

THE OPUS

SEPTEMBER 2020



Volume 37 – Issue 1
The official publication of the St. Louis Chapter
of the American Guild of Organists



Rick Burk (CAGO)

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Under “normal” circumstances I would be writing to you now about the end of the summer months with words of encouragement as we return to our weekly rehearsals and other tasks. But I suspect that for most, if not all of us, this year, September will not seem much different from July as regards to worship and music planning, preparation and performance. The “new normal” has led to new ways of doing worship and that will probably continue for some time going forward. So, let me encourage each of us to continue to explore the best ways we may lead our congregants in worship in the coming months with the various challenges we face.

As with our individual situations, so is the chapter struggling to figure out what the upcoming program year will entail. We certainly won’t be able to gather together around the meal table to share time with one another as we have in the past. Nevertheless, the program planning committee under the current Sub-Deans, Cathy Cooper, have been working to benefit our membership the recommendations the distancing. Heather will be about what is planned in her OPUS article this month and in future months.

“...continue to explore
the best ways we may
lead our congregants in
worship”

leadership of former and
Cassy and Heather Martin
diligently to design programs
and at the same time, respect
regarding safe, physical
sharing more information

Finally, I hope that each of you have been able to find some source of personal growth and fulfillment even while feeling isolated so much of the time. I personally managed to find more time to catch up on reading the many books and journals which had been piling up in my office. I also participated in the virtual conference of the Hymn Society. Perhaps you, too, have found similar ways of seeing to your own growth and health as a musician. Hopefully, one of those ways was listening to *Organfest 2020*. If you were not able to tune in during the week of July 20th, all of the programs have been archived and you may watch and listen to them by visiting here:

[ORGANFEST 2020](#).

Let us keep the faith and continually move forward in the days ahead.

Peace and grace,

Rick Burk (CAGO), Dean
St. Louis AGO Chapter

Convention Coordinator

2026 National Convention



Burnell Hackman

Even though the National AGO Convention in St. Louis is six years away, planning has begun.

Two hotels in St. Louis were asked to submit bids for the convention. The National Headquarters and ConferenceDirect, the firm hired by the National Office to guide us through this process is looking over a contract with a hotel. As soon as the contract is signed, we will let you know.

July 6-10, 2026 will be the dates of the convention. Pre-convention activities will begin on Sunday, July 5th. Both hotels under consideration are offering the convention rate three days before and after the convention so we will encourage conventioners to come early and enjoy *Fair St. Louis* and our Independence Day Celebration. 2026 marks the 250th birthday of America and what better place to celebrate than the Gateway to the West!!!

I was named Convention Coordinator by our Executive Committee and was approved by the National Council this past spring. Officers of the Convention and all committee members will also need approval by both bodies as we continue forward.

On September 20th and 21st we will have two socially distanced in person brainstorming sessions. On September 22nd, we will hold a Zoom-based brainstorming session. All meetings will begin at 6:30pm. (Subject to change.)

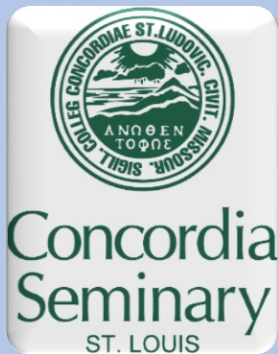
At these meetings, members of the chapter will be given the opportunity to indicate in writing their preferences regarding areas in which they would like to work. They will also be asked to suggest venues and performers for the convention. Those members who are unable to attend the brainstorming sessions will be invited, through the chapter newsletter and emails, to submit their preferences so that all will have an equal opportunity. Please understand that not everyone will get his or her first choice, and that not everyone will be appointed as an actual committee member, though every effort should be made to assign members to volunteer responsibilities in the areas for which they have expressed preferences.

Another way you can support the convention is by donating. All donations made between now and the convention will accumulate and listed in that category in the convention program. You can also donate via our website when you renew your membership via [Oncard](#) or mailing a check to:

Mike Kaberline, Treasurer
2 Holly Ridge Court
Swansea, Illinois 62226-2322

This is a **GREAT** opportunity to showcase St. Louis, our fantastic churches, our exceptional organs, and great people. I pray **EVERY** member of our chapter takes an active role in the convention. Please watch this space or visit our [convention page](#) on the chapter website for continuous updates!!!

Burnell Hackman
Convention Coordinator



2020-2021 Program Year

(NOTE: All Programs/Times/Locations subject to change)
For the latest updates – check our web-site:
www.agostlouis.org

SEPTEMBER 20-22, 2020

2026 National Convention Planning Sessions

Peace Lutheran Church
6:30pm (Details on page 6)

OCTOBER 25, 2020

Carillon Concert
Concordia Seminary
3:00pm

NOVEMBER 15, 2020

Choral Evensong
Honoring the Ministry of Church Musicians
Church of St. Michael & St. George
5:00pm

NOVEMBER 16, 2020

Choral Reading Session
Music for Christmas and Easter
MorningStar Music Publishers (Virtual Event)
7:00pm

JANUARY 8, 2021

Post Christmas Gathering
Host: Rick Burk

FEBRUARY 13, 2021

February Flourish
Virtual Event ONLY
8:30a-Noon

MARCH 15, 2021

Michael T.C. Hey
Associate Director of Music/Organist
St. Patrick's Cathedral (New York)
First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood
Time: TBA

MAY 19, 2021

End of Year Meeting
St. Louis Fox Theatre
Time: TBA

Sub-Dean



St. Louis AGO Chapter



Heather Martin Cooper (CAGO)

Dear Members:

Greetings to you during this....what shall we call it? Coronatide has been rolling off my tongue of late. For some of us working in church or synagogue, we have been providing music for in-person worship. For others, we lead music for a virtual congregation. Some of us are in the thick of back to school efforts and the various other activities that normally 'start up' at this time. For all of us, things are very different than they were in September 2019. Some things just cannot happen at all, and our routines may have been drastically altered. At the same time, I see signs of hope in every area of my life, and I pray you are similarly heartened as you experience the comforts of those things that have not changed as well as the new realities in your life.

I am delighted that our AGO program year has as much shape as it does. A hearty thanks goes to Cathy Cassy and her program committee, and those members who have graciously agreed to continue. Chapter events are outlined on page four. Some of these are already envisioned as "virtual only" offerings, and others are planned to be "in-person." Of course, these events could be changed as we get closer. In any case, whether we can meet in person much or not, let us do our best to *BE* hope for one another as we greet each new challenge that life presents.

Wishing you a good laugh each day, I am faithfully yours.

Heather Martin Cooper (CAGO), Sub-Dean
St. Louis AGO Chapter

OFFICERS:

Dean – Rick Burk (CAGO)
Sub-Dean – Heather Martin Cooper (CAGO)
Secretary – Cathy Cassy
Treasurer – Mike Kaberline
Past Dean – Burnell Hackman

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Bob Chamberlin
Tim Jansen
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Dr. Steven Ball
J.D. Brooks
Dr. William Sullivan
Class of 2023
Gaye Anderson
Andrew Peters
Shawn Portell

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

2026 Convention Coordinator
Burnell Hackman
Auditor
Denis Doelling
Dinner Reservations
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Directory Editor
Al Black
Educational Resources
Dr. Barbara Raedeke
Exam Coordinator
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2020 – 2021

This Month's Event

St. Louis AGO Chapter 2020-2021



2026 National Convention Meeting Sessions

This month, you are invited to attend one, two, or all three meeting sessions for the 2026 Nation AGO Convention at Peace Lutheran Church. At these meetings, we will be “brainstorming” ideas about the convention and other information will be shared as well. You are requested to REGISTER on-line in order to attend. We hope that every member of the St. Louis Chapter will get involved so that this convention will be a great success. Information about meeting dates, times and how/where to register is located below. PLEASE encourage your fellow chapter members to be involved. Please read the article by Convention Coordinator Burnell Hackman on page three for more details. We hope you are able to join us for this exciting event. For more information, please contact: [Burnell Hackman](mailto:burnellhackman@gmail.com) (burnellhackman@gmail.com)

MEETING INFORMATION:

September 20 – 6:30pm (In-person)

September 21 – 6:30pm (In-person)

September 22 – 6:30pm (VIRTUAL ONLY)

Location: Peace Lutheran Church
737 Barracksview Road
St. Louis, MO 63125

You will need to register for which ever session(s) you want to attend.

Registration will be open on September 1, 2020

REGISTER AT: www.agostlouis.org/2026-national-convention

For those who register for the VIRTUAL session – a zoom link will be e-mailed to you on the morning of September 22nd.



IN MEMORY



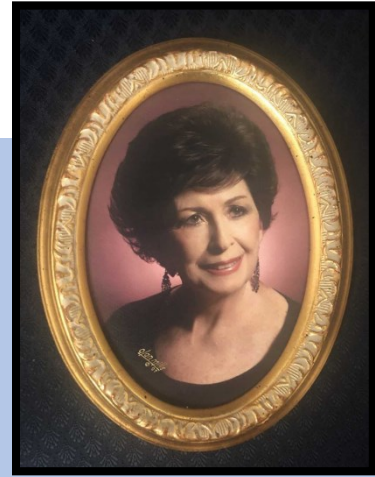
Emma "Ruth" Ayers, age 87, passed away at the Fred and Harriet Taylor nursing home in Bath, New York on June 10, 2020 due to COVID-19, Alzheimer's disease, and visitation restrictions that hastened her failure to thrive. Ruth was born on July 23, 1932 in Canton, MO. She was preceded in death by her ex-spouse, and her brother Joseph T. Smith.

Ruth spent many years in Canton, and then moved to St. Louis in 1992. She was a musician who shared her talents, serving as Music Director and Organist/Pianist for churches in Canton and in St. Louis. She played for many events including weddings, funerals, graduation ceremonies, musicals and pageants. She was a dedicated member and accompanist for the Canton Festival Theatre in Canton and the River City Pops in St. Louis. She did not hesitate to share her much sought-after knowledge of music with adults and children alike.

Ruth was civic-minded and donated her time and money to those causes that empowered women, and that promoted equal rights, environmental protections, and health care for all.

Ruth is survived by her five children, 11 grandchildren, one great grandchild, and her beloved cat Pumpkin. She was known as "Aunt Ruth" to Sybil, Kent, Joan, Bill and Bob. Her vested interest in each of them helped to shape their lives in some way, and they are better for having known her.

Ruth relocated to Bath in 2011 to be near her daughter as she needed assistance with mobility and healthcare. Her endearing personality, sharp wit, musical talent and generosity earned her many new friends. As one of her friends at the nursing home said, "I didn't know your mother for very long, but she just "zapped" me, and I loved her...God Bless Her Sweet Soul."



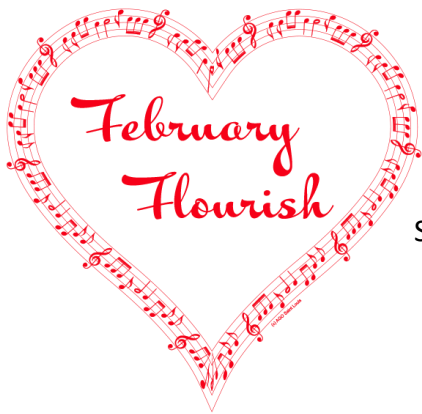
Maxine McCormick passed away on June 24, 2019 at the age of 80. Maxine was born to the late Aubrey Donald & Lou V. Allen McCormick. Maxine was a 1957 graduate of Livingston Academy. She attended Tennessee Tech University, Baldwin Wallace University, and West Virginia University, where she received her Master of Sacred Music. Maxine was a musician and played the organ, including a recital at the world-famous Carnegie Hall in New York City. She taught music at private schools in Dover, New Jersey and St. Louis, Missouri, as well as Tennessee Tech. As a lifelong Methodist, she also held the positions of Church Worship Leader and Music Director.

In addition to her love of music, Maxine enjoyed travel, skydiving, collecting antiques, and sports cars.

Maxine leaves behind her sister, Reba Crabtree and husband Jack of Livingston, TN; nephew Stan Crabtree and niece Tamara Crabtree of Nashville, TN.

Reminders/Information

St. Louis AGO Chapter 2020-2021



SAVE THE DATE – FEBRUARY 13, 2021

A day of **LIVE** Zoom meetings on presentations and topics. Areas to be offered include: Organ, Handbells, Recording Technology and Spiritual Care. Stay tuned for more information to come.



ST LOUIS ORGAN ARCHIVE

Do you have your Organ's Stop-List updated? What about an updated/current picture of your organ console or sanctuary? What about an updated picture of the outside of your church building? In order to make this a great success – you need to get started. Visit the SLOA website and decide what you need to do to make your part a success!!

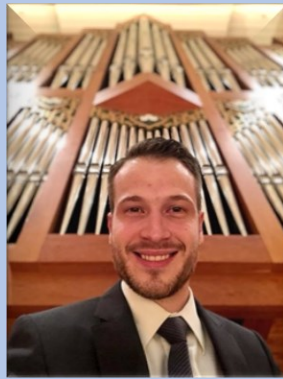


Did you miss any of the performances, interviews or Pipe Talks presented at ORGANFEST 2020? What about attending a webinar to learn something NEW? Click on the links below to take you directly to that page.

- [OrganFest Performances](#)
- [OrganFest PipeTalks](#)
- [OrganFest Rising Stars](#)
- [Webinars](#)
- [Upcoming Webinars](#) (you must register online)



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REMEMBERING A ST. LOUIS LEGACY

Dr. Edward A. Wallace, former Organist and Choirmaster of the Church of St. Michael and St. George, and former University Organist of Washington University in St. Louis, died peacefully in his home on August 17, 2020. He was 94 years old and had enjoyed a full career in Anglican Church Music that spanned over 60 years and included working with some of the greatest church musicians of the twentieth century in England and America. He also served as organist for Congregation Shaare Emeth for over 20 years. He was widely regarded for his musicianship, his



service playing, his choral work, and his understanding of organ tonal design. He was a member of the American Guild of Organists and the Association of Anglican Musicians.

Born in Hampton, Virginia on April 22, 1926, he grew up singing in the choir and eventually playing the organ at St. John's Episcopal Church. In 1939, at the age of thirteen, he traveled with his family to New York City for the World's Fair, during which the family visited the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Because he was so interested in church music and had shown such talent, his grandmother, always keen to support his musical development, made sure he met Dr. Norman Coke-Jephcott, Organist and Choirmaster of the cathedral. Dr. Coke-Jephcott surprised Edward by inviting him to join him at the organ console during a Sunday

service. A light came on, awakening this talented boy from a small Virginia town to the possibilities open to him, and he promised himself that one day, he would play the great cathedral organ. He kept that promise many times over as he later became a student of and assistant organist to Dr. Coke-Jephcott, playing countless services and giving recitals in that magnificent space.

His studies included work at the Peabody Institute in Baltimore and the Royal School of Church Music in London. All the while, he was playing recitals and services at the great churches of New York and London. In London, he met and studied with some of the great musicians there, including Dr. George Thalben-Ball and Sir William McKie, who offered him the post of Assistant Organist at Westminster Abbey, unimaginable at the time for an American musician. Dr. Coke-Jephcott and the renowned Canon Edward West from St. John the Divine, spiritual director to the young Edward, urged him to return to the U.S. and dedicate his talents to building the tradition of music on this side of the Atlantic.

Back in the States, Edward continued working with Dr. Coke-Jephcott as his assistant. When he was ready to take a position on his own, he received a letter from "Cokey," as he was known; "You are hereby appointed to the position of Organist and Choirmaster at the Church of the Ascension, Mt. Vernon, New York." It was a very different era in church deployments. The job gave Edward the responsibility of developing a choral program on his own while keeping him just a short train ride from Manhattan and a busy schedule of recitals and services.

Early in his career in New York, Edward caught the attention of T. Tertius Noble. Dr. Noble had come from York Minster to St. Thomas Fifth Avenue in 1913 to establish the English choral music tradition there and to found what became the world-famous choir of men and boys. Edward regularly played services at St. Thomas and studied with Dr. Noble, and when the opportunity arose, Edward took the

position of Assistant at St. Thomas and worked with Dr. T. Frederick H. Candlyn and later with William Self. During that time, G. Donald Harrison of Aeolian-Skinner was building a new instrument for St. Thomas and Edward got to learn from him as he designed his final American Classic; later, Edward would design a practice instrument for St. Thomas, which would be the first of many he would help design. As Assistant Organist and Choirmaster and Assistant Headmaster of the Choir School, Edward gained invaluable experience working with a world-class music program unique in America.

In 1965, St. Michael and St. George in St. Louis was looking for a new Organist and Choirmaster. The search committee brought Edward out to show him the church, the organ, the music library, and the parish. Unimpressed, he politely declined their offer. Undeterred, they invited him back, though he saw little point in it since the committee never seemed to know just what they wanted in the new person. Finally, one member spoke up: "We want a new broom. We want someone from someplace else to come in here and sweep the place out and start afresh new program." That sold him on the job, a challenge to build something – not from scratch, but from shambles – into something of enduring quality. He agreed to five years; he stayed for 35.

In the meantime, he built a music library. He oversaw the building of three organs: two by Petty-Madden, one at St. Michael and St. George and another at Graham Chapel at Washington University, and another by Quimby in St. George's Chapel. He took a choir of elderly volunteers with perhaps more good intentions than talent and built it into an internationally regarded choral group singing services at Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's Cathedral, and other great institutions. Among the many musicians along the way who benefited from his expertise and support was soprano Christine Brewer, who began her singing career with the choir when she was only 19. In 1995, he was awarded an honorary doctoral degree from Nashotah House Theological Seminary, in recognition of his work in liturgy and music.

Dr. Wallace was a mentor to many organists whose work graces services throughout the country.

He will be remembered not only for his music but also for his sharp wit and his unfailing charm. His Virginia accent never abandoned him, and he always dressed impeccably. He could burst out in a fit of frustration that Beethoven would have envied, but his appreciation was just as warm. His beloved rat terriers, Tick and, later, Skippy and Dixie, all long gone now, were his regular companions in the neighborhoods of Wydown and Ellenwood, and later in Westmoreland Place.

Dr. Edward A. Wallace was the last of a very rare breed, the utterly devoted churchman. From the time he left home to go to college until he retired, he never lived any place other than a church, including residence in his tower apartment at St. Michael and St. George's for 35 years. He grasped liturgy in a way that few have the capacity to understand, and he knew instinctively how music helps create coherent pageantry of worship. His expertise has influenced clergy and shaped services across the country. Over the years, he transformed countless weddings and funerals into occasions worthy of royalty, with music far better than any of us deserved, because it was not music for us; it was for God.

He is survived by three nephews and a niece. He is also survived by countless musicians, parishioners, and devoted friends whose lives have been immeasurably enriched by the unselfish sharing of his talents, and by his beloved choir of St. Michael and St. George which bears the standards he established through days and weeks and years of labor and devotion. *Si Monumentum requires*, listen for the music.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to the music program at the Church of St. Michael & St. George. 6345 Wydown Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63105. A memorial service will be announced for a time in the future when congregations and choirs can assemble safely.

NOTE: The St. Louis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will make a \$100 donation to the National AGO for both Dr. Ed Wallace and Marie Kramer in their memory.

Words of Hope and Encouragement

These last several months, for me, have been filled with a few ups, but a lot of downs, and I'm sure I am not alone. Most people that know me would identify me as one of the biggest introverts around. Perhaps that's one reason I play the organ; I am my own little symphony and I don't have to rely on anybody. Well, let me tell you that this little introvert is ready to come out of his "solo organ" shell. I long to make the wonderful music with Rob and our fantastic, loyal,



and loving choir again. I am aching to get back in the music-making groove.

Music *is* powerful! It has guided me through these hard times of very little to no human interaction, no attending church, and of course, no *LIVE* music. I miss seeing the congregation every week, even if it was only a quick smile during communion as you walked through the organ hallway, or a brief "hello" at coffee hour while I'm downing a donut and chugging my coffee before the 11:15 Eucharist. Music has helped fill this momentary, and hopefully, short-lived void.

Fun Fact: Did you know that musicians are constantly practicing, learning, collaborating with others, and working hard to become the best they can be? These are some of the many skills that we musicians possess and which are vital to our success. However, the *one* thing that was never taught to us in school, or even thought to be a possibility, was the idea of, or how to deal with the notion of live music being turned off just like a flick of a light switch. The best example would be this past March on a Sunday

morning, the Church of St. Michael and St. George choir sang one of Herbert Howell's most lovely and well-known anthems, *Like as the hart*, and then the next day we found out that all live performances of music, sacred and secular were banned due to the pandemic.

This hit our church and music community harder than the one time I played T-Ball and a kid hit a grounder towards me and it popped up and knocked me out for a few minutes. It hurt, I cried, and I had no clue where I was for a while. Surprisingly, I didn't quit. I continued to play the rest of the season and I got through it. We have been hurt, we have cried, and we have mourned for the days of pre-pandemic normalcy. I'm sure at least once, we have felt lost with a feeling of no direction or purpose, but we *will* continue on and a great way is through music! The CSMSG clergy, staff, and parishioners are tough and we will find ways to cope until we can be back together in the nave, worshipping together once again.

We are already on the way! Take for example, the current Sunday Eucharists that are held on the playground. With the help from the clergy, sextons, and others, we are able to have *LIVE* organ music from the chapel piped into the speakers on the playground. (Pun intended) With the guide of a little camera, Rob and I can also see the congregation as they gather and worship. Honestly, I can see more from that little camera than I can from behind the organ bench on a normal Sunday. You'll hear some favorite hymn tunes that will hopefully warm your heart, make you smile, and give you a little sense of normalcy. I can honestly say that these past few weeks have given me a lot more hope and joy in my life.

Whether it is hymns, choral music or whatever genre you like, don't give up listening to music. You might not realize it, but one piece could actually change your perspective and possibly your direction in life.

Mr. Nicholas Bideler is the Associate Organist/Choirmaster at the [Church of St. Michael & St. George](#) in St. Louis, MO.
Click on the link to visit the church website for more information.

THE *LAST* PAGE

Have an event or concert you would like to have included on the Chapter Calendar?

Send an email to: events@agostlouis.org with all the necessary information and it will be posted as soon as possible.

Have you renewed your membership yet? Please go to [OnCard](#) on the National AGO Website to renew and update your information by October 1st to be included in our annual chapter directory.

Have an article or something you would like to have included in the *OPUS* newsletter? Please submit all material to Ted Cronbaugh by the 15th of the month. Space and Content are subject to availability.

Email: ted.cronbaugh@gmail.com

**DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER 2020
ISSUE IS SEPTEMBER 15, 2020**

