

THE COUPLER

THE DEAN'S MESSAGE



Happy summer!

Dear DC AGO members,

I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to all who helped to make our recent Juneteenth Festival a success. Thank you to our fantastic chapter board members for their leadership throughout this past year and to all of you, our diverse, multi-talented members who bring artistic beauty and excellence to this region.

From our annual PipeSpectacular to our March members' recital and Juneteenth program, plus the countless recital series and musical offerings that each of you present at your churches, we are blessed with a rich tapestry of music and music lovers here in the nation's capital. I commend you and encourage you as you continue to contribute to the creative vibrancy of DC.

We look forward to providing more opportunities
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Marvin Mills 3
played the closing recital for our chapter's Juneteenth day of workshops.



The Member Spotlight this month shines on young organist Charles Reardon. 4



National Cathedral has raised \$12.5 million for its organ project. 6



The Basilica announces the lineup for its summer organ recital series. 7

Save the date

Our trichapter PipeSpectacular program will be Sept. 24 at Christ Church Alexandria and will feature recitalist Daniel Aune.

CHAPTER NEWS

Juneteenth day of workshops, recital



Our chapter celebrated Juneteenth with a day of workshops and a recital at the Franciscan Monastery.

Todd Fickley led a masterclass on AGO certification skills (transposition, figured bass, harmonization, etc.). Attendees, including Paul Griffin (shown with Fickley at upper left), participated as students.



Mike McMahon (lower left), executive director of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, led a reading session of hymns featuring social justice themes, and Ronald “Trey” Walton gave a lecture on the organ music of black women composers.

A recital by Marvin Mills on the monastery’s Lively-Fulcher organ concluded the program.

New members

Our chapter welcomes new members Dr. Eran Lupu and Midori O. Ataka.



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District of Columbia Chapter

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THE COUPLER

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Send submissions to
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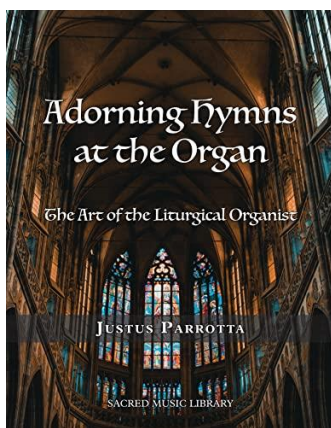
Potomac Organ Institute students play spring recital

Students enrolled in the Potomac Organ Institute played their spring recital June 2 at All Saints Episcopal Church in Chevy Chase. The institute pairs accomplished pianists with organ teachers for a year of free lessons.

The students were, from left, Owen Johnson, Bradley McMullin, Bailey Myers and Sarah Garcia. In the back row are Peter Crisafulli, POI co-coordinator; teachers Dr. Ben Keseley, Dr. David Kelley, Dr. Alain Truche and Clarice Snyder, and POI co-coordinator Carolyn Booth.

John Nothafft, our chapter's membership liaison, is the new leader of the program. Thank you, Carolyn and Peter from the Potomac Chapter, for heading up the program in recent years.

New publication from chapter member Jay Parotta



The Sacred Music Library recently published chapter member Justus (Jay) Parotta's collection *Adorning Hymns at the Organ: The Art of the Liturgical Organist*. This anthology consists of hymn introductions, verses, interludes, free accompaniments, codas and voluntaries. The book is available at [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

Here is a performance of the *Carillon on 'Lasst uns Erfreuen'* from the collection: <https://vimeo.com/755844362>.

Jay is the organist and Schola director at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in the Shaw-Mount Vernon area of DC.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Charles Reardon

If you would like to be spotlighted or to nominate someone else, send an email to dcchapterago@gmail.org.



CHARLES AT THE TABERNACLE ORGAN

ways and times to change registrations on the fly. The organ for my concert in Manassas didn't have a sequencer, so I found myself having to release notes early or stretching my hand a painful amount to hold notes as my other hand pressed presets. My concert in DC was on a completely mechanical
Continued on Page 5

How did you become interested in the organ?

I became interested in the organ when I was 13 years old. I was sitting by the bishop, as it was my job to run errands for him during services. I sat by the console of the Rodgers organ close enough to watch the organist's feet go crazy as he was playing *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* as a Christmas organ solo. I was immediately fascinated by the complexity of playing the organ, as I saw him press presets and adjust the swell shoes so cleanly. I begged my piano teacher to let me have a go at the console after a meeting a few weeks later, as she was also one of the organists at church. I played a few things I had learned on the piano and fell in love!

What is your educational and professional background?

I have studied piano and hymn playing technique for almost 10 years with various teachers, and have been studying the organ for four years. I have played countless services for various denominations, including "odd" jobs like funerals and special assemblies. I have also played (and plan to continue playing) the Wurlitzer Theater Organ at the Byrd Theater in Richmond and am taking occasional lessons with resident organist Bob Gullede there as well. My first concert performances took place in April of this year -- one in Manassas and one in downtown DC.

What are the organ's biggest challenges and joys for you?

The biggest challenge for me is finding the best

From Page 4

action organ, and I had an assistant to cover all registration changes for me, thank goodness!

Why are you an AGO member?

I am an AGO member because of the Year of the Young Organist and the free membership it gave me.

What do you like to do when you are not on the organ bench?

I enjoy playing jazz piano and bass trombone for various bands and orchestras in my school and community. I also enjoy mountain biking in the lush woods of Northern Virginia!



CHARLES ON THE TROMBONE

What else would you like members to know about you?

I am 17 years old and have actually been dreaming of being a theater organist, not just a classical organist. I've built an organ console so I could run Hauptwerk and practice at home -- one of the best decisions I've ever made!

What is your most memorable moment on the organ bench?

I was given the rare chance to go to Salt Lake City and sit in during a broadcast of a live concert by the choir, orchestra and bells at Temple Square (which was a mind-blowing experience alone). The tabernacle is famous for the 5/206 [five-manual, 206-rank] beast that it houses! After the broadcast ended, the organist played a flamboyant toccata as a postlude and the sound of full organ in the tabernacle brought me to tears.

One of the choir members noticed me (this woman also happened to be my sister's boss) and invited me to meet the organist. Of course I said yes! I was greeted by a big hug from organist Linda Margetts and she asked if I'd like to play a hymn on the organ. I chose the powerful *He is Risen* and another tabernacle organist, Joseph Peeples, quickly pulled me an appropriate registration. I played three verses, and the whole time Mr. Peeples was drawing more and more stops. By the end, there was even a 32' reed rumbling away.

I really wanted to make this an exceptional experience for me, so I decided it was now or never. I ended the final phrase with a dramatic, spur-of-the-moment deceptive cadence that really showed off the power of the organ! You can find a video of this [here](#) on YouTube (search for "full organ on the tabernacle organ). I left the tabernacle and proceeded to erupt into tears, as I was in shock at what I had just had the privilege of doing!

From organ failure to regeneration

Music lovers come to the rescue of Washington Cathedral's historic organ

The following is reprinted with permission from the spring/summer issue of Cathedral Age, a publication of the Washington National Cathedral.

After 85 years of wear and tear, the cathedral's massive pipe organ will soon undergo much-needed restoration work, thanks to the generosity of several dedicated music lovers. Connecticut-based organ builder Foley-Baker has signed a contract to revitalize the historic instrument after cathedral community members gave transformative gifts totaling \$12.5 million.

Work on the \$14 million project is set to begin in January with renovations estimated to end in 2028. Funds raised to date will go toward the organ itself, as well as needed upgrades to lighting, safety and mechanical infrastructure.

Originally installed in 1938 when the cathedral was only one-third complete, the organ has undergone various expansions, patches, retrofits and rebuilds to facilitate its use across more than 30,000 cathedral services. At least a quarter of the organ is no longer functioning, and it no longer speaks with a coherent voice into the cathedral's larger, completed space.



While the organ is being reconstructed, the cathedral will use a digital organ made by Walker Technical Company, which is known for digitally reproducing sound and control systems for the music industry and for supporting some of America's most cherished organs in spaces such as the Mormon Tabernacle, Christ Cathedral [in Garden Grove, CA], First Congregational Church in Los Angeles and Avery Fisher Hall of the Lincoln Center. Based in Zionsville, PA, the firm specializes in both permanent and temporary installations. The cathedral's digital organ will be both – temporary for the period the pipe organ is gone, then repurposed into a permanent practice instrument.

"We'll all miss the pipe organ while it's gone, but we're really pleased that Walker Technical Company is going to be providing us an instrument that will allow us to continue our programming seamlessly until the pipe organ comes back," said Thomas Sheehan, the cathedral's organist and associate director of music. The cathedral expects to install the temporary instrument sometime this winter and then repurpose it after the overall organ project is finished in 2028.

To learn more about the project, visit [cathedral.org/campaign](https://www.cathedral.org/campaign).

ORGAN EVENTS

Tuesday, July 4, 11 am: Washington National Cathedral organist Thomas Sheehan and Washington Symphonic Brass present an Independence Day concert.

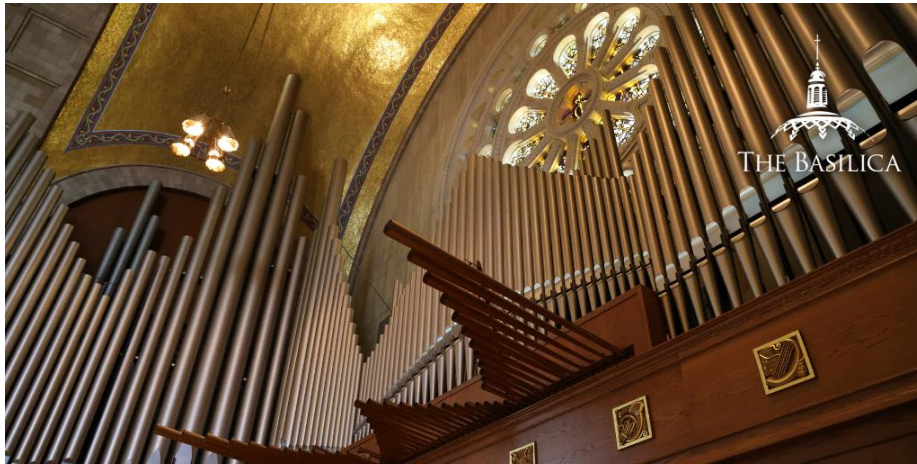
Thursday, July 6, 12:40 pm: The Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle, 1725 Rhode Island Ave., welcomes Stefan Donner for an organ recital following the 12:10 pm Mass. The concert will also be livestreamed on the cathedral's YouTube channel.

Sunday, July 23, 4 pm: Hunter Erickson plays a recital and hymn sing at Bethany Lutheran Church, 2501 Beacon Hill Lane, Alexandria.

Saturday, Aug. 19, 2 pm: East Washington Heights Baptist Church, 2220 S. Branch Ave. SE, will dedicate its newly donated MDS 35 Allen organ for its chapel.

Summer Organ Series

Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, 400 Michigan Ave. NE



Sunday evenings at 6 pm. For more information on the performers, click [here](#).

July 2 – Andrew Vu (chapter member)

July 9 – Stefan Donner

July 16- Peter Latona (chapter member)

July 23 – Alexander Straus-Fausto

July 30 – Todd Fickley (chapter member)

Aug. 6 – Nathan Ringkamp (chapter member)

Aug. 13 – Benjamin LaPrairie (chapter member)

Aug. 20 – Adam Chlebek

Music at Midday

The weekly Friday program at National City Christian Church is on summer break until September.

JOB OPENINGS

District of Columbia

Music director: St. Timothy's Episcopal Church. Part-time. \$25,000-30,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Music director and organist: St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church. Part-time. Interim with possibility to become permanent. Click [here](#).

Maryland

Director of music: Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, College Park. Full-time. From \$50,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Music director: St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Waldorf. Part-time. \$22,000-25,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Director of music: First Presbyterian Church of Howard County, Columbia. Part-time. For details, email musicsearch@firstpreshc.org.

Organist/pianist: Neelsville Presbyterian Church, Germantown. \$20-30 per hour. Click [here](#).

Music director: First Baptist Church of Suitland. Part-time. \$18,000-20,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Organist/choir director: Christ Church, Durham Parish, Nanjemoy. \$15,000-27,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Virginia

Music director: Grace Episcopal Church, Alexandria. Full-time. Click [here](#).

Director of music: Heritage Presbyterian Church, Alexandria. \$18,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Organist/pianist: Church of the Resurrection, Alexandria. \$14,000-24,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Worship leader/music director: Memorial Baptist Church, Arlington. From \$32,500 annually. Click [here](#).

Organist/accompanist: Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Alexandria. \$20,000-25,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Music director/organist: First Presbyterian Church of Annandale. \$17,500 annually. Click [here](#).

Catholic U ends bachelor's degree in organ performance

Catholic University of America is no longer offering a bachelor of music degree in organ performance due to a lack of interest from applicants, according to Jay D. Brock, associate dean for undergraduate studies and chairman of the Department of Music Performance.

The master's program in organ performance "will hopefully continue," he said. "We are in the process of hiring a new head of Sacred Music that will make decisions about how that will look for 2024 and beyond."

Two part-time faculty members currently teach organ lessons at CUA.

Chapter member Nathan Ringkamp was the final graduate of the bachelor's degree program in organ performance, finishing this past spring.

The Dean's Message

From Page One

for music-making and collegial fellowship as we head into our next season. We encourage you to stay connected and to share ideas for strengthening our bond as organists and musicians.

We won't have a Coupler in August. Please save the date for our annual PipeSpectacular event, this year to be hosted by the Northern Virginia chapter on Sunday, Sept. 24. I hope you will all find time for rest and renewal this summer, and I wish everyone a happy and peaceful Fourth of July!

Grace & peace,
Paul Byssainthe, Jr.

Did you know that on our chapter website, dcago.org...

... you can view upcoming organ recitals in our area under the Calendar tab?

...find a new job through the listings under the Membership tab?

...find substitutes under the Substitute tab?

...find organ teachers under the Membership tab?

... look at past issues of The Coupler under the Media tab?

... check out photos of past events under the Media tab?

Give it a try!

THE COUPLER

Promote your event, product or cause with an advertisement in The Coupler, the official publication of the District of Columbia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Rates: full page (4 issues), \$100; half-page (4 issues), \$50; quarter page (4 issues), \$25. Email advertising requests to dcagochapter@gmail.com with "The Coupler" in the subject field. Make checks payable to DC Chapter, American Guild of Organists and send them to DC AGO, P.O. Box 39179, Washington, DC 20016.

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Blanche Curfman

Nancy Dodge

Robert Grogan

Eileen Guenther

Irv Lawless

Kenneth Lowenberg

Donald Sutherland

David Hearn (deceased)

Albert Russell (deceased)



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SAINT DOMINIC CATHOLIC CHURCH WASHINGTON, DC

“The Island”, as it was often called in the nineteenth century, consisted of the area now known as Southwest Washington. Members of the Order of Preachers – the Dominicans – have stood witness in this historic part of the District of Columbia for over 160 years. The present structure, designed by noted New York City-based architect Patrick Keely, was completed in 1875. Just a decade later, in 1885, a fire destroyed the church’s interior, which was quickly restored. At the same time, the church was adorned with a grand new organ.



We at Di Gennaro-Hart are pleased to announce that we have been commissioned by the Archdiocese of Washington to undertake a major restoration of the Hilborne L. Roosevelt instrument. Cousins to Teddy, Hilborne and his brother, Frank Roosevelt, were among the very finest nineteenth century American organ builders.

The project will include the replacement of the 1929 English-style console with an “American terraced” console built according to current AGO standards. The console will offer a strong nod to the Roosevelts, particularly through the use of the engraving font that was commissioned by their firm. The present solid state control systems will be replaced with a 100 channel capture system and a new switching system with performance recorder. The reeds will be restored, numerous repairs will be completed, and the entire instrument will be thoroughly cleaned. A powerful Tuba stop, constructed by a shop that traces its roots to the Roosevelt firm, will be added.

Father Jordan Turano, OP, *Pastor*
JC Cantrell, *Music Director and Worship Coordinator*

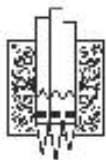


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