

THE OPUS

Volume 40 Issue No. 7

April 2024

Dean's Corner

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Hopefully you had a great Easter celebration - however that celebration takes form - and you're getting the chance to recuperate and rejuvenate. Our program year also is getting ready to wind down for the Summer, and our new regime takes over in July.

I wanted to first report to you that the Members' Recital went very well. This year, we partnered with "Pipes for Parkinson's", and there were probably close to 150 people who filled the pews at Little Flower Catholic Church on March 18! This served as a fundraiser for the "Pipes for Parkinson's" organization (which includes concerts other than for organ) and as our March Chapter event.



Jeffrey White-Dean

The Executive Committee had its regular meeting prior to the dinner and recital. We'd like everyone to keep an eye on their membership renewals when they come due, as we would like to keep you in our AGO Chapter family. We currently have around 130 paid members, which is considered a good healthy number by national standards. According to our liaison, Elizabeth George at National, we have one of the more active chapters in the country. In addition to the regular business, the Executive Committee also approved the slate of programs for the 2024/2025 season, and approved the presentation of the Avis Blewett Award, both of which will be presented at the closing banquet on May 20 at St. Paul Evangelical Free Church in West County. (See more details on page 14.) We hope that you all will attend this important Chapter business meeting and dinner. We also will install our new officers and recognize our outgoing officers as well.

Finally, I would like to encourage everyone to please vote in the Chapter election coming up this month. Though we only have one person running for each position, it is important that we have a strong turnout of ballots to show support for the incoming officers, and to our national organization, that we are committed to our Chapter. Instructions will be found on page three in this edition of The OPUS. We'd like to close the polls by April 10 so that we can tabulate and report the results by April 15, per our Operating Procedures.

Thank you all for everything you do, both for the greater organist community as well as our own St. Louis Chapter!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey White Dean, St. Louis AGO Chapter Page 2 April 2024



Mary Beth Wittry wittrym@stgabrielstl.org

Greetings, fellow organists and musicians!

We are cruising into the end of our year of programs with our final event being the closing banquet and annual meeting on May 20 at St. Paul Evangelical Free Church in Creve Coeur with Betsy Stull as our hostess. Please mark your calendars!

On Monday, March 18, we had our Members' Concert, "Pipes for Parkinson's" performed on the lovely new Kegg organ at Little Flower Parish in Richmond Heights. Chuck Chauvin was our gracious host. It was a delightful evening of music and thank you to all our fine performers: Bill Sullivan, Cathy Bolduan, David Erwin, Marvin Smith, Mark Scholz, and Rick Burk. And you, too, Bill for stepping up to finish the concert in lieu of a performer's absence due to illness. Well done, all!

Bob Schneider gave us warm words of welcome and explained his mission and hopes with "Pipes for Parkinson's" and also told us about the challenges of the disease. His lovely wife JoAnn was there; he and JoAnn are a testament of hope and bravery amidst those challenges.

Looking ahead, the program year of 2024-2025 will be filled with many interesting events; a visit to Principia College, a presentation by Dr. Alyson Moore on working with Children's Choirs, and we are initiating the year with a performance by Katelyn Emerson on September 15 at Ladue Chapel Presbyterian Church. (Ladue Chapel is generously co-sponsoring this event with our AGO Chapter). Good things ahead!

I hope to see you on Monday, May 20! Have a blessed and wonderful Holy Week and Easter!

Blessings!
Mary Beth Wittry
Sub-dean for the St. Louis Chapter of the AGO

Here is a note from Bob Schneider to the Chapter:

Dear AGO Members,

As I'm reflecting this morning on the first "Pipes for Parkinson's" event last night, it's become very clear to me why I was drawn to organ music at a young age.

The expressions on the faces of the concertgoers was the same as mine when I first heard Dr. Mario Salvador at the St. Louis Basilica and Stan Kann at the Fox Theatre.

YOU ALL MADE THAT HAPPEN last night, and I'm very grateful that you got this off to a good start. I'm asking any of you that are interested in participating in a future event/s this year to please contact me. Now we know what's possible, and you have energized me enough to press forward in advancing the love for organ music that we all share.

Thank you. You're all amazing! Bob Schneider

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS

ST. LOUIS AGO CHAPTER



The time for our annual elections has arrived. You should receive a ballot via email by April 1. If you do not receive the ballot via email, please contact Secretary Gaye Anderson (brierbankfarm@juno.com). You will have one week to submit your completed ballot online. After April 8 a paper ballot will be mailed to those who have not responded online. To save on the cost of mailing paper ballots, you are urged to PLEASE submit your vote online via the link you will receive in the email. All voting must be completed by April 15. Once again, here are the nominees:

DEAN

SUZANNE MANELLI

Suzanne Manelli earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree from the University of Missouri-St. Louis, majoring in piano and bassoon. Subsequently, she had a 40-year career in Information Technology at state government, Anheuser-Busch and Centene Corporation, retiring for the third and last time in 2020. Suzanne became an organist because there was a vacancy at her church and "well, you play piano, so....". Fortunately, her father, a lifelong organist, helped Suzanne get started and develop a library. In addition, other organizations - such as the AGO! - have provided on-going educational opportunities, materials, and conferences that have contributed greatly to her development and that of many others. Suzanne currently plays at St. John's Lutheran Church in South City, leads a tiny choir, and looks for ways to develop and engage the musical talents they have. She enjoys swimming as much as possible in the summer and also teaches YogAlign.



SUB-DEAN

BIFF HACKMAN

Biff Hackman, while not an organist himself, has been fascinated by the instrument and surrounded by church music his entire life. A member of the St. Louis Chapter since 2018, Biff has attended meetings and events since 2008. He has attended several Regional and National Conventions and will be Hotel Chair for the 2026 Convention to be held in St. Louis. He currently spends his days as a Revenue Manager for Lodging Hospitality Management, a local hotel management company. If elected Sub-Dean, Biff looks forward to offering varied Chapter programs that will give members the opportunity to explore new or once familiar spaces and topics.



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CLASS OF 2027

MARY HITCHCOCK-REINHART

Mary Hitchcock-Reinhart is a music therapist at Ranken Jordan Pediatric Bridge Hospital. Mary has degrees in Music Education, Church Music, and Music Therapy from Texas Christian University, Scarritt Graduate School, and Maryville University respectively. Mary's organ teachers have included Emmet Smith and Wilma Jensen. Originally from Maryland, Mary was an Orioles fan growing up but now cheers on the Cardinals and TCU Horned Frogs. Mary and husband Ted have two grown daughters, and will have a son-in-law as of June 8. Formerly, Mary was organist and director of traditional worship at Salem UMC and now substitutes on organ benches in the area.





EARL NAYLOR

Earl Naylor is organist and director of music for the First Unitarian Universalist Church of St. Louis and Temple Emanuel Reform Jewish Congregation in St. Louis County. A Past Dean of the St. Louis Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, Mr. Naylor was also chairman of the Organ Historical Society National Convention when it was held in St. Louis.

SPENCER SMITH

Spencer Smith has been the Minister of Music at Second Presbyterian Church in St. Louis since July 2022. At Second Church, Spencer directs adult choir, Second Church Chorale and handbell choir, and leads worship from both the organ and the piano. In addition to worship, he also directs the Couts Music Series, which includes programs in various genres of music. Outside of his duties at Second Church, Spencer is also a tenor, pianist, and conductor. As a singer he is a full member of the St. Louis Chamber Chorus, and participates in projects with the South Dakota based choral ensemble Transept. As a collaborative pianist, Spencer has accompanied a



variety of different ensembles including choirs, soloists, chamber music ensembles, and choral workshops throughout Eastern South Dakota and Northwestern Iowa at the high school and collegiate level. Smith is a member of area organizations including the American Guild of Organists. Spencer was previously the Director of Music & Arts Ministry at First Congregational Church in Sioux Falls, SD.

In May 2020, Spencer received a Master's Degree in Music with a specialization in Conducting, studying under Dr. David Holdhusen and Dr. Timothy Campbell at the University of South Dakota. Smith received a Bachelor's degree in Piano Performance from the University of South Dakota in the spring of 2017 where he studied piano with Dr. Susanne Skyrm and collaborative piano and chamber music with Dr. Susan Keith Gray. He studied organ under the direction of Dr. Larry Schou.

Concert Galendar

Check the Concerts and Events section of the Chapter website (<u>www.agostlouis.org</u>) for the most current list of upcoming events. When visiting that page, be sure to click on the heading of each concert listing for full details. As of press time here is some of what you will find.

Saturday, April 20 - 7:00 p.m.

The Wartburg Choir under the direction of Dr. Lee Nelson

Peace Lutheran Church 737 Barracksview Road St. Louis, MO

Thursday, May 2 - 7:00 p.m.

The Waldorf University Choir under the direction of Emilie Bertram

Peace Lutheran Church 737 Barracksview Road St. Louis, MO

If you or your church has an organ/musical event that you would like to have included in the calendar, **please** send an email to David Sinden at events@agostlouis.org. You are also advised to "cc" Brent Johnson at brent@brentmjohnson.net.

In Memoriam

We extend our condolences to the family of Chapter member Jared Faulkner of Troy, IL. Jared Andrew Faulkner, 51, formerly of Granite City and Roxana, passed away at his home on Friday, February 16, 2024. Jared pursued a passion for music, earning a Bachelor of Music in Organ Performance degree from Southern Illinois University. Jared shared his musical talents as an organist and choir director, contributing his skills to various area churches including a 28-year tenure at St. John United Church of Christ in Wood River, IL. For a more complete obituary, visit Legacy.com.

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Convention Coordinator

AGO STL

2026 National Convention

St. Louis 2026 AGO National Convention Update

The 2026 National AGO Convention is St. Louis is less than 840 days away. While that is still over two years in the future, much work has already been done and much more work will follow!

I am pleased to announce Conner Scott is joining the Steering Committee as Young Organist Committee Chair. Some of this committee's duties include: Creating opportunities and activities to engage Young Organists; sponsoring a bench day for Young Organists and planning social events for Young Organists during the Convention. There are several Young Organist Scholarships offered to the Convention and this committee will be responsible for administering these scholarships.

Conner is the new Music Director at Christ Church Cathedral. Before attending graduate school in California Conner was organist at Holy Communion Episcopal Church and Webster United Methodist Church. We welcome Conner back to St. Louis and to the Steering Committee.

Also joining the Steering Committee is Heather Martin-Cooper. Heather, along with her committee, will be the Liaison for the Rising Stars. This will include all aspects regarding the Rising Starts program including arranging transportation, rehearsal times, and social activities.

Heather is a free-lance musician in St. Louis having served for many years at St, Monica's Parish. She is a longtime member of the St. Louis Chapter and recently served as Sub-Dean.

We welcome these two additions to the Steering Committee.

Later in April I will attend the AGO National Council's Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. At this meeting I will present our proposed program and budget. The council will offer suggestions and hopefully approve our plans. If that is the case, I will be able to present our list of artists and programing at the May Annual Meeting. The Facilities Committee chaired by Scott Kennebeck will then begin securing locations around St. Louis for concerts and other events.

The Hyatt Regency at the Arch is our Convention hotel. The Workshop Committee will begin work in earnest following the San Francisco Convention.

Many members of the Steering Committee will be attending the San Francisco Convention as we have a booth in the Exhibit Hub which we should "man" during Exhibit hours. We have it on good authority that Avis Blewitt will be attending the San Francisco Convention to encourage people to come to St. Louis in 2026!

If you are planning to attend the 2024 AGO National Convention in San Francisco, please let me know.

If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer, please let me know that as well. Happy Spring!

Burnell Hackman

Convention Coordinator

Agostl2026@agostlouis.org

Runell J Harl

314.650.9415



February Flourish 2025

Plans are currently underway to conduct a February Flourish in 2025. Concordia and MorningStar Publishers are working with the St. Louis Chapter, AGO to present a cooperative Church Music Workshop event. We are trying to reach organists that are not currently members of AGO.

If you have ideas or suggestions, please feel free to let any of the committee members know.

Committee Members: Simeon Layne, Mark Lawson, Stephen Jones, Jeff White, Dawn Riske, Tom Doctor, Jacob Weber, Mary Beth Wittry and Suzanne Chisum (chair.)

SOCIAL MEDIA

The St. Louis Chapter has an active public Facebook Page, "Saint Louis Chapter AGO American Guild of Organists," and a private Facebook Group, "AGO St. Louis Members."

The Facebook Page is focused on posting all Chapter activities and events. It also shares organ events of the Guild's Chapter members. Other organ events in the community are also highlighted here.

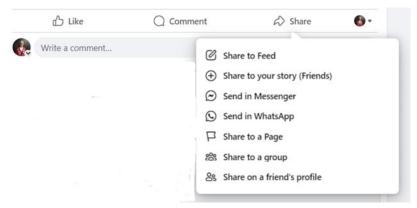
The Facebook Group is more casual, where all the members of the group may post items of interest related to the organ. Memes and cartoons about the organ are always welcome. Information about available practice organs in the area is also welcome.



In order to be a group member, you must accept an invitation of a current member of the group who is your friend or you can become a member using the QR Code to the right.

Spreading the Word with Social

You can easily share any of the Facebook Page information with your own Facebook Friends by clicking on the "Share" button. When you select this item you have choices. The "Share to Feed" will share it with all of the people you are friends with on Facebook. You will be given the opportunity of making a comment when you select this option. If you wish to share an item to your "Story" which can be found at the top of



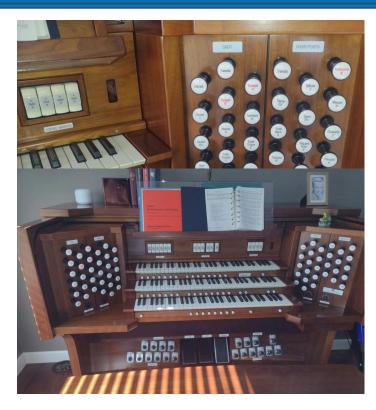
your feed and will stay visible for 24 hours to your Facebook Friends.

If you have any questions or suggestions about the Chapter's social media please feel free to send an email to suzchisum@gmail.com.

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Following the recent death of Chapter member Jared Faulkner, his family is attempting to find a new home for the organ Jared had in his home. The organ is a three manual Baldwin Church System-C made in Italy by Viscount - Model C 470 / Serial Number 62902/01. The age of the organ is about twenty-three years and is currently located in Troy, IL. For more information and/or to arrange a visit to see the instrument, contact Frank Faulkner at 618-920-0174.

(see photos of the organ to the right)



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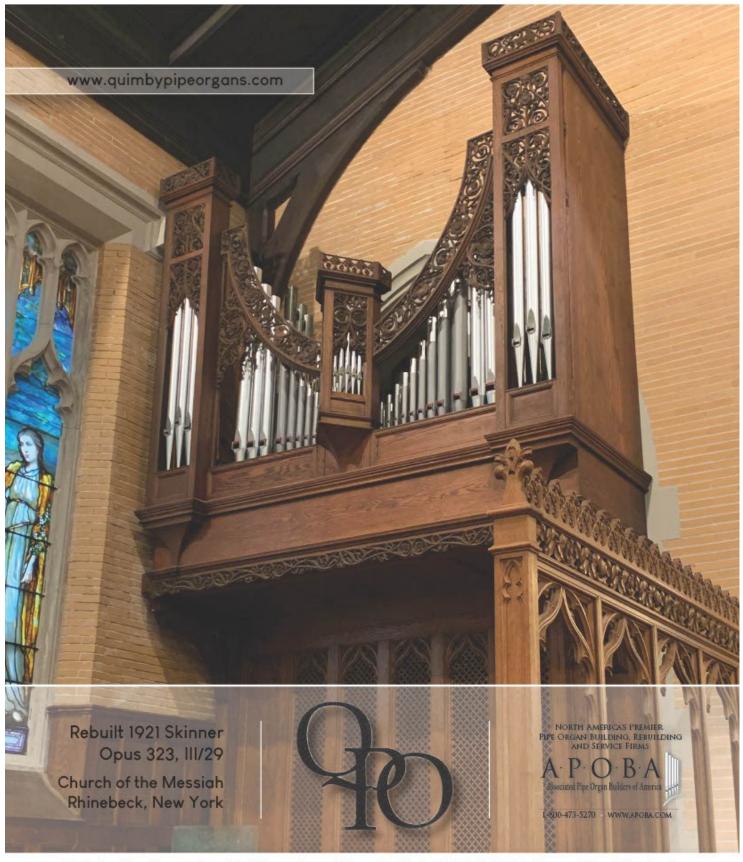


We received the following note from one of our Chapter members.

Bravo! to 107.3 FM for very inspiring 7:00 a.m. Sunday organ programs. They are so varied and challenging. Then the 8:00 a.m. Gospel Hour presents a lively and contrasting set of music to widen our experience of worship. Well done Brent, Bill and Mark! A great start to our Sunday praises!

--Luella Foster

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(Please note that some positions may no longer be available past the time of going to press.)

For more details on these and other job opportunities, please visit the "Open Positions" section of our website at https://www.agostlouis.org/job-openings/.

Director of Music Ministry

Kirkwood United Church of Christ is seeking a part-time Director of Music Ministry to lead our congregation and choir in worship. We are a progressive congregation located in Kirkwood and our music is diverse and eclectic: Classical music, traditional hymns, contemporary music, gospel, jazz, and world music may be included in any given service. KUCC boasts an enthusiastic choir with a paid section leader, as well as both a well-maintained Steinway M piano and a Wicks organ with three ranks. The Director of Music Ministry position typically requires between 6 and 10 hours per week, depending on the season, as the choir is off in the summer. Duties include worship planning with the pastor, a one-hour choir rehearsal on Thursday night, and church service on Sunday morning. Salary range for this position is based on experience and will also depend on the need for a separate accompanist. A well-qualified candidate will be able to demonstrate their ability in planning worship music, choral conducting, and strong keyboard training. Please direct your resume, referencing Director of Music Ministry Position, to stefanie@kirkwooducc.org.

We are an Open and Affirming congregation, actively supportive of the LGBTQIA+ community both in our church and society. We encourage diverse candidates to apply.

Organist or Pianist

Eldon United Methodist Church, Eldon, MO, is seeking organist or pianist to accompany our Sunday 10:00 a.m. worship service. Pay will be commensurate with experience. Please contact pastoramanda@eldonumc.org for more information or to apply. Eldon is 30 miles southwest of Jefferson City.

Director of Music

Trinity Presbyterian Church is seeking a Director of Music. The Director of Music is responsible for the supervision, development, and direction of all music ministries at Trinity. The Director of Music is also responsible for accompanying choral and corporate singing on piano, and if possible, organ on Sunday mornings during our 10:00 a.m. worship service and any additional special services. The Director will strive to support the overall mission of the congregation by fostering a sense of community that promotes the fellowship and spiritual growth of our members. As a congregation, music is central to our life and worship. Music and Worship consists of traditional hymns and anthems, additionally we value a wide range of musical styles. The choir consists of volunteer members of the church as well as four paid section leaders. We have a Casavant organ with three manuals and forty-seven ranks, four octaves of handbells, a Baldwin baby grand piano in the sanctuary, and other pianos located in the Chapel and music room. Weekly Time Commitment & Compensation: Part-time salaried position with an average of 20 hours a week; more during Advent and Lenten seasons; two weeks paid vacation, one week paid continuing education, annually. Salary: \$26,000 – \$30,000. Interested applicants should send a cover letter and resume to: melanie.smith@trinityucity.org

(Continued from page 10)

Organist

Friedens United Church of Christ in Marissa, IL is seeking a part-time organist. Duties include playing organ on Sundays for our 10:00 a.m. worship service as well as Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, mid-week Lenten services, and our Pre-Lenten breakfast. Services normally consists of a prelude, 2-3 hymns, some short-sung responses, and a postlude. Position includes 4 paid Sundays off (except for Easter) for vacation time.

To apply or for more information please contact Rev. Brett Palmer at <u>marissafriedens@gmail.com</u> or call the church office at 618-295-2004.

Music Director

New Baden (IL) Zion UCC is seeking a part time musician to fill several different roles. The person who fills this position will play at weekly Sunday services, along with various special services such as Ash Wednesday, weekly Lent services, Ecumenical Thanksgiving, etc. Additional possible responsibilities include selecting weekly service music and hymns, directing an adult choir, coordinating special vocal and/or instrumental music, and serving on the worship team. Keyboard skills and church choral experience as a singer or director are preferred. To apply or for additional information, please contact council president Rodney Washburn at rodneywashburn1@gmail.com

Organist

First Presbyterian Church in Alton is seeing a part-time organist to provide professional leadership for our ministry of music. The organist will support our church's music ministry consistent with our mission and vision statements, theology, and worship practices. We value a standard of music excellence that connects with our community and attracts people to the church. The organ at First Presbyterian was built by Robert Dial Organbuilders in 1991. It has three manuals, 45 ranks, floating chamade and 32' sub-bass (elec.) The console is moveable and has 8 levels of memory. Contact Vickie Oberlink 618-791-2565 or email First Presbyterian Church of Alton at firstpres1831@gmail.com

Organist

The Episcopal Church of the Holy Communion, University City, MO is seeking an Organist. At the discretion of the Rector and under supervision of the Director of Music, you will be involved as a pastor, as an educator and as the principal keyboard accompanist of the Parish. A 12-month part-time agreement with compensation based on experience; salary based on a 10-hour work week. (Inclusive of all extra rehearsals and services. Also inclusive of the summer season when the Choir does not rehearse.) Vacation, substitutes, and other considerations are negotiable. To apply please submit a cover letter, resume, and list of references to Mary Chapman, Director of Music at mchapman@holycommunion.net and copy office@holycommunion.net

Organist (or Organist/Choirmaster)

St. Michael's Episcopal Church, O'Fallon IL is seeking to find a part-time organist or organist/choir master to begin leading us in music as soon as possible. At present responsibilities include hymn and liturgical accompaniment for up to two hours per week (including warm-up) and an additional hour per week if choir practice is involved. A brief monthly planning meeting with parish clergy and minimal time with the parish administrator for bulletin information is expected. Additional hours can be expected around Christmas, during Holy Week and Easter. Possible wedding and funeral work as well, and occasional mid-week services as available. Remuneration to be discussed.

For questions or to apply please call Fr. Gregory Wilde at the church office (618-632-6168).

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Our Chapter Members' Recital on Monday, March 18 was quite the success. Thank you to those who participated as performers as well as to all who were in attendance at both the dinner and recital. Below are a few photos which capture a bit of the spirit of the evening.



Recitalists Mark Scholtz, Marvin Smith, Dr. Kathleen Bolduan, David Erwin, Dr. William Sullivan & Rick Burk



Bob Schneider, organizer of "Pipes for Parkinson's"



The console of the Kegg organ at Little Flower Church





Some of the attendees at the Members' Recital

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SAVE THE DATE! MAY CHAPTER EVENT

Closing Banquet & Annual Meeting Monday, May 20 - 6:30 p.m. St. Paul Evangelical Free Church 9801 Olive Boulevard St. Louis, MO 63141 Betsy Stull, Hostess

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BOARD OFFICERS

AGO ST.LOUIS

2023-2024 Chapter Leadership Team

OFFICERS:

Dean - Jeff White Sub-Dean - Mary Beth Wittry

Secretary - Gaye Anderson

Treasurer - Mike Kaberline

Past Dean - Rick Burk

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Class of 2024

Sarah Bereza

Chuck Chauvin

Jill Griffin

Class of 2025

Suzanne Chisum Bob Raymond

David Sinden

Class of 2026

Stephen Jones

Mark Lawson Sharon Whitlock

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

2026 Convention Coordinator

Burnell Hackman

Auditor

Denis J. Doelling

Certification Coordinator

Brent Johnson

Dinner Reservations

Dr. Cathy Bolduan

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Monday, May 20 - 5:00 p.m.

St. Paul Evangelical Free Church 9801 Olive Boulevard St. Louis, MO 63141

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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 April issue is April 15.

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