

THE COUPLER

The Dean's Message



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome to another exciting program year for the District of Columbia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. As the chapter embarks on its 105th anniversary, I am pleased to report that we, as a chapter,

are stronger and more vital than ever before.

There are a number of fantastic events planned for you this year. We will feature exciting recitals performed by two respected female artists, several enriching

Continued on page 4

SEPTEMBER 2015 In This Issue



An exciting year begins with an exciting recital and installation of officers. Don't miss it!

1



Mark your calendar now for this year's chapter events! Check out a whole year of great programs.

2



Al Russell will be honored at this year's East Texas Pipe Organ Festival in November.

3



Plans are being made for this year's Music @ the Monastery. A few slots remain for prospective recitalists.

5



DC AGO September Program

ORGAN RECITAL AND INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Monday, September 21, 7:00 p.m.

Mary Beth Bennett, Organist

First Congregational United Church of Christ
945 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001

2015-2016 DC AGO Chapter Schedule of Events

Monday, September 21, 2015, 7:00 p.m.
Organ Recital and Installation of Officers
Mary Beth Bennett, Organist
First Congregational United Church of Christ

Sunday, October 4, 2015, 5:15 p.m.
Tri-Chapter Pipes Spectacular
Renée Anne Louprette, Organist
Washington National Cathedral

Saturday, November 7, 2015, 10:00 a.m.
Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza
National City Christian Church

Monday, January 4, 2016, 6:30 p.m.
Annual Twelfth-Night Dinner and Service
(with Northern Virginia and Potomac Chapters)
All Saints Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase

Saturday, January 23, 2016
AGO Certification Workshop
Jeremy Filsell, Clinician

Monday, February 15, 2016
Presidents' Day Road Trip
Atlantic City Boardwalk Hall
Steven Ball, Host

Continued on page 3

DC AGO Board of Directors



Dean
Russell J. Weismann

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Karen Bredberg

Secretary
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Irvin Peterson

Education Coordinator
Jeremy Filsell

Historian
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The Coupler

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American Guild of
Organists

J. Michael McMahon,
Editor

To contact the DC AGO
or for newsletter
submissions:
dcagochapter@gmail.com

Continued from page 2

Wednesday, March 2, 2016

DC AGO Members' Evensong and Happy Hour
Church of the Epiphany

Friday, March 18, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

Silent Movie with Organ
La vie et la passion de Notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ
Thomas Ospital, Organist (co-titulair of St. Eustache, Paris)
Saint Jane Frances de Chantal Church, Bethesda

April (Date and Time TBD)

Theater Organ Concert
(Joint event with Northern Virginia and Potomac Chapters)
Jack Hardman Residence, Potomac, Virginia

Monday, May 23, 2016, 7:00 p.m.

Potomac Organ Institute Student Recital
All Saints Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase

Albert Russell to Be Honored



The East Texas Pipe Organ Festival, to be held in Kilgore, Texas from November 8 to 12, has announced that legendary American concert organist Albert Russell has agreed to be the special guest at this year's festival. Al had a long and distinguished career as a church organist, including his service for many years at St. John's Church, Lafayette Square. A native Texan, he was good friends with Roy Perry and Joseph Whiteford and a disciple of William Watkins. The festival also coincides with the re-release of Al's historic recordings for Aeolian-Skinner on compact disc.

? Question of the Month ?



In each month's newsletter we will pose a question. We encourage members to send their answers and/or advice. Responses will be included in the following month's newsletter.

This month's question is: **What is your best strategy for recruiting new choir members?**

Submit your responses to
dcagochapter@gmail.com.

*Dean's Message**Continued from page 1*

educational programs, a very special 'behind the scenes' Presidents' Day Road Trip to the world's largest pipe organ in Atlantic City's Boardwalk Hall, and we will end the year listening to the fruits of the hard working students in our Potomac Organ Institute.

Our inaugural event takes place on Monday, September 21 at 7pm and features Dr. Mary Beth Bennett in recital at First Congregational, UCC. First Congregational is situated in a safe and vibrant neighborhood just one block east of the Metro Center station. Plentiful parking is available, both on the street and in nearby public garages.

If you have not yet been to this church, then you are in for quite a treat. Built in 2011, First Congregational Church moved into its new sanctuary after selling their airspace rights. On the outside the building looks like an attractive office complex, but when you enter the lobby, you will discover an architectural gem of a church! Complete with a 40-rank Casavant/Letourneau pipe organ, First Congregational Church boasts fabulous acoustics, warm hospitality, and a vibrant church community.

Mary Beth Bennett is no stranger to our chapter. She lived and worked in DC and Virginia for a number of years before moving to Richmond, where she now serves on the faculty at the

University of Richmond and is the Organist and Choirmaster at Seventh Street Christian Church. She is the winner of numerous awards in performance and composition, and she has received commissions in multiple genres from the American Guild of Organists, The Paul VI Institute for the Arts, and various churches, chamber ensembles and private parties. She holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music, Stetson University, the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik (Cologne, Germany), and the University of Southern California.

As a performing member of the Liturgical Organists Consortium she recorded three compact discs which have garnered critical acclaim, including a "Golden Ear Award" for best organ CD of the year from Absolute Sound Magazine. Her performances have been featured on MPR's Pipe Dreams with Michael Barone. Her compositions are published by Augsburg-Fortress, Concordia, Broadman, National, and WLP.

I am especially pleased to announce that Mary Beth has composed a new hymn tune, to be sung to a text written by her husband Mark. We will premier this new hymn at the conclusion of the September 21st event. The tune and the text are beyond beautiful. A reception will follow the program. I really hope to see you there!

Your #1 fan -

Russell

September Members' Events

Sunday, September 6, 3:00 p.m.

Organ Recital
Augustana Lutheran Church
Jan Vermeire, Organist

Friday, September 11, 12:15 p.m.

September 11 Memorial Organ Recital
National City Christian Church
John Cannon, organist

Friday, September 18, 12:15 p.m.

Organ Recital
National City Christian Church
Randall Sheets, organist

Friday, September 25, 12:15 p.m.

Organ Recital
National City Christian Church
Joanne Peterson, organist

Submit your event to dcagochapter@gmail.com

Music @ the Monastery



The DC AGO Chapter hopes to continue its outreach program, *Music @ the Monastery*. This program features members in 45-minute recitals on the second Sunday of each month at 4:00 p.m. Members have the opportunity to play on a fine Lively-Fulcher pipe organ in one of the city's best acoustics. For more information, please email dcagochapter@gmail.com. Several dates still remain open.

Welcome, New Members!

Welcome to the newest members of the DC AGO Chapter:

David Houston

William Atwood

Daniel Campolieta

Tom Baynham, Jr.

Sarah Bereza



DC AGO History: Did You Know?

The District of Columbia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists was the twelfth chapter of the Guild to be established. The driving force was Oscar Franklin Comstock, longtime organist and choirmaster at Trinity Episcopal Church (now torn down) and a founding member of the National Guild in 1896. In 1907, Comstock proposed a Southern chapter "taking in Richmond [VA] and other near-by places." An Organists and Choirmaster's League had already been established under the leadership of the Right Rev. Henry Yates Satterlee, the first Episcopal Bishop of Washington (1895-1908). At the League's final meeting in June 1909, Comstock introduces New York physician and organist Dr. Henry Granger Hanchell, who urged the Washington organists to identify themselves with the American Guild of Organists. Eighteen months later, The Evening Star reported: "An event of considerable importance in musical circles took place Thursday evening (December 15, 1910) in the studio of Oscar Franklin Comstock, at 1217 F Street, N.W. when, ... the District of Columbia Chapter of the Guild was formed..." Comstock was elected Dean, and British native Edgar Priest, soon to leave St. Paul's Parish, K Street, to become the first organist and choirmaster of Washington National Cathedral, was named sub-dean. After Priest's death in 1938, the District of Columbia Chapter made possible a two-manual Ernest M. Skinner organ as a memorial in the Cathedral's Chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea.



Now, with over 150 members, the District of Columbia Chapter of the American Guild of Organists is a large and thriving force for the recognition of Organ, Choral, and Church Music in our Nation's Capital. Members represent every Christian denomination, as well as Jewish, Inter-Faith, and non-religious "Friends of the Organ". The Chapter meets several times throughout the year for educational, musical, and fellowship opportunities and is administered by a Board of Officers.

THE COUPLER

District of Columbia Chapter
The American Guild of Organists

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 are as follows: full page (4 times per season), \$100; half-page (4 times per season), \$50; quarter page (four times per season), \$25. Please email advertising requests to dcaagochapter@gmail.com with "The Coupler" in the subject field.

Make checks payable to DC Chapter, American Guild of Organists.