

American Guild of Organists Blue Ridge Chapter

September 2024

www.blueridgeago.org



2024 National Convention Report *aka* I Left My Harmonic Flute in San Francisco

San Francisco AGO produced a very successful National Convention this past summer. I was grateful to be able to attend and am happy to report that the pipe organ world is alive and well. It was affirming to observe that registrant numbers were up from the previous National Convention, a good trend. High cost has ushered in changes in conventions and convention planning. That's a positive thing. I attended the National Annual Meeting and the meeting of the Southeastern Region. Both levels of our organizations are in great shape, capable hands, with promising futures. I'm an optimist!

The hotel was very conveniently located and the committee was able to negotiate a very reasonable hotel rate. Not much else was cheap! There was an abundance of places to eat close by in every direction. The Marriott Marquis served truly well to create workshop spaces, a big exhibit hall, receptions, reading sessions, etc.. There was a nice diversity of workshops available. "Fundraising," "Making Hymns Spectacular," "Meet the Composers," and "Mindfulness" were among my favorites.



And there were beaucoup performances! Faythe Freese from our Southeastern region presented a Multimedia Organ concert at Grace Cathedral where lights, dancing, and screen projection added new layers to her brilliant playing and program. I finally heard Organ Mistress Janette Fishell play after hearing about her legendary technique for decades. Ken Cowen, with the gifts of an orchestrator, played on the E.M. Skinner at Trinity & St Peter's Church. The convention also featured its hometown (international) group Chanticleer. The musical highlight for me was hearing Olivier Latry and Shin-Young Lee play Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" in its entirety from the composer's two-piano arrangement. The instrument was the 2024 Hupalo & Repasky Organ at St. Ignatius Church. THAT was spectacular!

I followed the commissions with interest, even listening to the composers' pre-convention interviews. The convention commissioned ten new pieces that were performed at various performance venues through the week. They were diverse in style and approach. They were mostly secular, only a few would fit a Sunday morning worship service. I commend the AGO for their commitment to new music.

It is a brand new year here in Western North Carolina, the other side of the country from San Francisco. I can't help but think what a great area we could offer as a regional convention, but that's just my idea. I am noting a really great line up of programs that my colleagues are gearing up for next season. In fact we are a growing chapter, which is such an exciting thing. Show up at the meetings so that we can meet each other and celebrate the good things that we are doing in the world and at our churches!

Tim Shepard, Past-Dean

September Meeting

September 21 · 11:00am · \$5

Join us for an informal time of playing the organ for each other with brief comments/discussion followed by a meal. Along the way we will have introductions and get-acquainted coverage.

First Baptist Church, Hendersonville
312 5th Ave W, Hendersonville, NC 28739

RSVP to Tom Bernard: tbernard (at) knology.net

SacredMusicDownloads.com



Handbell, Choral, Keyboard music
for music ministries

By Timothy Shepard

www.blueridgeago.org

How to Inspire Congregational Hymn Singing

*Introductions, Improvisations,
Interludes, Modulations, Reharmonizations*

October 26 · 10:00am
Calvary Episcopal Church · Fletcher, NC

As church musicians, most of us have little opportunity to hear other organists in worship. At best, we attend the occasional service playing sessions at organists' conventions, visit a few other worship services during the year, and read books on the topic. Sometimes this "vacuum" results in using the same formulas and comfortable routines in our service hymns. This program will include practical ideas for enhancing your hymn playing. These ideas have been developed over five decades of service playing, teaching, workshops, tips from others, untold hours of experimentation, and trial and error during worship. It includes old standards, bending the rules, and yes – sometimes breaking the rules! Join us for this fun program. Your congregations will be the beneficiaries!

Dr. Rhonda Furr, a Sylva, NC native, taught music at Houston Christian University for 33 years where her primary teaching responsibilities were musicology and organ. She also taught applied piano, church music, composer studies, and music education. She was the university consultant for HCU's 58-rank Létourneau pipe organ. Upon retirement, she was named both HCU Professor Emerita and HCU University Organist Emerita.

During her career, Rhonda served as organist in Baptist, Presbyterian, Episcopal and Methodist churches, serving at First Presbyterian Church, Houston, from 2004-2021. During her tenure at FPC, she gave over 40 after-worship organ concerts to educate, inspire, and even entertain the congregation. Rhonda's passion for inspired hymn singing led her to write many descants for the FPC Chancel Choir. She currently serves as organist at First United Methodist Church in Waynesville, NC. Rhonda was the AGO National Convention Coordinator in 2016 and held various leadership positions in the Houston chapter. She has served as an organ consultant, clinician and recitalist in several states. Her compositions for organ are hymn-inspired and published by Fred Bock Music.



Dr. Furr received her Bachelor and Master of Music Education degrees from Western Carolina University and her Doctor of Musical Arts from Southern Seminary in Louisville KY. She is married to Dr. James Furr, President Emeritus of Houston Graduate School of Theology. In retirement Rhonda and James continue in ministry through their church and other organizations. They enjoy home projects, hiking, and spending time with their four children, eleven grandchildren, and precious dog, Abby.

Free Music for Autumn!

Gaël Liardon (1973-2018) was a Swiss musician who taught music pedagogy at the Geneva Conservatory. Many of his compositions are freely available online; here are two of them, reproduced by permission under the Creative Commons license. https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Liardon,_Ga%EBI

The first, perfect for thanksgiving or other celebratory services, is a very short composition on “Now Thank We All Our God.” You could play this with a full registration at a stately tempo and have the perfect short but festive prelude for days when there are a lot of other things going on in the service! It would also work well as a hymn introduction (do check the hymnal key first, though...) Or maybe you’re about to start the final stanza, look in the mirror, and see that the procession has barely started: play this on a loud reed stop for an exciting interlude, and the verger will know that you’re an old pro!

Nun danket alle Gott

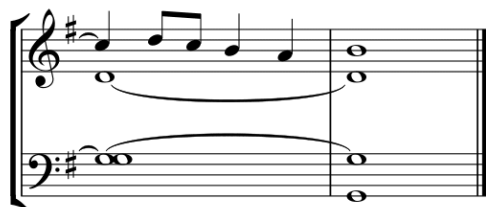
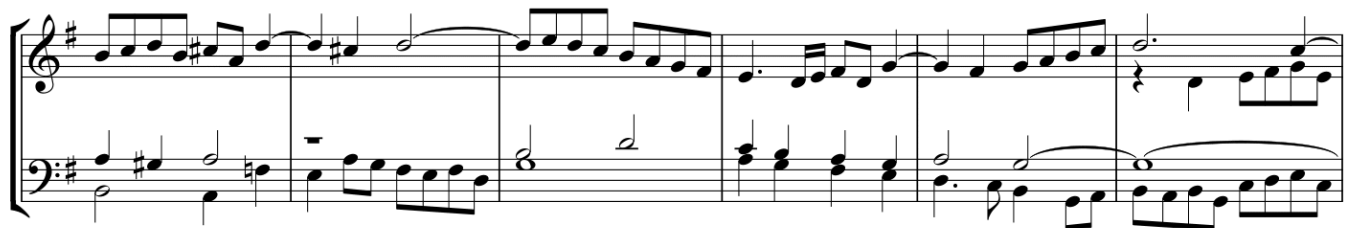
Gaël Liardon
15.2.11

The musical score for "Nun danket alle Gott" is presented in three systems. Each system contains a treble staff and a bass staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major), and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is written in the treble staff, while the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The piece is a short, festive prelude.

The next is based on “Deck Thyself My Soul With Gladness,” appropriate for any service that includes communion. The simple three-part texture makes it easy to play, but notice that the melody is in the middle voice. You can play this on manuals only with a little prior planning. Since Liardon left us no registration or tempo markings, flex your creative muscles! It works well as a slow, meditative piece played on string stops; you might also play it fast and lively on some flutes. If you’re comfortable with pedals, try it on three manuals: swell 8’ flute, great 8’ principal, pedal 16’, swell-pedal. Above all remember to pay attention to that melody line, and do your best to make the congregation hear it.

Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele

Gaël Liardon
7-8.7.12





American Guild of
ORGANISTS

National Headquarters and The American Organist Magazine
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AGO Organ Scholar Program

The purpose of the AGO Organ Scholar Program is to create a skills-based investment in young organists who have a strong interest in church music. The scholar will acquire practical experience through an immersive full-time church music program. The host institution/church should have an active and vibrant music program with a proven and capable leader. In total, the Organ Scholar will receive a salary of at least \$30,000, housing, and health insurance.

Financial Obligation of AGO National Headquarters

- **\$20,000:** AGO National Headquarters will make ten monthly payments of \$2,000 each to the Host Institution/Church who will apply them to the Organ Scholar's salary.

Financial Obligations of Host Institution/Church

- **\$10,000:** The Host Institution will provide at least \$10,000 towards the Organ Scholar's salary.
- **Health Insurance:** The Host Institution will provide or contribute to health insurance for the Organ Scholar and abide by employment practices such as withholding taxes and FICA.
- **Housing:** The Host Institution will provide housing for the Organ Scholar. This should be described as a guesthouse or apartment with private living quarters at one location for the duration of the Organ Scholar's employment.

Additional Requirements for the Host Institution:

- **A Strong Music Ministry** that is broad, dynamic, and able to offer considerable amounts of hands-on experience to a scholar. Any denomination is welcome.
- **A Commitment to Mentoring** the scholar actively and intentionally.
- **A Safe and Healthy Work Environment** by abiding by the [AGO Code of Ethics](#) and the [Policy Against Harassment](#).

Application Process and Deadlines:

- Application Deadline: **September 30, 2024**
- Online Application Form: agohq.org/organ-scholar-program-hosting/.
- The AGO Committee on Scholarships will review the applications and recommend a Host Institution by November 1, 2024



Questions: Email Organscholar@agohq.org or Call (212) 870-2311, ext. 4320

Open Positions

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Hickory NC



Director of Worship and Music Ministry, Full-time with benefits
The Director of Worship and Music Ministry will assist in worship and provide worship music through the HTLC vocal choirs and instrumental ensembles. As a member of the staff of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church with specific responsibilities in the area of church music, the Director of Worship and Music Ministry will coordinate with the Pastor(s) and the Worship and Music Ministry Team in the planning and implementation of the liturgical and other special worship services in accordance with Lutheran tradition and practices. Primary Duties: Work with the pastor(s) to plan and coordinate worship services. Coordinate the use of liturgical resources, choose liturgical music and

prayers, select hymnody, and create bulletin templates/written drafts of worship for editing and publication. Select music appropriate liturgically for Lutheran worship and musically suitable for the choirs. Provide choir anthems, vocal or instrumental ensembles, or solos for all regular worship services. Obtain copyright permission for all hymns, anthems, liturgy, prayers, etc. for use in worship and livestream. Develop and Direct vocal choirs for adults, youth, and children. Coordinate all music ministries for children, youth, and adults including recruitment of leaders. Supervise the Director of Handbells and Instrumental Music. Serve as pianist for the 8:30 a.m. Sunday service. Communicate and promote Music Ministries by disseminating information in various communication formats, and in coordination with other music staff. Participate with other staff in weekly staff meetings. Work with other music staff to strengthen youth participation in Education Ministry, Youth Ministry, Worship, and Music Ministries. Manage funds allocated for music and worship. Plan and coordinate annual budget requests. Supervise music expenses. Coordinate maintenance of all musical instruments, with the exception of the church organs. Meet with Worship and Music Ministry as an ex officio member (with voice and vote). www.htlchickory.org/

Skyland United Methodist Church, Arden NC

Organ and Piano Accompanist

Position Summary: We are seeking a part-time skilled organist and piano accompanist to join our worship staff. This position will support our worship services through music, providing accompaniment for congregational singing, choir performances, and other special musical performances.

Primary Duties: Provide accompaniment by playing the organ and/or piano to accompany congregational hymns, choir anthems, soloists, and other musicians during worship services. Select appropriate musical pieces in collaboration with the music director or worship leader and prepare adequately for services. Availability to attend rehearsals and services, which may include evenings, weekends, and holidays. Actively participate in rehearsals with the choir, soloists, and other musicians as needed. Provide music for special services including holidays and other church services upon request. Collaborate with the music director, worship team, and other musicians to enhance the overall musical experience during worship. Provide or assist in arranging accompaniment for funerals, memorial services, and weddings on organ/piano as needed. For more information, contact Erin Brady, SPR Chair: erinRbrady@gmail.com or 828-808-5324



St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church, Candler NC



Director of Music Ministry. The Director of Music Ministry will inspire musical participation by the congregation during Roman Catholic liturgical worship through the appropriate selection of music and the proper training and direction of choir, cantors, and instrumentalists. Part time position requiring 8-12 hours each week. More hours may be required during certain Liturgical seasons. Responsibilities: Ensure that the musical presentation at Mass and other events is of a sufficient quality to inspire robust participation by the congregation and enhances their worship experience.

First Baptist Church, Forest City NC

First Baptist Church of Forest City is looking for an organist and/or pianist for Wednesday evening rehearsal and Sunday morning worship. The salary is \$250 to \$400 a week depending on responsibilities and experience. There is also the possibility of an internship for a young accompanist interested in church music as a career. Contact: Diane Nelson; Minister of Music, First Baptist Church Forest City NC.; 828-447-6709



Fletcher United Methodist, Fletcher, NC



Fletcher United Methodist Church is seeking a part-time Organist/Pianist. Under the direction of the Director of Music and the Pastor, this person is responsible for the planning and participation of organ and piano music in support of the worship services and programs of the church. He/she ensures that the music is presented in a manner that preaches the Gospel of Jesus Christ, provides glory to God, and inspires holy worship at all worship services. The Organist/Pianist will accompany rehearsals of the Chancel Choir one weekday evening per week (from early September through early June) and provide a year-round musical component for both Sunday worship services (8:30 and 11:00), as well as special worship services throughout the year (i.e. Good Friday, Christmas Eve, etc.) Occasional assistance may also be needed for our Anticipate Ancient-Modern services, which occur on Wednesday evenings during Advent and Lent. A degree in organ and

previous church-related music experience is preferred. For more information, email Blaine Russell, Director of Music: [blaine \(at\) fletcherumc.org](mailto:blaine(at)fletcherumc.org)

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Clyde NC

Our Savior Lutheran Church in Clyde, NC is looking for a part-time organist to play one or two Sundays per month, as well as special services throughout the year (Good Friday, Christmas, etc). OSLC is a small congregation with a traditional, liturgical worship service. We only need someone to play for the church service, no choir or other duties are needed. We are happy to work with various skill levels, whether a young student looking to grow as an organist, a retired organist still interested in playing occasionally, or anything in between! Compensation is per service, and will be based on experience. For more information please contact: office@oursaviorlutherannc.com or (828) 456-6493.



St. John's Church, Marion NC**Organist/Church Musician (Part Time)**

Church musician will provide music and musical leadership at the regular Sunday services of the Parish, and for Holy Week, Christmas, and additional services. Musician will assist the Rector in the selection of hymns, anthems, and service music. Provide music for other occasions as requested. The ideal candidate will provide direction for a seasonal choir, handbells and other musical groups as needed and work to develop, and encourage, small ensembles, soloists and other talented musicians within the congregation. St. John's has a 2007, three manual Rodgers Allegiant digital organ. Qualifications: Knowledge of church music and organ repertoire for church services. Experience within the Episcopal/Anglican tradition preferred or willingness to learn. Proficiency in organ and piano. Experience directing a choir or ensemble (ideal) Self-motivated with a collegial style of leadership Part time salaried position requiring an average of 9-12 hours per week. Additional hours required for special services. Salary is \$805 per month (\$10,200 per year) 4 Sundays off per year \$250 towards continuing education per year. To apply send cover letter and resume via email to Rev. Erin Kirby, [stjohnsmarionclergy \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsmarionclergy@gmail.com), or as a hardcopy to St. John's Church, Attention Rev. Kirby, P.O. Box 968, Marion, NC 28752. Position open until filled



Sing!
in majestic
worship spaces
Duke Chapel

Learn!
with experienced
presenters
Tom Trenney

Join Us!
Summer 2025

Enjoy
wonderful
ensembles
Raleigh Ringers

For all that is to be

Association of
Lutheran Church
Musicians
**2025 National Worship
and Music Conference**

**August 4 - 8, 2025
Raleigh-Durham, NC**

A continuing education conference for all
musicians, pastors and worship leaders.

**Holy Name
of Jesus**

Voces8



Brevard College Fine Arts Fall Events 2024

Events in the Scott Concert Hall, Porter Center
More information at brevard.edu

Music Faculty Showcase
September 8, 3:00pm

Wind Ensemble Concert
September 23, 7:30pm

Choral Concert
October 10, 7:30pm

Organ Recital by Daniel Sansone
November 3, 3:00pm

Lessons and Carols Service
December 7, 7:30pm

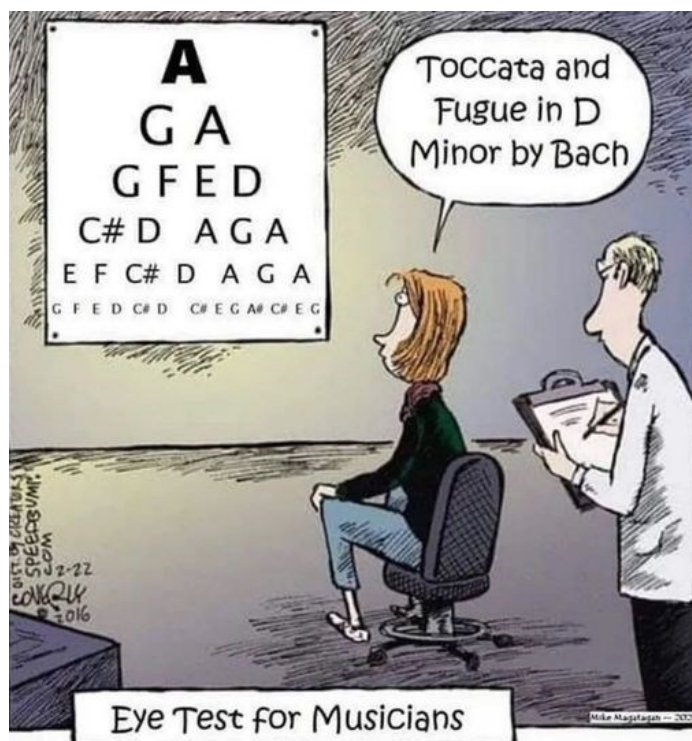
Bach Christmas Oratorio
December 12, 7:30pm
Brevard College Chamber Singers and
Transylvania Choral Society

Asheville Chamber Music Series

Tickets and information at:
ashevillechambermusic.org

ensemble 4.1
November 1, 7:30pm

Experience the communicative power and intoxicating stage dynamic of this widely acclaimed ensemble, self-described as the world's only "Piano Windtet." Praised by critics as a "breath of fresh air," ensemble 4.1 is devoted to presenting original masterpieces in a new light, while also discovering and performing rarely played compositions from the turn of the 19th to 20th centuries.



= PAN HARMONIA =

Dances in Nature

Jessica Schaeffer harp · Kate Steinbeck flute

This program leans toward modern lyrical – from Leonard Bernstein to South Carolina waltz-composer Andrew Levin and mystical Alan Hovhaness – with a common thread weaving throughout. What thread is that? Kate and Jessica's love for what they find beautiful, surprising, sublime, and exciting (and sometimes challenging!). Join in on a journey into the breadth and depth of life, distilled in music!

Friday, September 27, 7 pm · Black Mountain Presbyterian Church
Sunday, September 29, 3 pm · First Presbyterian Church of Asheville

Sonidos Picantes

Kate Steinbeck flute · Special Guest Maria Luisa de la Cerda Rohde flute & piccolo
Rosalind Buda bassoon · Amy Brucksch guitar · Byron Hedgepeth percussion

Join us for a fun and beautiful afternoon of chamber music for 2 flutes, bassoon (Asheville only), guitar and percussion! This program will feature *Cinco Canciones* and *Concierto Indio* by Mexican-American composer Alice Gomez, swinging sounds of American icons Alec Wilder and Lou Harrison, and magical sororities of Swedish composer Frederik Holm.

Saturday, October 26, 3 pm · Greer Center for the Arts, SC
Sunday, October 27, 3 pm · First Presbyterian Church of Asheville

For more information and to reserve seats, visit www.panharmonia.org



Is your AGO membership current? In addition to the great programming from the Blue Ridge chapter, your membership includes this newsletter, and a subscription to *The American Organist*, **the glossiest magazine around**. Please visit agohq.org to check on the status of your membership, or contact the registrar.

Blue Ridge AGO Chapter

www.blueridgeago.org

Founded
August 15, 2013

OFFICERS

Vance Yoder
Dean

Thomas Bernard
Treasurer and Sub Dean

JC Cecconi
Secretary

Rhonda Furr
Timothy Wissler
Hunter Holbert
Michael Helman
Members at Large

Tim Shepard
Past Dean and Registrar

David Anderson
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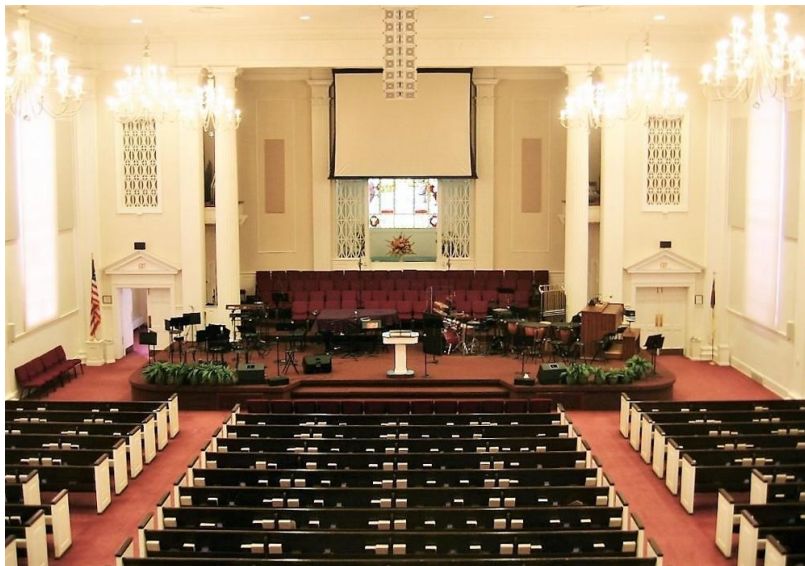


About Us

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

Come hear this instrument in person at our September meeting!



First Baptist Church, Hendersonville NC
Casavant Frères Ltée. (Opus 2901, 1966) · 3 manuals, 45 ranks

