

American Guild of Organists Blue Ridge Chapter May 2026



End of Year Dinner and Installation of Chapter Officers

Our final spring 2026 program will be a **dinner and installation of chapter officers on May 19** at Nativity Lutheran in Arden at 6:00pm. The \$15 dinner (subsidized by the chapter) will be catered by Hubba Hubba BBQ of Flat Rock. Friends and guests are welcome!

RSVP by May 11 to Tom Bernard: tbernardjr1949 (at) gmail.com

6:00pm: Dinner catered by Hubba Hubba BBQ

7:00pm: Installation of Officers/Holden Evening Prayer

7:30pm: Dessert

From the Dean: Executive Nominations



The nominating committee is pleased to present the following slate of candidates for affirmation and installation onto the Blue Ridge Executive Committee at our annual meeting in May. The nominating committee was comprised of long-time members Gayle Stepp, Vance Yoder, Howard Bakken, and myself. I extend my sincere gratitude to them for their diligent and earnest efforts. We are pleased that we have an exceptional roster of talent, experience, and enthusiasm to guide the Blue Ridge Chapter into the future. A big thank you to these individuals who are willing to assume leadership roles.

Executive Committee Nominees

Dean: Brennan Szafron

Treasurer: Thomas Bernard

Registrar: Thomas Bernard

At large: Burton Bumgarner (6/27)

At large: Tate Addis (6/27)

At large: James Cassarino (6/28)

Website and Newsletter Editor: David Anderson

Sub Dean: Ed Hauck

Secretary: Daniel Gainey

Past Dean: Tim Shepard

At large: Hunter Holbert (6/27)

At large: James Taulbee (6/28)

Nathan Laube Recital

St. James Episcopal Church, Hendersonville • May 14, 7:00pm



World-renowned concert organist Nathan Laube will give a recital at St James on Thursday, May 14 at 7:00 p.m.. Mr. Laube is Associate Professor of Organ at the Eastman School of Music and has given recitals worldwide to great critical acclaim. He will be playing the church's Harrison & Harrison organ in the beautiful neo-Gothic splendor of St. James with a stunning reverberant acoustic. No tickets are required for this event. The audience is cordially invited to a catered reception in Stillwell Hall following the program. This recital is part of the Linda Lassiter Hill Organ Recital Series which is in memory of Roy Lassiter, Jr., Linda's father and William J. Hill, Linda's late husband, for his unflinching support of her musical career.

Bev Ward

It is with sadness that we announce the death of longtime WNC organist and friend Bev Ward on Wednesday, March 18. Please pray for the repose of Bev's soul and for God's loving comfort for his family and friends in their grief. Funeral arrangements and an obituary will be announced when they become available.



Is your membership current? In addition to the superlative programming you've come to expect from the Blue Ridge chapter, your membership includes a subscription to *The American Organist*, **the only professional journal visible by the crew of Artemis II!** Please visit www.agohq.org to check on the status of your membership, or contact chapter registrar Tom Bernard: Tbernardjr1949 (at) gmail.com

NATIONAL CONVENTION

July 6 – 10, 2026

Hyatt Regency St. Louis at The Arch



The Blue Ridge Ringers PRESENT

POP!



GO THE HANDBELLS

Sunday, May 3, 4:00 p.m.

Trinity Presbyterian Church, Hendersonville, NC

Wednesday, May 13, 2:00 p.m.

Trinity View Assisted Living, Arden, NC*

Wednesday, May 6, 2:00 p.m.

Tryon Estates Retirement Center, Columbus, NC*

Sunday, May 17, 4:00 p.m.

Central United Methodist Church, Asheville, NC

Sunday, May 10, 4:00 p.m.

St. John in the Wilderness, Flat Rock, NC

Monday, May 18, 7:00 p.m.

Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Tryon, NC

* This concert is at a senior facility and residents are given seating priority.
Please check with the facility before attending to confirm that the concert is open to the public.

CONTACT US

For information, or to arrange an appearance by the Blue Ridge Ringers, contact: theblueridgeringers@gmail.com, or call Donnie Halter, 828-577-1297. Find us on the web at blueridgeringers.org, or on Facebook at facebook.com/theblueridgeringers. Our concerts are FREE, but donations are gratefully accepted. The Blue Ridge Ringers is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation.



Open Positions

First United Methodist Church, 190 E. Franklin Blvd. Gastonia NC 28053. www.fumcgastonia.org 704.864.4371; fax 704.864.2076 Part-time organist [15-20 hrs. week] for 1,500-member church in metro Charlotte area with a tradition of excellence in music ministry and mission to the community. Two Sunday morning services, weekly choir rehearsals, festival services, concerts, weddings/funerals. Accompany Chancel Choir, soloists and ensembles. Bachelor's degree required (organ major preferred, graduate degree optional), with additional study in sacred music a plus. 5-7 years' experience as an organist preferred. 73-rank, three manual Möller organ (1956/renovated 1997) and antiphonal organ in sanctuary; Cornell Zimmer organ (2006) in chapel. The applicant should demonstrate knowledge and commitment to traditional and contemporary music of the Church within a liturgical, United Methodist context. Come and join an outstanding ministry team. Salary commensurate with experience. Please e-mail cover letter, resume and references to James C. Smith, Search Committee Chair, at beanman@vnet.net . Recordings/videos optional but encouraged.



St. Edmund Campion Catholic Church is a recently founded Roman Catholic parish mission of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter. The parish is seeking an organist or pianist to accompany its 11am Sung Mass on Sundays. While an organist would be ideal, a pianist could use just one rank without pedals for hymn and anthem accompaniment. The parish is also open to students currently learning the organ but who can provide basic keyboard accompaniment while developing more robust organ skills. In addition to the 11am Sunday Mass each week, if the candidate is interested in additional work, the parish is open to having simple hymns and improvisation at the 8:30am Mass either weekly or periodically (currently a said Mass). On occasion, the parish also has services for feasts/Holy Days, weddings & funerals, and special programs. The ideal candidate is proficient in sight-reading music, knowledgeable of traditional Catholic and/or Anglican liturgical music, capable of advanced improvisation and will aid the music director in music programming. Compensation will be based upon the rates established by the Parish for participation in each Mass and rehearsal, taking into consideration the candidate's experience and familiarity with the liturgy. Mileage may be considered as a part of compensation. The incumbent shall perform these duties in a professional manner consistent with the standards expected by the Church. Interested applicants should email wncord@gmail.com

St John's Lutheran Evangelical Lutheran Church, 740 N Center St Statesville, NC 28677**Job Posting: Temporary Organist/Pianist (Part-Time/Interim)**

St. John's is currently seeking a temporary organist/pianist to provide musical leadership for worship services during a transition period. This interim role is ideal for a skilled church musician who can support weekly worship by playing hymns, liturgical music, and service preludes/postludes on our Schantz pipe organ and piano. Responsibilities: Play for Sunday morning worship services; Rehearse with choir (if applicable) on one week-night; collaborate with the Pastor and Worship Committee for music planning; Provide music for occasional special services as needed

Requirements: Proficiency on both organ and piano; Familiarity with Lutheran liturgical worship is desirable; Ability to work collaboratively and reliably

This is a temporary, part-time paid position. Compensation will be determined based on relevant experience.

To apply or inquire, please contact us at: stjohnsluth740@gmail.com

Job Posting: Organist and Director of Music (Part-Time)

St. John's Lutheran Church, a vibrant congregation located in historic Statesville, NC, is seeking a part-time Organist and Director of Music to lead a dynamic and Christ-centered music ministry. The ideal candidate will be a skilled organist and choral director who is passionate about glorifying God through sacred music and enhancing the congregation's worship life through hymns, liturgy, choral offerings, and instrumental music.

We are blessed with a Schantz pipe organ, a dedicated choir, and a congregation that deeply values music in worship. This role offers an opportunity to shape a music ministry rooted in Lutheran tradition while embracing musical diversity and congregational participation.

Key Responsibilities Include: Planning and leading music for Sunday worship, festivals, and special services; Directing the Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir; Collaborating with the Pastor and Worship & Music Committee; Rehearsing weekly and preparing an annual music plan; Engaging guest musicians and supporting congregational musical growth

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in music or equivalent experience; Strong organ and piano proficiency; Knowledge of Lutheran liturgical worship and choral direction; Positive Christian leadership and excellent communication skills

This is a salaried part-time position with a flexible schedule. Compensation will be determined based on relevant experience.

To apply, please email resume to: stjohnsluth740@gmail.com

St. John's Lutheran Church
740 North Center Street
Statesville, NC 28677
704-873-0222



Blue Ridge AGO Chapter

www.blueridgeago.org

Founded
August 15, 2013

OFFICERS

Timothy Shepard
Dean

Brennan Szafron
Sub Dean

Thomas Bernard
Treasurer and Registrar

JC Cecconi
Secretary

Rhonda Furr
Hunter Holbert
Michael Helman
Tate Addis
Members at Large

Vance Yoder
Past Dean

David Anderson
Newsletter Editor

American Guild of Organists

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New York, NY 10115
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About Us

Our mission is to enrich lives through organ and choral music. To achieve this, we encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music; inspire, educate, and offer certification for organists and choral conductors; provide networking, fellowship, and mutual support; nurture future generations of organists; promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles; and engage wider audiences with organ and choral music.

Area Organs

Christ School, Arden NC



Cornel Zimmer (Opus 156, 2020)

Originally Schantz Organ Co. (Opus 1919, 1989)

21 ranks 3 manuals

