

May 2023

Dean's Corner

Dear Colleagues and Friends -

I am writing this having just returned from a relaxing week in Florida. I flew out on Easter Sunday in the afternoon - and gave our church musicians a week to rest up as well. As I reflect on what to write for this issue, I cannot help but feel a little like those movies where tension and action build to a high point, and now it is just the tail end of the story now that the bad guy has been dispatched, and the heroes ride off into the sunset. Choir seasons begin to wrap up as many take the summer off. But our work goes on, does it not? Already we start thinking ahead to what is next. Maybe it is the time to take the opportunity to look into some of the educational programs and materials that the Guild provides - even our own Chapter has its own educational library (visit <https://www.agostlouis.org/educational-resources/>). Maybe take in one of the regional conventions coming up - you may attend any regional, but North Central is our Region's event. For more information, visit the National website: <https://www.agohq.org/conventions/>



Jeffrey White—Dean

Coming up, we have our closing banquet for the 2022/2023 season. I hope that each member will attend as they are able. We have a program line-up for the coming season, we will share some of the Chapter business with the membership, and we have a recipient to present with the Avis Blewett Award. We will also install our newly elected officers and board members and recognize our outgoing board members. We will be holding this event at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, a wonderful facility for such events. Please call or text Cathy Bolduan to RSVP for the dinner. [See more details regarding the closing banquet on page 2.]

I hope that the dawning of Spring finds you well and refreshed!

Jeffrey White
Dean, St. Louis AGO Chapter



Mary Beth Wittry
wittrym@stgabrielstl.org

Easter blessings to all of you, fellow organists!

I hope and pray you are all enjoying these glorious spring days with which we have been gifted! One . . . after the other!

Thank you to our host, Sarah Bereza and Grace United Methodist for providing us with such a lovely venue for our Members' Concert in March. We had a delightful meal and a treat of a concert. Thank you to our performers that evening: Ruth Sweeten, Earl Naylor, Randal Zerkel, David Sinden, and Bill Sullivan. We heard the music of J.S. Bach, R. Evan Copley, Johannes Brahms, Marcel Dupré, Calvin Hampton, Powell Weaver and John Weaver. It was a wonderful event. Chuck Chauvin has already invited us for next year's Members' Concert at Little Flower in March, where we can showcase the new 26 rank Kegg organ! I am extending an early invitation to anyone who wishes to perform in 2024!

The program committee for 2023-2024 (myself, David Sinden, and David Erwin) has proposed the events for the next year and this has been accepted by the Executive Board. We have many exciting events coming up — so stay tuned!

We close our current program year with a banquet on Monday, May 22, at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Carondelet. We will have a chance to visit the Sisters' beautiful chapel and hopefully hear the historic organ. Find all the details below.

Blessings to you all and hope to see you on May 22!

Mary Beth Wittry
 Sub-dean of the STL Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

Closing Banquet

Monday, May 22

6:30 p.m. - Dinner

7:30 p.m. - Program

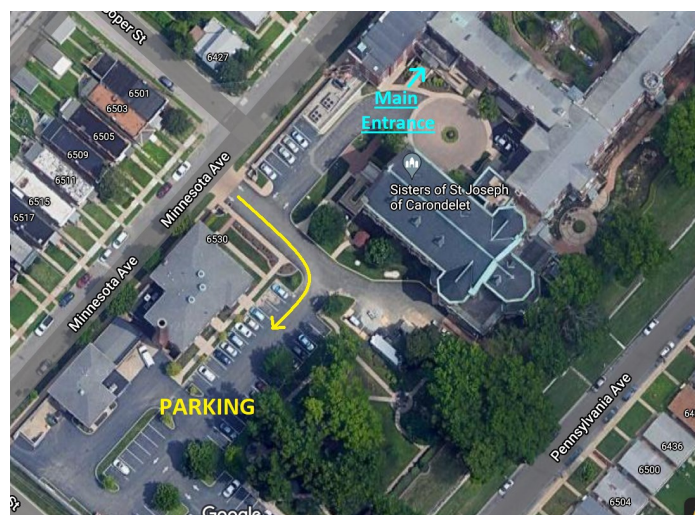
Motherhouse of the Sisters of
 St. Joseph of Carondelet

6400 Minnesota Avenue
 St. Louis, MO 63111

The cost for the meal is \$20.00 per person.

Please confirm dinner reservations no later than May 18 by contacting Cathy Bolduan at 314-853-5011 or Kathleen.bolduan@gmail.com.

Please note that if the parking lot is full when you arrive you may utilize street parking, or park on the lot of Sts. Mary and Joseph Chapel next door to the Motherhouse (6300 Minnesota Avenue). You may also want to consider carpooling.





Attendees at each February Flourish who have never been a member of the American Guild of Organists are offered a one-time opportunity to receive a free six-month membership in the Guild. Following our 2023 February Flourish we had six people accept this invitation and have become new members of the AGO and the St. Louis Chapter. They have been assigned mentors who will aide in assisting them to learn more about the AGO and our Chapter. Let us all welcome them and encourage them as colleagues.

Simeon Layne James Marck Joan Ruwald Catherine Schorsch Marvin Smith

ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to the following Chapter members recently elected to serve on the Executive Committee:

Secretary: Gaye Anderson

Treasurer: Mike Kaberline

Class of 2026: Stephen Jones, Mark Lawson and Sharon Whitlock

These newly elected Executive Committee members will be installed at the May 22 meeting. They will begin their duties effective July 1, 2023.

Concert Calendar

Organ Recital: **Chelsea Chen** — May 4, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KIRKWOOD

100 E Adams Avenue Kirkwood, MO 63122

This concert is free, but a free-will offering will be taken.

For more information, please visit: <https://conspirito.kirkwoodpres.org/>

Organ Recital: **Dennis Bergin** — June 9, 2023 - 7:00 p.m.

TWIN OAKS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1230 Big Bend Road Ballwin, Missouri 63021

The concert is free and open to the public.

For further information: (636) 861-1870

If you are hosting or sponsoring an event, or know of any that may be of interest to the members of our Chapter, **please** be sure to send that information to events@agostlouis.org so those events may be posted on the Chapter website. Thank you!

Check the [Concerts and Events](#) section of the Chapter website for more details and recently posted events.

AVIS BLEWETT AWARD

ST. LOUIS AGO CHAPTER



The Avis Blewett Award Committee met on the day after Valentine's Day, February 15, via the technological miracle of Zoom®. This year's committee, Dr. Kathleen Bolduan, Cathy Cassy, and chaired by Dr. William Sullivan, unanimously chose Dawn Riske as the 2023 recipient of the Chapter's esteemed award.

The consensus was this: The Blewett Award is open "to those who have made a significant contribution to the musical life of the Saint Louis area." It doesn't say it has to be someone from outside the Chapter. So, why not celebrate one of our own – someone who has exemplified what it means to be a committed and fully engaged member of the St. Louis Chapter?

Consider February Flourish, January Jubilee, the engaging chapter news reports and photos in *The American Organist*. These are just some of the ways that Dawn has served us and served us well. But wait, there's more: As one who has been behind the scenes for a while, I can attest that there was more than one occasion that Dawn stepped up to the plate when no one else was available or willing to get something done that kept a project from stalling. Many times she has been the "go to" person when real help was needed in tasks small and large. Just as importantly, I can recall several instances during Dawn's tenure as Chapter Dean that illuminated her skills in peace-making and ambassadorship, adroitly squelching a few political fires before damage control had to be activated (Hey, it happens in every organization; we're not perfect, and, I will admit that I was part of one of those *faux pas*. Thanks, Dawn!).

Please make a point to attend our concluding banquet and award ceremony on May 22 to congratulate Dawn on a job well done. She is truly our poster child in the best sense of the phrase.

Wm. Sullivan



Deaconess Dawn Riske of Saint Louis serves as Director of Music Ministries at Christ the King Parish in University City. She also accompanies the weekly Hispanic Mass at St. Joseph, Manchester and teaches private music lessons. Her degrees in Music and Theology from Aquinas Institute and Valparaiso University provide a solid foundation upon which to build her ministry of music and liturgy. Directing choirs of all ages, planning liturgies, and leading music in worship provide her with a true sense of vocation. She treasures ecumenism and connecting with Latino faith communities through music. Dawn is a past Dean of the American Guild of Organists, served as Director of the St. Louis Chapter February Flourish for many years, and also appreciates the collegiality provided by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians. Her professional colleagues

in the American Guild of Organists leave her feeling a sense of awe and gratitude. Gardening, reading, cooking are favorite activities when she is not visiting with friends and family—or even when she is!

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New Music for the 2026 National Convention



Upon recommendation by the New Music Committee, [Sarah Bereza (chair), Mary Hitchcock Reinhart, Mark Lawson, Kirsten Santos Rutschman, and David Sinden (Rick Burk and Burnell Hackman, *ex officio*.)], the following composers were approved by 1) the local Steering Committee, 2) the National Committee on New Music and 3) the National Council.

The list of composers include five women and three men; five white composers, two African-American composers, and one Indian-American composer; and they range in age from their twenties to their seventies.

The Gifts and Grants Committee invites you or your group to sponsor one of these commissions. Commission sponsors will have the opportunity to include a notation above the title of the composition which will be included if the composition is published. If you are interested in sponsoring a New Music Composition, please contact John Walsh, Gifts and Grants Chair, at 314-503-3690.

Here is the list of commissioned composers:

Mack Wilberg

Commission: Hymn festival anthem for SATB choir and organ with brass quintet and handbells, using an ecumenical sacred text that will include a familiar, public domain hymn-tune.

Composer Bio: Mack Wilberg was appointed music director of The Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square on March 28, 2008, having served as associate music director of the Choir since May 1999. He is a former professor of music at Brigham Young University and is active as a composer, arranger, guest conductor, and clinician throughout the United States and abroad. His compositions and arrangements, currently published exclusively by Oxford University Press, are performed and recorded by choral organizations throughout the world. Dr. Wilberg received his bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University and his master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Southern California.

Jonathan Dove

Commission: Multi-movement work for solo organ.

Composer Bio: Jonathan Dove is an English composer of opera, choral works, plays, films, and orchestral and chamber music. Starting with his breakthrough opera *Flight*, commissioned by Glyndebourne in 1998, Dove has gone on to write almost thirty operatic works. *Flight*, a rare example of a successful modern comic opera, has been produced and broadcast many times, in Europe, the USA and Australia. He was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2019 Birthday Honours for services to music. In addition to his many vocal works, Dove has written multiple extended works for solo organ as well as many choral anthems with organ.

Sarah MacDonald

Commission: Two-part anthem for children's voices with organ accompaniment, with a joyful/celebratory affect, and ecumenical sacred text in English.

Text Commission: \$1,000 from Sharon Grenham-Thompson.

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(Continued from page 6)

Composer Bio: Sarah is a Canadian-born conductor, organist, pianist, and composer, living in the UK, and she holds the positions of Fellow and Director of Music at Selwyn College, Cambridge, and Director of Ely Cathedral's Girl Choristers. She has been at Selwyn since 1999, and was the first woman to hold such a post in an Oxbridge Chapel. Sarah came to the UK from Canada in 1992 as Organ Scholar of Robinson College, Cambridge after studying piano, organ, and conducting at The Royal Conservatory of Music's Glenn Gould School in Toronto with Leon Fleisher, Marek Jablonski, and John Tuttle. At Cambridge she read for a degree in Music, and studied the organ with David Sanger. Sarah has played numerous recitals and conducted choirs throughout the UK, North America, the Middle East, New Zealand, and much of mainland Europe. She has made over thirty-five recordings, variously in the guises of pianist, organist, conductor, and producer, and currently works most frequently with Regent Records. Her first solo disc, a recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations on the Steinway-D in Ely Cathedral will be released in 2023. Sarah is a winner of the Royal College of Organists' (RCO) coveted Limpus Prize, and she has taught organ and conducting for the Rodolfus Foundation, Oundle for Organists, the Jennifer Bate Organ Academy, and courses run by the RCO. She has directed the annual Girl Chorister Course at St Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, in New York City, and a number of RSCM in America residential courses. Sarah holds the Fellowship diploma of the RCO, and is a teacher and examiner for the University of Cambridge and the RCO. She has had over fifty choral and organ compositions published in the UK, Canada, and the States, and she is series editor for 'The Sarah MacDonald Choral Series' with Selah Publishing in Pittsburgh. Sarah also writes a popular monthly column for the American Guild of Organists' magazine *The American Organist*, called 'UK Report.' A compiled volume of twelve years worth of her essays was published in November 2022. She is a Patron of the Society of Women Organists, an Honorary Patron of the Herbert Howells Society, and President of the School Organists' Association. In 2018 Sarah received the honorary ARSCM in recognition of her contribution to choral music in the UK and Canada, and the citation made particular mention of her support of contemporary British composers. She was recently appointed University Organist at Cambridge, and is the first woman to hold that prestigious ceremonial role, which dates back to 1670.

Rollo Dilworth

Commission: Gospel anthem for SATB choir, Hammond B3 organ, and percussion (possible bass), with ecumenical sacred text.

Composer Bio: Rollo Dilworth is Associate Professor of Choral Music Education at Temple University's Boyer College of Music in Philadelphia, PA. Prior to his Temple University appointment in 2009, Dilworth was director of the music education program and director of the choral program at North Park University in Chicago (1996-2009). Dilworth has a bachelor of science in music education from Case Western Reserve University; a M.Ed. from University of Missouri-St. Louis; and a D.M.A. from Northwestern University. He is an oft-published composer of choral music, with emphasis in the areas of spirituals and gospel-inspired works. Dilworth is a native of St. Louis.

Gwyneth Walker

Commission: Multi-movement solo organ piece celebrating the seven geographical regions of the AGO with approximately a two minute movement for each of the AGO regions, possibly with opening/closing material.

Composer Bio: Widely performed throughout the country, the music of American composer Gwyneth Walker is beloved by performers and audiences alike for its energy, beauty, reverence, drama, and humor. Dr. Gwyneth Walker is a graduate of Brown University and the Hartt School of Music. She holds B.A., M.M. and D.M.A. degrees in Music Composition. A former faculty member of the Oberlin College Conservatory, she resigned from academic employment in 1982 in order to pursue a career as a full-time composer. Walker's extensive catalogue includes many solo organ works, and pieces that reflect her long-time interest in regional and geographic aspects of the United States.

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(Continued from page 7)

Jessica Hunt

Commission: Single-movement work for organ and brass quintet suitable as a concert opener.

Composer Bio: Jessica Hunt has been commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra (*Climb*), the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra (*The Eagle Tree*), the Gaudete Brass Quintet (seven works), Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings, The Michigan Lighthouse Landmark Legacy Project, Access Contemporary Music, and many others; has served as the 2018 Boontling Community Fellow at the Gabriela Lena Frank Creative Academy of Music and as the 2017-18 Young Composer in Residence with the Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings; and was awarded a Regents Fellowship at the University of Michigan, where she completed her doctoral studies in 2019. Hunt is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory at The Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University.

Shruthi Rajasekar

Commission: Solo work organ.

Composer Bio: Named by *The Guardian* as a composer "who will enrich your life," Shruthi Rajasekar is an Indian-American musician exploring identity, community, and joy. Shruthi's music draws from her training in the Carnatic (South Indian classical) and Western classical idioms. Composition honors include the KHORI-KOS ORTUS International Award and the Global Women in Music Award from the United Nations and Donne in Musica. As a soprano and Carnatic vocalist, Shruthi has been recognized by the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) and the internationally-televised Carnatic Music Idol USA. A graduate of Princeton University, Shruthi was awarded a Marshall Scholarship in the UK for graduate studies in composition and ethnomusicology.

Zanaida Stewart Robles

Commission: Multi-movement work for organ and solo voice, with a public domain secular or ecumenical sacred text likely of a mystical nature (e.g. Rumi, Psalms).

Composer Bio: Zanaida Stewart Robles is an award-winning American composer, vocalist, and teacher. Dr. Robles primarily writes choral music, songs, and keyboard works. Her compositional style can be described as "progressive classical": energized, soulful, harmonically colorful, rhythmically driven, heavily modal with African elements and touches of progressive rock. As a concert soprano soloist, studio vocalist for film and television, and professional ensemble singer, Dr. Robles has sung throughout the United States, and in parts of Europe, New Zealand, and Australia. Her film, television, and video game credits include *Glee*, *Godzilla*, *Minions*, *The Lego Movie*, *Despicable Me 3*, *Star Wars: The Last Jedi*, and *Frozen 2*. Dr. Robles holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the USC Thornton School of Music, a Master of Music degree from CSU Northridge, and a Bachelor of Music degree from CSU Long Beach.

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By Suzanne Chisum

Looking for Pics of Your Organ

If you have any pictures of your organ, pipes or console, please consider sharing them with me so that I may post them to Instagram or Facebook. Please send photos to suzchisum@gmail.com.

Have you joined the STL AGO Member Group yet?

If you are interested in joining a dynamic group of other organists of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, you may message me on Facebook at Suzanne Olszewski Chisum, or scan the QR Code to the right. This is a place that you can share information as well as questions with other AGO members. Hope to see you there!



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 Secretary - Gaye Anderson
 Treasurer - Mike Kaberline
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Kit LaMar
 Shawn Portell
 Bill Sullivan

Class of 2024

Sarah Bereza
 Chuck Chauvin
 Jill Griffin

Class of 2025

Suzanne Chisum
 Bob Raymond
 David Sinden

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

2026 Convention Coordinator

Burnell Hackman

Auditor

Denis J. Doelling

Certification Coordinator

Brent Johnson

Dinner Reservations

Dr. Cathy Bolduan

Directory Editors

Jeff White & Regina Morris

Educational Resources

Dr. Barbara Raedeke

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Randy Zerkel

Membership Coordinator

Mary Beth Wittry

OPUS Editor

Rick Burk

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Dawn Riske (Interim)

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Send address changes or mailing label requests to:

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

THE OPUS

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