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

THE COUPLER

May 2026

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A note of gratitude and transition

As I prepare to conclude my term as dean, I find myself reflecting on the experience over the past two years. It has been a profound honor to be entrusted with the stewardship of a chapter with such a rich history and vibrant future.

Our mission has been at the forefront of every initiative, and I am particularly proud of the work we



have done to broaden our musical landscape.

By intentionally promoting the works of women and black composers, we have sought to ensure our programming reflects the full breadth of the organ tradition. From hosting masterclasses with world-class artists to exploring unique instruments through local and regional organ crawls, we have fostered both professional growth and fellowship.

A cornerstone of our work has been investing in the next generation. By providing funding for Potomac Organ Institute (POI) students, we have enabled the development of future organists.

I have been fortunate to work alongside a board that is as talented as it is hard-working. These individuals have shown remarkable spirit, even—and especially—when faced with unexpected challenges.

I want to extend heartfelt thanks to those who stepped up during critical moments. Whether it was the collaborative effort from both board and chapter members to navigate technical hurdles when our website went down, or the board's swift action in appointing a new treasurer, the response never wavered. This collective willingness to assist, along with the dedication to lead monthly events and to volunteer time, has kept our chapter moving steadily and preparing for the future.

Thank you for the trust you have placed in me and for the support you have shown our chapter. I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events and supporting our new leadership as they take the helm.

With deepest gratitude,
John Nothafft

Seeking new leaders

Looking forward, we are seeking members to fill key leadership roles, including:

- **Dean**
- **Sub-Dean**
- **Secretary**
- **Assistant Treasurer**

Serving on the board is an excellent way to give back to the profession and help shape the musical landscape of our region. It is a chance to build professional connections, develop leadership skills, and ensure that the organ remains a vital part of our cultural fabric. If you have ever considered taking a more active role in our chapter, please reach out. We need your voice, your expertise, and your vision to carry this mission forward.

Want to know what is involved? To learn more or to volunteer, send an email to dcagochapter@gmail.com. **We hope to hear from you by May 7.**

Upcoming chapter events

May 4 organ crawl

Join chapter members Monday, May 4 for an organ crawl of the recently restored 1885 Hilborne L. Roosevelt (Opus 290) at St. Dominic's Catholic Church, 630 E. St. SW. The event begins at 7:30 pm.

Michael Hart of the Di Gennaro-Hart Organ Co. will join us to discuss the company's multi-year restoration effort.



This instrument is a rare surviving example of the "American Symphonic" style of Hilborne Roosevelt—Teddy's cousin.

New features of the instrument include a "Roosevelt-style" console, a tuba stop, restored reed registers, and stenciled façade pipes.

Nathan Laube will play a rededication concert on Friday, May 8 at 7:30 pm. See the flier below.

Juneteenth recital and workshops

We hope to see you on Saturday, June 20, at First Baptist Church DC for our annual Juneteenth celebration. We have a fantastic lineup of presenters and a chance to hear the church's 85-rank Austin organ in action.

Where: 1328 16th St. NW

Parking: First Baptist's parking garage is accessible.

Schedule:

11 am: AGO Netherlands Study Tour Review – Dr. Patrick Merrill discusses the recent tour of historic Dutch organs led by Dr. Russ Weissman.

Noon: Lunch (on your own)

1:15 pm: "In Their Own Words" – Dr. Eileen Guenther discusses her book *In Their Own Words* on slave life and the power of spirituals, with musical accompaniment by Kevin Biggins.

3 pm: Featured recital – Carolyn Hoff, recent prize-winner in the AGO's Regional Competitions for Young Organists, performs a preview of her National AGO Convention program.

Masterclass with Stefan Donner

The DC AGO, in partnership with the Austrian Embassy, is pleased to announce a masterclass featuring acclaimed Austrian organist Stefan Donner on Saturday, June 27 at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle, 1725 Rhode Island Ave. NW.

Please RSVP to dcagochapter@gmail.com to play for Stefan.

9:30 am: Coffee & bagels

10–11:30: Masterclass

For more information about Stefan, go to <https://www.stefandonner.at/en/BIO/>

Organ events

Friday, May 1, 7 pm: The White House Historical Association and St. John's Church host "An Evening with the Choir of Westminster Abbey." 1525 H St. NW. For tickets, click [here](#).

Sunday, May 3, 4 pm: Dr. Stephen Ackert performs selections by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, and Iranian-American composer Golnoush Khaleghi on the Richard Howell tracker organ and Steinway piano at Georgetown Lutheran Church, 1556 Wisconsin Ave. NW. See flier below.

Sunday, May 3, 4 pm: Music director Maria Balducci plays the annual Marian concert at St. Joseph's on Capitol Hill, 313 2nd St. NE.

Tuesday, May 5, 12:10 pm: Kitty Yang performs the Fugue in E-flat Major (St. Anne,) Prelude and Fugue in A Minor, Pastorale, Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor and Toccata in F Major. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

Thursday, May 7, 8 pm: Organist Kali Malone presents a program titled "All Life Long." Malone crafts post-minimalist pieces that incorporate organ, drone, chamber ensemble and brass. Memorial Chapel at the University of Maryland. See flier below for ticket information.

Friday, May 8, 7:30 pm: Nathan Laube plays a rededication recital on the 1885 Roosevelt organ at St. Dominic Catholic Church, 630 E St. SE. Preceded by 6 pm vespers and 6:45 presentation by Michael Hart on "The Roosevelts,

America's celebrated 19th century organ builders." Reception to follow.

Saturday, May 9, 3:30 pm: Organist, composer and arranger Evelyn Simpson-Curenton is presented in concert by the Shiloh Baptist Church Senior Choir. This concert will feature her music for choir, solo voice, organ, piano, and flute. 9th and P Streets NW. Scan QR code on flier below.

Sunday, May 10, 4 pm: Michael Lodico plays a recital at the Franciscan Monastery, 1400 Quincy St. NE.

Sunday, May 17, 4 pm: Concert organist Amanda Mole presents a recital on the recently restored mechanical action organ at St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 6800 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Admission is free; donations gratefully accepted. A reception follows.

Sunday, May 31, 3:15 pm: Raymond Nagem, organist at Brick Presbyterian Church in New York City, plays a recital at St. Matthew's Cathedral, 1725 Rhode Island Ave NW.

Sunday, June 14, 3 pm: Alcee Chris plays a recital at St. Ann's Catholic Church, Tenley Circle NW.

Sunday, June 14, 4 pm: Todd Fickley, organist at National Presbyterian Church, plays a recital at St. Joseph's on Capitol Hill, 313 2nd St. NE.

Music at Midday



Kitty Yang, left and David Houston will perform at National City Christian Church this month.



National City Christian Church offers Music at Midday programs most Fridays from 12:15-1 pm. The church is at 5 Thomas Circle NW in DC.

May 1: Chinese pianist Junwen Liang (Philadelphia) presents “Romantic Dialogues across Time,” featuring music of Maurice Ravel, Florence Price, Stephen Hough, and Frédéric Chopin.

May 8: Violinist Sara Su Jones and pianist Tatyana Stepanova (Chicago) perform music composed by women, including Clara Schumann, Elena Kats-Chemin, Marguerite Canal, Florence Price, Lili Boulanger, Clarice Assad, and Cecile Chaminade.

May 15: Organist Kitty Yang (Springfield, VA) performs an all-Bach program concluding with the Prelude and Fugue in E-flat Major.

May 22: Maryland pianist Ching-Yi Lin performs the Eroica Variations of Ludwig van Beethoven and the Polonaise in A-flat Major by Frédéric Chopin.

May 29: Organist David Houston (College Park, MD) performs works by Judith Weir, Angela Kraft Cross, Louis Vierne, and Erik Santos.

Member spotlight on Sarah DeLacy

How did you become interested in the organ?

My father was a minister in the Korean Presbyterian Church and pastored congregations throughout the country. Each often had 10 or more weekly services including Sunday morning traditional worship and evening contemporary worship, weekday Lauds prayer, midweek services, Friday prayer meetings, and Saturday youth services. From the time I was 3, elders and congregants sponsored my education in voice, piano, and organ.



In many Korean churches, the pastor lives in the church building and so the sanctuary was quite literally my home. I remember running into the sanctuary each day exclaiming, “God, I am home!” before settling in to practice.

What is your educational and professional background?

I conservatory-trained in piano performance before completing my education in church music at Yonsei University. I was formally appointed to my first church music position at age 14. Following my father’s pastoral journey, I often played more than 500 services annually. I also conducted national children’s choirs, including the Samsung Dream Children’s Choir and a choir affiliated with Korea’s Christian television station, and instructed employee choirs at major corporations.

My relocation to the United States proved formative in an entirely new sense. Many Korean churches favor hymn-based improvisations or light arrangements. Now serving at Messiah Lutheran Church in Germantown, MD, I am drawing

fully on my training to offer classical sacred music in its proper liturgical and architectural context.

Why are you an AGO member?

I believe musicians need community beyond their own walls. Every church is its own gallery, and each organist is, in a way, painting a very particular canvas shaped by space, people, theology, and sound. The AGO gives me the chance to step outside my own gallery and stand alongside others who are doing serious, thoughtful work in theirs. It is a place where the organ is taken seriously as a living instrument, and where shared standards help keep our work grounded and honest.

What's an interesting fact about you?

I homeschool my two boys, who are in first and fourth grade. I am also involved in their Cub Scouting activities supporting my husband, who serves as the pack cubmaster. When our pack goes camping, I often spend all day Saturday helping children catch their first fish, preparing dinner over an open fire, and sleeping in a tent, only to wake early the next morning and head straight to church to play.

April organ crawl to Richmond



Members of the DC AGO chapter joined the Northern Virginia AGO chapter and the Organ Historical Society's Hilbus chapter for a field trip April 11 to visit the new Juget-Sinclair organ at the cathedral in Richmond, Va.

Job openings

Current job listings in the DMV are available at dcago.org under the Membership tab. To submit a listing, send an email to dcagochapter@gmail.com.



*The Well-tempered Clavier
as Bach Might Have Heard It*

Stephen Ackert, organist/pianist
Sunday, May 3, 2026, 4pm
Georgetown Lutheran Church
Washington, DC

Program

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Prelude and Fugue in B-flat Major, from The Well-tempered Clavier, Book 1

Prelude and Fugue in E-flat Minor, from The Well-tempered Clavier, Book 1

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Sonata No. 17 in D Minor, Op. 31, No. 2

Largo; allegro

Adagio

Allegretto

Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Nocturne in B-flat Minor, Op. 9, No. 1

Golnoub Khaleghi (1941-2021)

In Exile (1983)

Dance of the Dervish (1989)

25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

at The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center

Clarice Presents

Kali Malone, organ: *All Life Long*

Thursday, May 7, 2026 | 8PM at Memorial Chapel



In this one-of-a-kind recital held at the University of Maryland's Memorial Chapel, organist Kali Malone creates post-minimalist pieces that incorporate drone, chamber ensemble, brass orchestra, pipe organ and a resonant sense of the sacred.



***Scan to Learn More
& Buy Tickets***

The
CLARICE SMITH
Performing Arts Center

UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND

ST. DOMINIC CATHOLIC CHURCH
 HILBORNE L. ROOSEVELT ORGAN
 OPUS NO. 290, 1885
 REDEDICATION CONCERT



Friday, May 8 at 7:30 p.m.
 featuring internationally renowned organist
Nathan Laube

Laube has the perfect blend of imposing technique and refined musicality. His interpretative skills are impressive as is his range of expressions. A very articulate and perceptive artist who brings depth and perspective to his performances and makes the music come alive.

- 6:00 pm** Solemn Vespers
Break
- 6:45 pm** Presentation by Michael Hart: “The Roosevelts, America's celebrated nineteenth-century Organ Builders”
Break
- 7:30 pm** Concert by Nathan Laube
8:30 pm Conclusion & Reception

630 E St SW, Washington, DC 20024
 Use Metro: L'Enfant Plaza, Exit B

For more information, contact Noah Lovold:
music@stdominicchurch.org

THE SHILOH SENIOR CHOIR
presents in concert

Evelyn
Simpson-Curenton

Composer • Arranger • Organist

SATURDAY
9 May 2026 | 3:30 P.M

Scan the QR code
for featured artists
and additional
information




Joseph R. Simpson
PHOTOGRAPHY

Shiloh Baptist Church | 1500 Ninth Street, NW • Washington, DC 20001
Rev. George E. Mensah, Sr., MDiv, Interim Pastor
www.shilohbaptist.org

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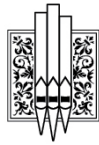
Week One: June 14–19, 2026 with Clinician Marianne Kim
Week Two: June 21–26, 2026 with Clinician Jan Kraybill

ORGAN & PIANO
Plus other church music topics led by specialists and clinicians!

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Visit our website at dcago.org.

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American Guild of Organists
District of Columbia Chapter



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