

THE COUPLER

THE DEAN'S MESSAGE



Following or leading?

One day last week I left home in Silver Spring to drive to Charleston, WV, to see my mentor from my years fresh out of college. It was a quick turn-around trip, just one evening, but full of conversation and gratitude and memories. It was wonderful to see Wayne.

On my way there, I drove through a moderate storm, at times only fog and mist, at times a light rain. The traffic was not-so-busy on a Tuesday morning, but there were a remarkable number of trucks, including the oversize load variety. Ugh.

I got stuck several times behind cars passing the trucks, cars moving faster than the 18-wheelers but not by much. I found myself concentrating with as much intensity as is necessary performing a Bach prelude and fugue.

At some point, the traffic lightened up, and I was able to pull away from any other car or truck. The *Continued on Page 6*

MAY 2022 IN THIS ISSUE



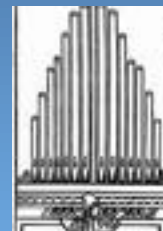
The Member Spotlight shines on Robert Scherer, a new chapter member.

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Check out a slew of organ recitals taking place in the District, Maryland and Virginia this month.

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Thinking of changing jobs? There are quite a few available.

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An anthem by chapter member Ken Lowenberg will be premiered May 22.

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Mark Your Calendar

Our chapter is planning a full day of workshops and performances for the Juneteenth federal holiday to be celebrated on June 20.

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CHAPTER NEWS

Juneteenth recital and workshops in the works

Mark your calendars for June 20, a holiday for many, when



our chapter will host a full day of workshops and a recital at First Baptist Church, 1328 16th St. NW, halfway between Dupont And Logan Circles.

Concert organist Mickey Thomas Terry, pictured at left, will play a recital on the church's 2013 Austin organ, which has five manuals and 229 stops.

The workshops will cover:

- Conducting from the console led by Dr. Jeffrey Smith, music director at St. Paul's, K Street, using music by African-American composers.
- Music licensing and copyright issues led by Carol Feather Martin, director of music at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Arlington.
- Best practices for using music from other traditions with a panel led by the Rev. Dr. Michael McMahon, executive director of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. Other panelists will be former AGO national dean Eileen Guenther; Stanley Thurston, artist-in-residence at the National Cathedral and director of music ministries at Foundry United Methodist Church; and Marvin Mills, organist at St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Kensington, MD.

Chapter board elections next month

Our chapter will elect 2022-23 board members in June.

Candidates are:

Dean: Paul Byssainthe Jr.

Subdean:

Secretary:

Treasurer:

Coupler editor and website administrator: Pat Henry

Membership liaison: John Nothafft

Member at large: Trey Walton

Voting will be June 1-5. Watch your email for more information.



DC AGO
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2021-2022

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THE COUPLER

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Send submissions to
dcagochapter@gmail.com.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Robert Scherer

Each month *The Coupler* focuses on one of our chapter members. To nominate someone to be featured in a future Member Spotlight, send an email to dcagochapter@gmail.com. This month we speak with Robert Scherer, who joined our chapter in March through the AGO's Year of the Young Organist initiative.



How did you become interested in the organ?

Throughout my childhood my mother would frequently work as an organist, playing for various churches in all the places we lived. She taught me and my siblings to play the piano. She left it to us to decide if we wanted to learn the organ. While I would occasionally mess around on her practice organ, I never asked for lessons.

A few years back, I came across an article in the *Baltimore Sun* about the increasing shortage of organists, which pushed me to start taking lessons. I had always enjoyed listening to the organ and felt that it is a beautiful tradition I would like to participate in and continue.

What is your professional and educational background?

After high school, I enlisted in the Air Force and served as a cryptologic linguist. In 2018, I was honorably discharged upon completing my enlistment contract, and after a year of contract work I put my GI Bill to use and became a full time-student. I graduated last

year from the University of Maryland with a bachelor's degree in political science, and have worked as a conflict researcher for the ACLED Project (a research nonprofit that monitors protest and conflict situations) since July 2021. I currently play the piano for a local church but hope to play the organ for services in the future.

For you, what are the organ's particular joys and challenges?

The greatest challenge of the organ for me at my initial lessons was the coordination between feet and hands. Much of my piano experience transitioned over, but the obvious differences in technique are still a challenge. For the joys, nothing really tops the majesty of playing in a cathedral or large sanctuary with good acoustics. To play an instrument the size of a building--it hasn't gotten old yet.

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Why are you an AGO member?

I joined the AGO after my organ instructor made me aware of the opportunity for young organists. There is value in being part of a collaborative organization, and I hope that I can connect with others who share a passion for organ and find greater opportunities both professionally and personally. I am a member of both the Baltimore and DC chapters. While I'm living in Baltimore, I spend a good amount of time in and near DC, and with my line of work there's a strong chance I'll move to DC in the future.

What do you enjoy when not on the organ bench?

My two dominating passions are music and language. I also play the violin, cello, mandolin and piano and enjoy jamming with friends or participating in Baltimore's various jam scenes. (In the photo at left, Robert is playing on the Avenue in the Hampden neighborhood of Baltimore.) I also spend time studying and practicing various languages, some for professional reasons--such as Farsi,

Dari and French – and others for either social connections or just pure interest in the language itself, such as Portuguese, Yiddish, Hebrew and Korean.

AGO National Convention: The Well-Tempered Future



Seattle, Washington | July 3–7, 2022

Go to [AGO Seattle 2022](#) for more information and registration.

Booking your flight to Seattle? Receive a 5% discount from Alaska Airlines for AGO convention travel and fly round-trip from [cities](#) across the U.S. and Canada. [Book online](#) with the exclusive AGO convention discount code **ECMD864**. Questions? Email info@agoseattle2022.com.

ORGAN RECITALS

Sunday, May 1, 3:30 pm: Edward Alan Moore, organist at East Liberty Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh and formerly of the DC area, plays a recital celebrating the 200th anniversary of the birth of César Franck, including his three chorales. St. Matthew's Cathedral, 1725 Rhode Island Ave. NW.

Sunday, May 1, 5 pm: Hymn Festival with Michael Smith and Patrick Scott at Christ Church, 118 N. Washington St., Alexandria.

Tuesday, May 3, 12:10 pm: Washington Bach Consort performs a cantata preceded by Nicolaus Bruhns' Praeludium in G Major played by John Walthausen. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

Friday, May 6, 12:15-1 pm: Organist Michał Szostak is traveling from Warsaw, Poland, to perform works of J. S. Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven, along with three of his own improvisations based on tunes that you may recognize. National City Christian Church, 5 Thomas Circle NW.

Sunday, May 8, 5 pm: Chuyoung Suter, organist at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, plays a recital at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, 1400 Quincy St. NE.

Friday, May 13, 12:15-1 pm: Chicago violinist Sara Su Jones and pianist Tatanya Stepanova will perform music by women composers Clara Schumann, Florence Price, Germaine Talleferre and Gwyneth Walker, along with a work by Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk. National City Christian Church, 5 Thomas Circle NW.

Saturday, May 14, 2 pm: Dr. Roy Belfield, director of music ministries and organist at Towson United Methodist Church, will play a recital at Chevy Chase United Methodist Church, 7001 Connecticut Ave., on the church's M.P. Möller Opus 8839, rebuilt by Lewis & Hitchcock in 2006.

Friday, May 20, 12:15-1 pm: Organist Richard Spotts (Doylestown, PA) will perform Three Poems by composer Charles Tournemire. National City Christian Church, 5 Thomas Circle NW.

Friday, May 20, 7:30 pm: Kimberly Marshall, organ professor at Arizona State University, plays a recital titled "Music of Conflict and Hope" on the new Martin Pasi organ at St. George's Episcopal Church, 915 N. Oakland St., Arlington. Co-sponsored by the Northern Virginia AGO chapter.

Saturday, May 21, 10:30 am: Kimberly Marshall presents a lecture on the healing power of sound followed by a Sound Bath meditation with yoga on the labyrinth. St. George's Episcopal Church, 915 N. Oakland St., Arlington.

Tuesday, May 24, 12:10 pm: Organist Jeff Kempeskie, director of music at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, performs works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Howells and Persichetti. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

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Friday, May 27, 12:15-1 pm: Organist Matthew Dion (Houston, Texas) will perform works by Guy Weitz, François Couperin, J.S. Bach, Gabriel Pierné, Florence Price and Jeanne Demessieux. National City Christian Church, 5 Thomas Circle NW.

Sunday, June 12, 4 pm: Peggy Haas Howell of Lynchburg, VA, plays selections from Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier on the Baroque temperament Howell organ at Georgetown Lutheran Church, 1556 Wisconsin Ave. NW, as part of Stephen Ackert's series for the WTC's 300th anniversary.

Tuesday, June 14, 12:10 pm: Celebrating Juneteenth at Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW, with organist Paul Byssainthe Jr., director of music at Sligo Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Takoma Park.

Dean's column

From Page One

clarity! The view! The ability to see clearly, even with a light rain, with windshield wipers on a normal speed, was lovely. I was surprised by the sigh that escaped from my lips. My shoulders relaxed and I drove in freedom for a bit.

Even from such a mundane example, I wish to share a bit of a life lesson. There are times when following close behind another driver (or cyclist) can make life easier -- it's called drafting. There are times when going along with the crowd can be easier -- we don't have to make decisions for ourselves; we can rely on the group mind (not often the best choice, but...). Or, heeding the example of Good King Wenceslas, following in someone else's footsteps is a very good thing.

Then there are times when, for clarity and health, we must strike out on our own. Driving in the rain is so much easier without the spray from other vehicles. Moving forward on our own can at times be so much easier without listening to the blustering babble of those who "know how it should be done." Of course, throughout our career as musicians, we need to accept help and heed examples from others, following best practice and, somewhat, the tried and true. But that must be balanced by relying on our authentic selves, our innate musicianship, our relationship to the music that drives our lives.

Trust your years of experience, vision and work to help you connect to the needs of the world around you. The Divine will reward your efforts.

All the best,

David

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Director of music: National United Methodist Church, Washington, DC. Full-time. \$53,000-\$80,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Protestant music director/organist: Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, DC. 1099 contractor with Music Ministry International. Click [here](#).

Office manager: Lewis & Hitchcock Organ Builders, Beltsville, MD. Full-time. Customer relations, scheduling, accounts payable and receivable, payroll and other bookkeeping. Salary plus benefits. To apply, send letter and resume to richard@lhorgans.com.

Minister of music: Trinity Lutheran Church, North Bethesda, MD. 28-rank Moeller organ. About 15 hours per week. \$23,000-30,000. Click [here](#).

Director of music and arts: United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley, Germantown, MD. Part-time. \$29,000-32,000 annually. Click [here](#).

Organist: Abundant Life Church, Hyattsville, MD. Part-time. From \$250 per week. Click [here](#).

Organist/pianist/accompanist: Holy Cross Catholic Church, Garrett Park, MD. From \$65 per hour. Apply by May 6. Click [here](#).

Organist/assistant music director: Catonsville Presbyterian Church, MD. 10-15 hours per week. \$17,000-18,000 annually. Three-manual Moeller organ. Click [here](#).

Music director and principal organist: St. Catherine Laboure Parish, Wheaton, MD. Full-time. Click [here](#). Send resume and cover letter to the Rev. Francisco Aguirre at aguirref@adw.org.

Director of music: Christ Episcopal Church, Columbia, MD. 10-15 hours weekly. Rogers 599 electronic organ plus small mid-20th century pipe organ refurbished in 1999. \$17,000-20,000 yearly. Apply by May 1. Click [here](#).

Director of music ministries: Cathedral of St. Thomas More, Arlington, VA. Work in collaboration with other members of the parish music staff, including the youth and high school choir directors, associate organists and administrative assistant. Click [here](#).

Director of music: Immanuel Presbyterian Church, McLean, VA. Full-time. \$75,000-85,000 plus benefits. Lively-Fulcher pipe organ. Click [here](#).

Minister of music/organist/choir director: Pohick Episcopal Church, Lorton, VA. \$60,000-70,000 annually. Noack 2-manual, 17-rank tracker rebuilt in 2005 and updated in 2019. Click [here](#).

Organist/pianist: Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Vienna. \$20,000-25,000. Click [here](#).

Director of liturgical music: Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Manassas. Full-time. Click [here](#).

CONCERT TO PREMIERE ANTHEM BY CHAPTER MEMBER

A commissioned piece for choir and organ will receive its premiere on Sunday, May 22 at 4 pm at the



50th anniversary celebration for Chevy Chase Concerts at Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC.

The Concert Series commissioned Minister of Music Emeritus Kenneth Lowenberg, a lifetime DC AGO chapter member, to compose the work. He was organist-choirmaster at CCPC for 38 years and started Chevy Chase Concerts.

According to Ken, "The text is from Isaiah 58:1-9a and 11b-12 and focuses on what constitutes a real

feast day or fast day, pleasing to the Lord. The contrast is made between (on the one hand) fasting and dressing in sackcloth and ashes to give the appearance of contrition, while doing as one pleases, exploiting workers, quarreling with others, and even striking each other with wicked fists! On the other hand, the kind of fasting the Lord has chosen is to loose the chains of injustice, to set the oppressed free, to share food with the hungry, to provide the poor wanderer with shelter, and the like. Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and you will be like a well-watered garden.

"The first part of the anthem has an angry, busy, dissonant feel to it, suggested by use of scales of limited inversion, blustery fanfares, snake-like slithering of reeds, and even violent tone clusters. There is a tenor solo in the middle section, with the organ imitating some of the vocalist's musical gestures. The concluding portion of the anthem, with the choir, uses more traditional 'sweeter' harmonic language, and some of the more tender stops of the organ. The anthem then returns to some of the opening fanfare motifs, with a hopeful, triumphant look to the future."



Also featured on the 4 pm concert will be the Faure Requiem with choir, soloists and orchestra, conducted by Music Director Julie Vidrick Evans.

All are welcome to attend. There is no admission charge but a free-will offering will be received. The church is at 1 Chevy Chase Circle NW, DC, at the intersection of Connecticut Avenue and Western Avenue, on the east side of the circle. There is limited parking in the lot behind the church, reached via Oliver Street. Parking is also available on local streets.

TWO CHANCES FOR PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTER PLUS

Two area chapters will offer Pipe Organ Encounter Plus (POE+) programs this summer for keyboard players 19 or older who are interested in improving their organ skills.

Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley POE+ is June 12-17 with housing and meals on the campus of Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA.

For more information, go to [poePlusBrochureLVAGO2022.pdf](#).



The Richmond AGO chapter's POE+ is Aug. 7-12.

The fee of \$500 (\$450 if paid by June 1) includes a hotel room and all meals.

Participants will experience six organs, including the 26-rank Martin Pasi instrument at St. Benedict Catholic Church (shown at left).

See the full description, brochure and registration information at [Richmond AGO POE+ 2022 - August 7-12, 2022](#).

For more information, email poeinfo@richmondago.org.

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NEW MEMBERS

We welcome new chapter members Matthew Richardson and Andrew Brown, who joined through the AGO's Year of the Young Organist initiative, and Francis Crociata.

LIFE MEMBERS

Blanche Curfman

Nancy Dodge

Robert Grogan

Eileen Guenther

Irv Lawless

Kenneth Lowenberg

Albert Russell

Donald Sutherland

David Hearn (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

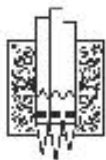


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