

September 2026

Dean's Message

Dear Members of the Guild,

Part of me wants to ask, "Where did the summer go?" Part of me knows, "What a great summer this was, especially because of the Convention in July." There is definitely much cause for rejoicing. St. Louisans rose up and served as hosts that welcomed and supported and communicated—and the Convention was one for the books. Recitals and presentations, workshops and worship, exhibits and networking . . . every element of our time together was enriching and well-planned. Enjoy the photos and memories shared in this OPUS.



Dawn Riske

James Thomashower just retired as Executive Director of the Guild. We welcome Cathy Brigham to lead us forward as we continue to expand and share the love for pipe organs (all organs) and their music.

Now we begin another program year. After a big event like the Convention, there is always a need to pause a bit, to take stock and to "catch our breath." I hope you have used these late summer weeks for some renewal and self-care. I also hope that we are refreshed to gather and plan, to improve our craft and to continue connecting with the Guild on the local and on national levels. The upcoming Chapter Meetings promise to be engaging and informational. Sharing a meal together means a lot, as well; I always get to know something new about someone at our AGO gatherings. What might I get to know about you at the September meeting? It would be wonderful to see you there.

Blessings,
Dcs. Dawn Riske, CAGO
(314) 397-2651

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, September 21 - 5:30 p.m.
Second Presbyterian Church

Sub-Dean's Message



David Sinden

Dear Chapter Members,

I am so proud that our Chapter served as such a gracious host for a successful AGO National Convention this summer. Our Chapter spent an incredible amount of time and energy preparing and producing a very successful four days in St. Louis.

Together, we gathered with Guild members from far and wide to fulfill our organization's purposes: 1) To advance the cause of organ and choral music, 2) To improve the proficiency of organists and choral conductors, and 3) To provide members with opportunities to meet for discussion of professional topics, and to pursue such other activities as contribute to the fulfillment of the purposes of the Guild.

We should congratulate ourselves on a job well done! And as we look ahead to the coming program year, we can expect our Chapter to continue serving these purposes at the local level.

Our first event will be on **Monday, September 21**, at Second Presbyterian Church (4501 Westminster Place). We are grateful to Spencer Smith, who will be our host for the evening. Parking is available in the lot off Westminster Place. Use the elevator entrance in the parking lot, and take the elevator to the Lower Level (LL) for the Dining Room. Dinner will begin at 6:30 p.m. Be sure to make your dinner reservations by contacting Cathy Bolduan at 314-853-5011 or kathleen.bolduan@gmail.com. Following dinner, Dr. Connor Scott will give a Choral Conducting Masterclass. Dr. Scott is the Organist and Choir Director at Christ Church Cathedral. He completed his DMA in Choral Conducting from the University of Southern California last year. This masterclass is particularly geared toward anyone whose primary training is on the organ or who wishes they had more choral conducting training and experience. Beginning conductors are welcome! A quartet of singers from Christ Church Cathedral will be present to sing for the masterclass. Please get in touch with me at dsinden@gmail.com if you are interested in conducting for the masterclass.



Dr. Connor Scott

Future events for the 2026-27 program year are still being finalized, but here is what we currently know.

October - *date and details to be announced*

November - A presentation by Bryan Dunawald, President and Tonal Director of Schoenstein & Co., about the new Schoenstein organ at The Church of St. Michael and St. George, Clayton (6345 Wydown Blvd) - *date and further details to be announced*

Friday, January 8 - Epiphany Party

We plan to hold the annual Epiphany Party on Friday, January 8, at 6:00 p.m. This has become an important Chapter social event after a busy season. **We are looking for a host for this year's party.** Please get in touch if you can host this festive Chapter gathering.

Saturday, February 6 - February Flourish

More details to be announced soon.

April - A Chapter Members' Recital - *date and details to be announced*

Please keep this recital in mind as you prepare repertoire this year. We will be looking for Chapter members to perform.

(continued on page 4)

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PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED

Please include JoAnn Schneider, wife of Bob Schneider, in your prayers. Bob has done so much to promote Pipes for Parkinsons recitals and fundraising for research for this disease. JoAnn has taken a sudden turn for the worse and is under home hospice care with a poor prognosis as of the time of going to press. Your prayers and support mean a lot during these difficult days.

IN MEMORIUM

Mark Stephen Manelli

August 5, 1953-July 29, 2026

We offer our sympathies to Suzanne Manelli at the death of her husband, Mark Manelli. He died on July 29, 2026 after an extended illness. Mark was known for radio journalism, golfing, traveling, and appreciating many styles of music. A Service of Remembrance was held on Saturday, August 15, at Saint James Lutheran Church. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider memorial donations to a charity or organization dear to your heart, or to your local food pantry, in Mark's honor.

Some photos from the 2026 AGO National Convention.



The smiling faces of 2026 Club members Dawn Riske, Michelle Sliger and Burnell Hackman getting ready to enjoy the Fourth of July Fireworks from the Parkview Room of the Hyatt Regency at the Arch Hotel.



The fireworks display at the Arch.

(continued from page 2)

Monday, May 17 – Spring Banquet, Annual Meeting, and Presentation of the Avis Blewett Award
 Dardenne Prairie Presbyterian Church
 7400 S Outer Rd 364
 Dardenne Prairie, Mo. 63368
 6:30 p.m. – Dinner
 7:30 p.m. – Meeting

As I begin my tenure as your Sub-Dean, I will be forming a committee to plan the 2027-28 program year. I welcome any ideas you have for future Chapter programming. Please do get in touch! You can email me at dsinden@gmail.com.

David Sinden
 Sub-Dean

More photos from the 2026 AGO National Convention.



Convention Registrar, Regina Morris, ready to go!



Rick Burk at the AGO Hub in the Exhibit Hall.



Sunday evening choral concert by the Cathedral Choir and Schola directed by Andrew Kreigh at the Cathedral Basilica.



The welcome sign at Manchester UMC as we arrived for the Hymn Festival.



This is my last column as Convention Coordinator for the 2026 National Convention held in St. Louis!

It was a fantastic Convention from the Opening Banquet at Principia College to the closing St. Cecilia Recital Reception at the Hyatt Regency at the Arch. The pre- and post-convention events were pretty awesome too!

We had a fantastic Steering Committee who kept everything on course!

Rick Burk	Assistant Coordinator
Kendra Ruseler	Executive Secretary
Mike Kaberline	Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair
Regina Morris	Registrar
Dr. Sarah Bereza	New Music Chair
Dr. Steven Ball	Performance Co-Chair
Andrew Kreigh	Performance Co-Chair
Robert Raymond	Workshops Chair
Father Jeremy Secrist	Worship Chair
Scott Kennebeck	Facilities Chair
Biff Hackman	Hotel Chair
James Threlkeld	Transportation Co-Chair
Bill Wade	Transportation Co-Chair
Chuck Chauvin	Exhibits Chair
Jeff White	Mobile App Chair
Spencer Smith	Program Book Chair
Sharon Whitlock	Promotions Chair
Joseph Arndt	Gifts and Grants Chair
Dawn Riske	Hospitality and Volunteers Chair
Heather Martin Cooper	Young Organist Chair
Suzanne Manelli	Chapter Dean
Connor Scott	Rising Stars Liaison
Dr. Rose Whitmore	National Young Artists Competition in Organ Liaison
Joseph Arndt	National Competition in Organ Improvisation Liaison
Valerie Franzen	Director of Conventions and Event Services

Also

Dr. Bill Sullivan	Historic Organs Tour
Earl Naylor	Small but Mighty Organ Tour
Brent Johnson	Notable Organs Tour
Scott Wick	Wicks Factory and related sites tour

Plus, the many Chapter members and members of the larger community who helped in so many ways!

There are still outstanding bills but Mike Kaberline, Convention Treasurer, is “fairly optimistic” that we’ll end up in the black!

This Convention was six years in the planning, and it did truly take that entire time.

The number of Convention attendees who thanked me and members of this extraordinary Steering Committee is overwhelming!

Again, A BIG thank you to all who had a part of the Organ World *Meeting Us In St. Louis*!

Burnell L. Hackman
Convention Coordinator

MEET OUR NEW CHAPTER REGISTRAR

I would like to introduce myself by saying that I am looking forward to getting to know the Chapter members through my role as registrar. I moved to St Louis in 2007, and currently play a 100+ year old Kilgen organ at Kutis Funeral Home for a church group who meets there. (Many thanks to Jeff White of Wicks Organ L.L.C., who recently repaired some faulty keys for me!).

Our Chapter currently has 122 members. We welcome these most recent colleagues to our chapter: Brian Seever, Jin A. Yoo, DMA, Dr. Paul Florek, Peter Shea, and David McCoy.

The deadline for being included in the AGO St Louis Chapter directory/yearbook is October 1. Please renew your membership if it expires before then. If you have any questions, please contact me at nbtrippfam@gmail.com or 314-488-4786.

Brenda Tripp
Chapter Registrar

We thank out-going registrar, Regina Morris, for her many, many years of service in this role!

Monday, September 21

6:30 p.m. - Dinner

7:30 p.m. - Program

Second Presbyterian Church
4501 Westminster Place
St. Louis, MO 63108

Please RSVP by September 17 to Cathy Bolduan at kathleen.bolduan@gmail.com or 314-853-5011 to make your dinner reservation. Cost is \$20.00 per person.

See page two for more details on the program for this event.



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Dear Friends of Lectures in Church Music,

We are happy to announce the program for *Vi Messerli Memorial Lectures in Church Music*, **For All the Saints**, October 18-20, 2026, at Concordia University Chicago!

Please join us as we host our Monday plenary speaker **Rev. Dr. Dien Ashley Taylor**, pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in the Bronx, NY and Atlantic District president (LCMS), **Marin Jacobson**, director of choral activities at Valparaiso University, the **Kantorei** from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, under the direction of Kantor **Kevin Hildebrand**, and a hymn festival led by **Daniel Schwandt**, now cantor at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, plus many practical and thought-provoking workshops.

We begin on Sunday afternoon with a stellar piano recital by the director of Concordia's Preparatory and Community Music Program **Katrina Sudman** and **Vincent Catalano**.

The Lectures in Church Music website is www.CUCHICAGO.EDU/LCM26 If you wish, you can access the brochure at [here](#). Online registration is available within links in the brochure.

Registration fees are given on page 9 of the brochure. Please note that the early registration fees apply until September 15. A limited number of scholarships are available to college students and those new to church music. **Bring a friend** to Lectures and get \$25 off the registration when each of you registers! Please use the code FRIEND2026.

We are excited about the *Vi Messerli Memorial Lectures in Church Music: For All the Saints!* Please join us on Concordia's campus for a time of professional growth, Christian fellowship and worship, and inspiring music-making!

Steven Wentz

Coordinator, *Vi Messerli Memorial Lectures in Church Music*

News from one of the partners of the American Guild of Organists. Don't forget AGO members receive a discount on membership in CMI. Details are available on the National website at www.agohq.org.



CMI 2026 Fall Events

August 22: New and New-to-You Choral Music for the Upcoming Seasons with Dr. Don Horisberger & Dr. Robert Mann

August 29: Navigating Church Employment with Dr. Lenora McCroskey

September 1: Dr. Paul Lindsley Thomas Society Application Deadline

September 12: A Psalm Service for Advent/Christmas based on the O Antiphons with Dr. Lynn Trapp

September 26: Mastering Congregational Song with Dr. Michael Burkhardt

October 3: More than Moving Our Lips: Singing with Confidence and Helping Others to do the Same with Dr. Geoffrey Williams

October 10: Hymn Festival in Littleton, CO. Watch for more information.

October 18: Hymn Festival as part of The Congregation Sings project at 4:00 p.m., First Lutheran Church, Carlisle, PA. Watch for opportunities to join a hymn study prior!

November 7: Our Present and Future: Singing with Children with Dr. Michael Burkhardt

November 14: Spirituals: The Why, When, and How to Use Black Sacred Music in Worship Dr. Jeffrey Murdock

More information and registration at churchmusicinstitute.org/events

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Still more photos from the
2026 AGO National Convention

Left: The welcome sign as we arrived at Principia College in Elsa, IL.

Center: Opening Concert in Cox Auditorium at Principia College.

Lower left: The St. Louis Children's Choir performing at The Sheldon Concert Hall.

Lower right: Chelsea Chen, organist for the St. Cecilia Recital at Manchester United Methodist Church.



Open POSITIONS

(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, be sure to visit the “Open Positions” section of our website at <https://www.agostlouis.org/job-openings/>.

MUSIC ASSOCIATE AND ASSISTANT ORGANIST

First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, MO is seeking a gifted musician, collaborative colleague, and creative leader to help shape the next chapter of our music ministry. This is a part-time position of 15 hours per week. To apply, send a cover letter, resume and recordings to Bill Larson, Business Manager, at blarson@kirkwoodpres.org.

ORGANIST

Holy Trinity Reformed Episcopal Church (1016 S. Elm, Webster Groves, MO) is seeking an organist. In addition to regular services, the organist will have the right of first refusal for weddings and funerals. For more information, please contact Sr. Warden Ted Watkins at crsprat@charter.net or 636-221-1512.

ORGANIST

Third Baptist Church invites applications from trained organists to join its music ministry team. The full-time position also includes serving as media director. Full position description may be found on the church’s website. If interested, please send a cover letter, resume, references to Senior Pastor, Dr. Tommy Simons at tsimons@thirdbaptist.org.

CHOIR DIRECTOR

Parkway United Church of Christ seeks a part-time choir director. If you feel that we could be a good fit for you and your gifts, please send a cover letter and resume to employment@parkwayucc.org. Please indicate that you are applying for the choir director position.

ORGANIST/PIANIST

Resurrection Lutheran Church (1211 W. Homer M Adams Pkwy, Godfrey IL) is seeking an organist or pianist. Duties include playing hymns, Lutheran liturgies, and service music such as preludes, voluntaries and postludes. Sunday services are at 10:00 a.m. Additional services include mid-week services during Lent and Advent, Christmas Eve and other special services. For more information or to apply please contact Neal at 618-433-1611 or Pastor Jan at 618-250-1608.

Events Calendar

There are currently very few upcoming events listed on our Chapter online calendar. With more activity beginning in the Fall, 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 events@agostlouis.org. Visit the Chapter website at www.agostlouis.org for more detailed information on all events.

Paul Fey, Organist

Sunday, October 11, 2026— 7:00 p.m.

Webster Groves Presbyterian Church

45 West Lockwood Ave

Webster Groves, MO 63119

Free and open to the public

This is part of his US Concert Tour

Convention photos continued: *Below Left: Exhibits Hall Grand Opening; Below Right: NYACOP Finalists*



*Below Left: NCOI Finalists; Below Right: In Unison Young Artists
Bottom Left: Gospel Worship Service; Bottom Right: Hymn Festival*



Final Convention Photos

*Columbia Handbell Ensemble**Christopher Houlihan; Christine Brewer; Zanaida Stewart Robles**Rising Stars*

*Above: Toasting outgoing AGO Executive Director James Thomashower
Right: Welcoming incoming AGO Executive Director Cathy Bringham*



BOARD OFFICERS

2026-2027 Chapter Leadership Team



OFFICERS:

Dean - Dawn Riske
 Sub-Dean - David Sinden
 Secretary - Gaye Anderson
 Treasurer - Mike Kaberline
 Past Dean - Suzanne Manelli

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Class of 2027

Mary Hitchcock-Reinhart
 Earl Naylor
 Spencer Smith

Class of 2028

Joseph Arndt
 Luella Foster
 Matthew Gerhardt

Class of 2029

Kendra Ruesler
 Connor Scott
 TBD

APPOINTED POSITIONS:

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 Denis J. Doelling
Certification Coordinator
 Brent Johnson
Dinner Reservations
 Cathy Bolduan
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St. Louis Chapter

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THE OPUS

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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 October issue is September 10.

Send address changes or mailing label requests to:

**Brenda Tripp
6923 Ravenscroft Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63123**