

THE OPUS



October 2021

Volume 38 – Issue #2
The official publication of the
St. Louis Chapter of the
American Guild of Organists



View of Seattle skyline from Kerry Park (source)

Surrounded by the stunning beauty of the Pacific Northwest, Seattle is the host city for

The American Guild of Organists National Convention, THE WELL-TEMPERED FUTURE, July 3–7, 2022.

Dean



St. Louis AGO Chapter



Rick Burk (CAGO)

Dear Colleagues,

My September letter did not make it into the last issue of OPUS so I have tweaked it a bit and am including it this month.

Typically, this is the time of year where we would be welcoming back our choirs and one another after a summer respite. *But as during so much of the past seventeen months, I am certain many, if not most, of us did not experience the usual R&R a summer schedule brings.* Many churches continued over the summer months to adapt to the ebb and flow of COVID, perhaps resuming in-person worship, then stepping back from it once again, then back to it again, and back again, and again. So instead of feeling refreshed from a summer lull in activities, we may actually be more exhausted (both physically and mentally) than at this time in past years. So let us seek to find that respite whenever and wherever we might, even in the days ahead.

One place where you might find a refreshing space is at our Chapter programs and dinners. While not everyone may yet feel comfortable being among a group of people, and while “the best laid plans” may need to be revised as circumstances change, we are moving forward with a plan to once again meet for a shared meal followed by various programs in the months of October, November and beyond. Our Sub-Dean, Heather Martin Cooper, shares more of the details in her article on page 3. I encourage you to give prayerful consideration to participating when and where you feel comfortable doing so.

The Executive Committee met on August 23 as we welcomed the newest class of Committee members and spent some time getting to know one another better. In addition to reviewing the plans for the upcoming year, the EC voted to accept another slate of appointees to the 2026 Convention Committee and discussed ways we might be able to implement the “Year of the Young Organist” in our Chapter. There is a brief article about the Year of the Young Organist on page 5. I would encourage you to share with the Executive Committee any ideas you may have for us to reach out to more young organists in our area.

May we continue to work together to affirm and support one another in our shared calling as musicians in this time and place. I look forward to seeing more of you in the coming months – and not just on Zoom!

Here’s to making a joyful noise!

Rick Burk

Dean

Sub-Dean

St. Louis AGO Chapter



Heather Martin Cooper - CAGO

October, 2021

Dear Members,

Success! Our opening event on September 27 was definitely a success. Altogether, about 35-40 chapter members attended the dinner and/or the program live and in-person at Our Lady of the Pillar Parish in Creve Coeur. We enjoyed a delicious dinner prepared by Terri Bushman of As-You-Like-It Catering. This was followed by a wonderful presentation on the history of our chapter. Chapter Historian Randy Zerkel took us through his presentation, offering some very interesting facts and anecdotes with plenty of props. He displayed framed photos of a dozen or so past chapter Deans, articles and other items from our archives. Chapter members then shared stories and memories. A good time was enjoyed. My thanks to all who attended and to those whose preparations and hospitality made it such a great start to our year.

Our next event is coming quickly, and dinner reservations are needed as soon as possible. Please **RSVP right away** for the dinner (see the details below).

On Sunday, October 10, we will enjoy a concert of Organ and Handbell Music presented by Dr. John Behnke, the Archdiocesan Handbell Choir, the Wesley Ringers of Kirkwood United Methodist Church and vocal soloist Emily Stolarski. The concert is at 3:00 p.m. at St. Paul United Church of Christ in Belleville, IL. Bill Wade will be our host.

On Monday, October 11, we will again enjoy a dinner at 6:30 pm. Our 7:30 program again features Dr. Behnke, who will present a reading session of his organ and choral music at the same venue. CPH and MorningStar music publishing companies will be there to offer music for sale.

Our November meeting will be on the early side of the month, so please mark your calendar for November 15 and keep your eyes out for the November issue of The Opus for more details.

I'm looking forward to seeing you next week!

Heather Martin Cooper
Sub Dean

The Details

Organ and Handbells Weekend
with Dr. John Behnke
St Paul United Church of Christ
115 W B St, Belleville, IL 62220
*Park in the lot on the C Street side.
The sanctuary doors off of the parking lot
will be the only doors to enter.*

Sunday, October 10, 2021
3:00 pm Organ and Handbells Concert

Monday, October 11, 2021
5:30 pm Executive Committee Meeting
6:30 pm Dinner
7:30 pm Organ and Choral music
reading session

Cost \$20 for dinner
RSVP to Cathy Bolduan **right now**
(314) 853-5011
kathleen.bolduan@gmail.com

Convention Coordinator

2026 National Convention



Burnell Hackman

The 2026 Club

It's exciting to be a member of an exclusive club. We are offering you the opportunity to join the 2026 Club in support of our National AGO Convention to be held in St. Louis in 2026!

Payments to the club can be spread out over the next five years with the balance due on December 31, 2025.

In addition to helping make our convention a success you will be invited to a very special Independence Day party in a Parkview Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency at the Arch. You will have a GREAT view of the evening fireworks above the crowds on the street.

To make a pledge for the 2026 club (or higher) please visit

<https://www.agostlouis.org/2026-national-convention-pledge/>

If you have any questions, please contact Gifts and Grant Chair John Powel Walsh at Johnpowalsh@aol.com

Thank you for your support of our historic convention!

Burnell L. Hackman
Conference Coordinator

NATIONAL AGO CONVENTION

July 6-10, 2026

SAVE THE DATE

FILL OUT THE SURVEY AT:

www.agostlouis.org



INFORMATION/OBITUARY



**YEAR
OF THE
YOUNG
ORGANIST**
Investing in the Future
July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022

The AGO National Council is committed to membership recruitment, retention, and growth within our organization. During the Year of the Young Organist, July 1, 2021–June 30, 2022, any individual under the age of 30 can become a member or renew her/his membership for free as part of this program.

The Year of the Young Organist will provide opportunities for both personal and professional development. Programs will include master classes and webinars on a wide variety of topics including:

- Organ Maintenance
- Insurance
- Retirement and Healthcare
- Conducting
- Video Recording
- Vocal Pedagogy

The current program details may be found at

[Program Year — AGO Young Organists \(yearoftheyoungorganist.com\)](https://yearoftheyoungorganist.com)

If you know of anyone whose age would qualify them for this opportunity, please share the above information with them and/or share their name and contact information with our Registrar, Regina Morris at morrisrp@swbell.net or our Membership Coordinator, Kendra Ruesler, at rueslerk@fox6.org.

One of the recipients
of our 2019 Avis
Blewett Award

Dr. Joseph George Beck

FEBRUARY 19, 1935
– AUGUST 2, 2021



Dr. Joseph “Joe” George Beck, age 86, passed away Monday, August 2, 2021, at St. Luke’s Hospital in Chesterfield, Missouri. He was born on Tuesday, February 19, 1935, in Youngstown, Ohio and married Sara Louise Ramser on Saturday, November 17, 1962 (also in Youngstown).

A graduate of Westminster Choir College, he also earned a Master of Arts degree in voice and conducting from Kent State University and a Doctor of Education degree from St. Louis University. Joseph taught choral and vocal music at Kent State University, Mount Union College, Webster University, St. Louis University, and Maryville University.

Joseph was president of JGB Productions, a film and video production company. He was a singer, conductor, clinician, and performed extensively in St. Louis. He served as musical director of the St. Louis Repertory Theatre, guest conductor for the St. Louis Chamber Chorus and Midwest Lyric Opera, founded the Madrigal Singers of St. Louis and authored two books on John Finley Williamson, founder of the Westminster Choir.

A Memorial Service was held Thursday, August 12, 2021 at Ladue Chapel.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to the Westminster Foundation of Princeton New Jersey, Inc., 174 Nassau Street #124, Princeton, New Jersey 08542.

CONCERT CALENDAR

ST. LOUIS AGO CHAPTER (2021-2022)



(For more information on these and other events please visit the Concerts and Events section of our website at agostlouis.org)

ORGAN AND HANDBELLS CONCERT WITH DR. JOHN BEHNKE

October 10 @ 3:00 PM
St. Paul United Church of Christ
115 West B Street, Belleville, IL

CHORAL EVENSONG

October 10 @ 5:00 PM
ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
110 N Warson Rd
St. Louis, MO

GATEWAY RINGERS CONCERT

October 24 @ 4:00 PM
Our Savior Lutheran Church
2800 Elm Street
St. Charles, MO

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR CONCERT

October 29 @ 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM
ST. PAUL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
115 West B Street
Belleville, IL



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MEMORIES/110 YEARS

ST. LOUIS AGO CHAPTER



110 Anniversary – October

- Early 19th century: Many American organists were amateurs or musical “jack-of-all-trades”: composer, teacher, band member or director, pianist, accompanist, etc.
- During the 1850s American musicians began going to Europe to study and were introduced to organ recitals featuring music written by organists for the organ.
- The British Royal College of Organists was founded in 1864 and emphasized training.
- The Music Teachers’ National Association was founded in 1876 and included several organists.
- The American Guild of Organists was chartered in April 13, 1896 at Calvary Church, NY, NY. On December 13, 1896, the NY University Board of Regents authorized the AGO to conduct examinations and grant accreditation to organists.
- The Missouri Chapter was chartered October 23, 1911 and would later be known as the St. Louis Chapter. The name change occurred in February 1955. Of all active chapters in the country today, St. Louis is the twelfth oldest in the nation.
- The Missouri Chapter was chartered as one of eight states which comprise the AGO North Central Region.
- St. Louis AGO Chapter founders were Charles H. Galloway, Ernest R. Kroeger, and James Quarles.
- “The Diapason” became the AGO journal in 1935.

- Randy Zerkel



*Randy Zerkel presenting
our history at our meeting
on Monday,
September 27, 2021.*

THE OPUS

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3526 Oxford Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63143-4209
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You are invited to submit material for publication consideration.
Material and calendar items should be e-mailed to newsletter@agostlouis.org.
Copy deadline for the November issue is October 15.

Send address changes or mailing labels requests to:

Regina Morris
3526 Oxford Blvd
St. Louis MO 63143-4209

OFFICERS:

Dean - Rick Burk
Sub-Dean - Heather Martin Cooper
Secretary - Gaye Anderson
Treasurer - Mike Kaberline
Past Dean - Burnell Hackman

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Class of 2022

Dr. Steven Ball
J. D. Brooks
Dr. William Sullivan

Class of 2023

(Vacant)
Shawn Portell
Kit LaMar

Class of 2024

Sarah Bereza
Jill Griffin

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

2026 Convention Coordinator

Burnell Hackman
Auditor
Denis J. Doelling
Dinner Reservations
Dr. Cathy Bolduan
Directory Editor
Al Black
Educational Resources
Dr. Barbara Raedeke
Exam Coordinator
Brent Johnson
Historian
Randy Zerkel
Membership Coordinator
Kendra Ruesler

OPUS Editor

Kit LaMar
Photographer
Rene Zajner
Professional Concerns
Liaison
Shawn Portell
Publicity Liaison
Dawn Riske
Registrar
Regina Morris
Social Media
Rene Zajner

2021-2022