

[View this email in your browser](#)



**American Guild of Organists
District of Columbia Chapter**

THE COUPLER

October 2026

In this issue:

Dean's message
Halloween Organ-Fest
Upcoming recitals

Dean's message

What a wonderful way to begin our program year! Thank you to everyone who joined us Sept. 25 for our installation dinner and members' recital at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. It was a joyful evening of food, fellowship, and music, as well as a reminder of what our chapter can be.



Above: Dean Robert Baird addresses chapter members during the installation of officers.

Below: Sarah DeLacy and her helpers — sons Eitan, center, and Enoch — arranged a delicious spread.

At the beginning of the recital, I spoke briefly about something many musicians know well: imposter syndrome. Our profession can be intimidating. We spend years studying an instrument with an enormous repertoire and an endless list of things we could know better or do better. We hear extraordinary colleagues play. We compare degrees, positions, technique, repertoire, instruments, and careers. It can become remarkably easy, even after years of work, to walk into a room of musicians and quietly wonder whether we belong there. I certainly know that feeling.

I learned a lesson about this from my teacher at Peabody. Professor John Walker had every reason to be intimidating—an extraordinary career, enormous knowledge, and decades of experience at the highest levels of our profession. Instead, what I encountered in him was kindness.

John never needed to diminish another person to demonstrate his own stature. He could be demanding about the music while remaining generous toward the musician. His kindness did not make his standards smaller-- it made the room larger. There is something important in that for all of us.

We do not lose anything by bringing down the walls between us. Another musician's success does not diminish our own. Younger organists do not



need to prove they deserve to be in the room before we welcome them into it. Organists struggling with a passage, a job, a congregation, or simply their own confidence do not need another critic nearly as much as they need a colleague.



I want our chapter to be ambitious about our programming and serious about our profession, but also relentlessly generous with one another. I want experienced musicians to know younger ones. I want students to feel comfortable coming to our events. I want us to hear one another play without every performance becoming an occasion for comparison. I want us to share knowledge freely and celebrate one another enthusiastically. That is part of our mission, and Sept. 25 embodied it beautifully.

Patrick Merrill opened our recital with Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in C Major*, BWV 545, and Mulet's *Carillon-Sortie*. Kevin Paton-Cole played Buxtehude's *Chaconne in E Minor*, Caleb Bates improvised, and I contributed Bach's *Prelude and Fugue in C Minor*, BWV 546. Anna Elise Smith closed the program with the first movement of Widor's Sixth Symphony and brought down the house. It was thrilling.

Sarah DeLacy did an incredible job with the food and hospitality. That matters, too. Sitting around tables, eating together, talking, laughing, meeting someone new --

those things are how a professional organization becomes a community.

I was proud to welcome the chapter to New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, where I serve as director of music and organist. It was a treat for me to hear other musicians bring their own personalities and repertoire to the 2010 A.E. Schlueter pipe organ. Sharing instruments is one of the great pleasures of our profession.

We soon will have another opportunity to do exactly that. Our next chapter event, with the public invited, is the **Halloween Organ-Fest** on Saturday, Oct. 17 at 7:30 pm at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 4900 Connecticut Ave. NW. Chapter members will take on St. Paul's magnificent 1985/1993 Schantz pipe organ for an evening of Halloween favorites, classical masterworks, movie music, and music from the theater. Costumes are encouraged, and a reception will follow the concert. Bring friends and family and have some fun with an instrument especially good at making a little noise. See you there!

-- Robert Baird

OCT 17 2026

7:30 PM

*DC CHAPTER AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS
& FRIENDS OF MUSIC AT ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN*

PRESENT

HALLOWEEN ORGAN-FEST

Featuring an evening of frightful and scary favorites including classical masterworks, movie music, and themes from theatre.

Join us in your costumes, if you dare!
Reception following the concert.

**ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
4900 CONNECTICUT AVE NW
WASHINGTON, DC**

Organ recitals

For a continually updated recital list, visit dcago.org.

Friday, Oct. 2, 7 pm: Chapter member Jay Parrotta performs his transcriptions of Vivaldi's Four Seasons in a program titled "Four Seasons, One Organist" on the Di Gennaro-Hart organ at the Church of the Redeemer, 6201 Dunrobbin Drive, Bethesda. The concert is free and will be followed by a reception. For a preview, click [here](#).

Saturday, Oct. 3, 6 pm: Heather Adelsberger and Ronald "Trey" Walton III play a recital at Grace Episcopal Church, 1607 Grace Church Road, Silver Spring, MD.

Sunday, Oct. 11, 4 pm: Samuel Rowe, organist and music director at the Basilica of the Assumption in Baltimore, plays a recital at St. Joseph's on Capitol Hill, 313 2nd St. NE. Music of Elgar, Bach, Sowerby, Hindemith, and Vierne.

Sunday, Oct. 11, 4 pm: Stephen Kalnoske plays a recital at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America, 1400 Quincy St. NE.

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 12:10 pm: The Washington Bach Consort presents Paula Maust playing Buxtehude's Praeludium in G minor and Toccata in D minor; followed by the cantata *Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot*, BWV 39. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

Friday, Oct. 16, 7 pm: Adam Chlebek plays a recital at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Alexandria.

Friday, Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m. Brenda Portman plays repertoire from the past 100 years in celebration of the 100th anniversary of St. Mary's Episcopal Church and the rededication of the church's newly completed Lively-Fulcher organ. The recital is co-sponsored by the Northern Virginia Chapter of the AGO. A reception will follow. 2609 N. Glebe Road, Arlington.

Saturday, Oct. 24, 3 pm: Isabella Isza Wu, assistant director of music and organist at St. Paul's, K Street, plays a program including her transcriptions of music by Prokofiev as part of the Sterling Organ House series. 15902 Jerald Rd., Laurel, MD. \$45 tickets include wine, snacks and a dessert reception. Send email to kasterling@verizon.net.

Sunday, Oct. 25, 3:15 pm: Recital by John Henderson, organist and music director at St. Bernadette R.C. Church in Silver Spring and lecturer at the Rome School of the Performing Arts at Catholic University. St. Matthew's Cathedral, 1725 Rhode Island

Ave. NW.

Tuesday, Oct. 27, 12:10 pm: Organist Áron Dóbisz presents Johnathan Scott's organ transcription of Antonín Dvořák's Symphony No.9 "New World Symphony." Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

Sunday, Nov. 1, 7:30 pm: Concert of Remembrance, Schola Cantorum. St. Matthew's Cathedral, 1725 Rhode Island Ave. NW.

Music at Midday



Adam Chlebek, left, and Kevin Paton-Cole play at National City Christian Church this month as part of the Music at Midday series.

Music at Midday presents concerts downtown each Friday from 12:15 to 1 pm at National City Christian Church, 5 Thomas Circle NW, Washington, DC.

Oct. 2: Organist Adam Chlebek (Washington, DC) performs works of Henri Mulet, Sigfrid Karg-Elert, Maurice Duruflé, and Iain Farrington.

Oct. 9: Kevin Paton-Cole (Gaithersburg, MD) performs a program titled "The Gift of Peace: An Organ Meditation," featuring works of J.S. Bach, George Thalben-Ball, and Dan Locklair.

Oct. 23: Organist Edward Hewes (Washington, DC) performs music by J.S. Bach.



A Sacred Music FESTIVAL

Educate Preserve Inspire Create

Produced by Dr. Andrew Smith and ASMITHMUSIC LLC

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2ND

7:30PM *A Sacred Music Recital: featuring Dr. Andrew Smith, bass-baritone; Jouelle Roberson, soprano; and Dr. Elizabeth Hill, collaborative pianist*



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3RD

2:00PM *The Edward Jackson Sacred Music Competition*

6:00PM *Sacred Music Organ Recital featuring Heather Adelsberger and Ronald Walton III*

GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
1607 GRACE CHURCH ROAD SILVER SPRING, MD 20910

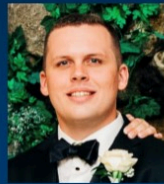
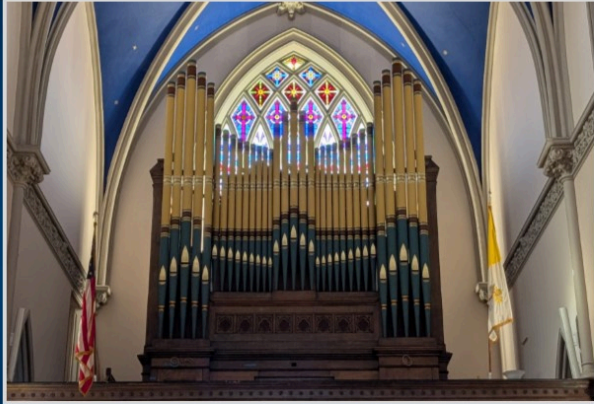
**ALL EVENTS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. REGISTER AT
WWW.ASMITHMUSIC.ORG/EVENTS**



ORGAN CONCERT

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2026 AT 4PM

ST. JOSEPH'S ON CAPITOL HILL



SAM ROWE, *organ*

Sam serves as the director of music and organist at the Basilica of the Assumption in Baltimore, Maryland.

PROGRAM

Elgar: Sonata - mvt. 1

Bach: O Mensch Bewein (*from Orgelbüchlein*)

Hindemith: Sonata No. 2

Sowerby: Toccata

Vierne: Impromptu from *Pièces de Fantaisie*

Bach: Fugue in E minor, BWV 548

*Concert is free and open to the public - monthly 2026 organ concert series
donations gratefully accepted - 313 Second Street NE - parking available*

100TH ANNIVERSARY REDEDICATION ORGAN RECITAL



Brenda Portman, Guest Artist
Music by Anna Amalia of Prussia,
Laurin, Higdon & Portman

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 7:30 PM

St. Mary's Episcopal Church
2609 North Glebe Road, Arlington, Virginia

Co-sponsored by St. Mary's Music Fund and the American Guild of Organists Northern Virginia Chapter in celebration of St. Mary's 100th Anniversary and the completion of its Lively-Fulcher Organ



Job openings

Listings are continuously updated on our website, dcago.org. Click on the Membership tab. To submit a listing, send an email to dcagochapter@gmail.com.



Why Daffer?

Proven **Stability &**
Long-Term **Commitment**

With over four decades of experience and a strengthened ownership structure, Daffer is **intentionally built for longevity**—ensuring your instrument is supported not just today, but for generations to come.

Unmatched Depth
of Expertise

Our team is comprised of **specialists in pipe organs**, digital instruments, and combination design. From historic restorations to **cutting-edge installations**, we offer a level of tonal and technical knowledge few firms can match.



Al Murrell
Vice President

Jeffery Hobbs
President

Steve McBride
Vice President



R.A. Daffer Church Organs, INC.

ESTABLISHED 1977

OFFERING PIPE, DIGITAL, and COMBINATION ORGAN SOLUTIONS

Sales@DafferOrgans.com | 410-792-2252 | www.DafferOrgans.com

AGO chapter board

Robert Baird, dean
Rob Church, treasurer
Eric McAfee, assistant treasurer
Kevin Biggins, membership secretary
Justin Connors, social media director
Anna Elise Smith, chapter young organists coordinator
Paul Hersey, education coordinator
Caleb Bates, member-at-large
Sarah DeLacy, member-at-large
Patrick Merrill, member-at-large
Evelyn Simpson-Curenton, member-at-large
Contact us at dcagochapter@gmail.com.
Visit our website at dcago.org.

Contact the editor

To reach Coupler and website editor Pat Henry, send an email to dcagochapter@gmail.com. Coupler advertising rates for four issues are \$125 for a full page, \$65 for a half page or \$35 for a quarter page.

Life members

Blanche Curfman
Nancy Dodge
Robert Grogan
Eileen Guenther
Irv Lawless
Kenneth Lowenberg
Donald Sutherland
David Hearn (deceased)
Albert Russell (deceased)





American Guild of Organists
District of Columbia Chapter



This email was sent to dcagochapter@gmail.com

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

DC AGO chapter · 1566 Wisconsin Ave NW · Washington, DC 20007-2759 · USA

