



## Letter from our Dean

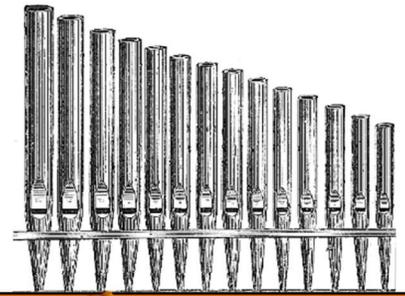
I am looking forward to this year's AGO Delaware activities, and I'm certain you are as well. I always enjoy seeing your smiling faces at these events and hearing about the latest news of your church and your life. This is one of the best parts of the AGO – seeing friends and catching up with them. Plan to come and enjoy good times with your colleagues this season.

Speaking of catching up with colleagues, I was delighted to attend this summer's AGO National Convention in Seattle. The AGO has not had an in-person convention for many years, and it was great fun to catch up at this one with friends and colleagues from across the county. This national meeting was, in my experience, the best I've attended – and I began attending these in 1980! The players were outstanding and almost all of them were young. The organs we heard are excellent and colorful. Many of you know that the country's northwest has been a hotbed of cutting-edge organ builders for many years. These organs were thrillingly in evidence at this convention!

And speaking of new organs, we are getting a new one here in Wilmington! This fall Christ Church Christiana Hundred is installing in its chapel a new Fisk organ in Italian baroque style – a style of organ unique for this part of the world. Organist Nathan Laube will be with us at our November meeting to explain and demonstrate it for us. Make sure you mark this Saturday meeting on your calendar!

I do hope you will plan to join us this season at one - or every one - of our programs this season. We can't wait to see you!

—David Schelat



## Delaware AGO Chapter Officers

David Schelat, *dean*

Gabe Benton, *subdean*

Barb Bayer, *secretary*

Mike Eareham, *treasurer/registrars*

## Members-at-large

Dalai Choie

Joe Loudon

Steven Patchel, *newsletter*

Jane van Valkenburg

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## Delaware AGO Member Spotlight

Jack Burnam

## From our Subdean

*We hope you will join us for this season's events sponsored by the Delaware AGO*

### **Saturday 15 October 10:00-12:00 Handbell Workshop with Kerry Dietz**

St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
1314 Foulk Rd, Wilmington, DE

*Kerry Dietz, director of the Wilmington Handbell Ensemble, will lead a hands-on workshop. This is aimed at helping church music directors gear up their handbell choirs for Advent and beyond.*

### **Saturday 12 November 12:00-1:00 pm Masterclass with Nathan Laube**

Chapel of Christ Church Christiana Hundred  
505 Buck Rd, Wilmington, DE

*It's not every day that a new pipe organ is installed in Wilmington! In connection with his dedication recitals on November 11th and 13th, acclaimed concert organist and pedagogue Nathan Laube will lead a masterclass on Christ Church's new Fisk Opus 164. This organ is based on northern Italian instruments of the 16th century.*

**These later events are detailed on [www.delawareago.org](http://www.delawareago.org)**

#### **January 7th - 12th Night Party**

2PM - 5PM Home of Joanne Hench

#### **Saturday, January 28th - January Jumpstart**

9AM - 4PM Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church

#### **Sunday, February 19th Spirituals Workshop with Eileen Gunther**

1PM - 4PM Westminster Presbyterian Church

#### **Saturday, March 11th - Joint Meeting with the Southern Delaware Chapter**

9:30AM - 12PM Saint Anne's Episcopal Church

#### **Sunday, April 30 - Tour of Old Swedes Church**

3PM - 5PM Old Swedes Historic Site

#### **Sunday, June 4th - Annual Banquet**

5PM - 7PM St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

DELAWARE AGO

2022

Fall Events

**Saturday, October 15**

**10AM - 12PM**

**Handbell Workshop  
with Kerry Dietz**

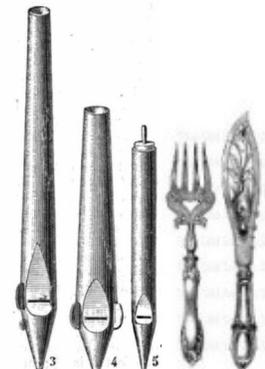
St. Paul's United Methodist Ch

**Saturday, November 12**

**12PM - 1PM**

**Masterclass: Nathan Laube**

Chapel of Christ Church  
Christiana Hundred



## **Calling all Culinaricians!** by Jane van Valkenburg

Do you love to cook or bake? Are you feeling frustrated because that villainous COVID has put a damper on your hosting opportunities? Well, fret no longer! Your very own AGO Chapter has the answer to your dilemma! Our program committee has assembled a phenomenal lineup of meetings for the coming year, but they will be even better with REFRESHMENTS! This is your chance to amaze your colleagues with some delectable treats. Reserve your spot now by contacting Jane Van Valkenburg ([JAVan211@gmail.com](mailto:JAVan211@gmail.com) or 979/220-0168)

*Mmmmm... Our mouths are watering already!*

## NOTABLE EVENTS



### Key Locations

- Christ Church, Christiana Hundred 505 Buck Rd, Wilmington
- First & Central Presbyterian Church, 1101 N Market St, Wilmington
- Immanuel Church on the Green, 50 Market Street, New Castle
- Immanuel Church, Highlands, 2400 W. 17th Street, Wilmington
- Newark UMC 69 East Main Street, Newark
- Old Town Hall of DE Historical Society 504 N Market Street
- Presbyterian Church of the Covenant 503 Duncan Road
- Saints Andrews and Matthew Episcopal Church 719 N. Shipley St.
- St. Barnabas Episcopal 2800 Duncan Road, Wilmington
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church 701 S. College Ave, Newark
- Silverside Church, 2800 Silverside Road, Wilmington

## SEPTEMBER

**Saturday 18 September 2:00 pm**  
**The Great American Songbook**  
Wilmington Concert Opera  
*Covenant Presbyterian Church*  
\$15

**Sunday 18 September 3:00 pm**  
**Nadjah Nicole – Jazz program**  
*Outdoor concert at Silverside Ch.*

**Sunday 25 September 3:00 pm**  
**Double Shot - Rock'n Roll**  
*Outdoor concert at Silverside Ch.*

**Sunday 25 September 3:00 pm**  
**Dr. Octavio Moreno, Baritone**  
**Gabe Benton, Accompanist**  
Dubois, Handel, Mendelssohn,  
Schubert, and more  
*St. Barnabas Episcopal Church*

## OCTOBER

**Thursday 6 October 12:30 pm**  
**David Schelat, organist**  
Lübeck, DuBois, Schelat, Vierne  
*First & Central Presbyterian*

**Friday 7 October 7:00 pm**  
**Willow Tree Celtic Ensemble**  
Celtic harp, cello, flute, violin  
*Immanuel Highlands Episcopal*

**Thursday 13 October 12:30 pm**  
**Joan Sparks, flute: "Songs of the Open Road"**  
New music by Philly  
composer Daniel Dorff  
*First & Central Presbyterian*

**Thursday 20 October 12:30 pm**  
**Dallas Vietty, accordion**  
Bach, Piazzolla, Ellington  
*First & Central Presbyterian*

**Fri-Sun. Oct 21-23, 2022**

**Wilmington Concert Opera**  
presents "Girondines"  
World Premiere Opera  
Music by Sarah Scrivener  
Liberetto by Kirsten Kunkle  
7pm Lecture 8pm performance  
(Sunday 1:00 lecture 2:00 opera)  
*Covenant Presbyterian Church*

**Saturday 22 October 3:00 pm**  
**Pyxis Piano Trio**  
Music of Debussy and Dvořák  
\$25 advance \$30 door \$10 students  
*First & Central Presbyterian*

**Thursday 27 October 12:30 pm**  
**Center City Chorale**  
Choral Music for Evening  
by Hogan, Phillips, Wood,  
Proulx, Lauridsen  
*First & Central Presbyterian*

**Saturday 29 October 2:00-5:00**  
**Fall Festival & Halloween Spooktacular**  
Musical events featuring  
Barbershop Quartet; Music School  
String Faculty; Wilm. Concert  
Opera; Rainbow Chorale of  
Delaware; Organ demonstrations  
*Covenant Presbyterian Church*

**Sunday 23 October 4:00 pm**  
**Tempesta di Mare Orchestra**  
Music: Lully, Barsanti, Bon, Handel  
*Chapel of the Christ Child*

**Sunday 30 October 3:00 pm**  
**Richard Spotts, organ**  
Music of Tournemire on the  
newly restored Aeolian-Skinner  
*St. Paul's Episcopal Church*  
301 E. Ninth Street, Chester PA

## NOVEMBER

**Thursday 3 November 12:30 pm**  
**John Bullard, banjo**  
Bach on the banjo  
*Old Town Hall, 510 N Market St.*  
*Wilmington*

**Sunday 6 November 10:00 am**  
**Music for All Saints Sunday**  
Selections from Fauré's *Requiem*  
*Covenant Presbyterian Church*

**Sunday 6 November 3:00 PM**  
**Sharon Sable – Jazz program**  
*Outdoor concert at Silverside Ch.*

**Thursday 10 November 12:30 pm**  
**Copeland String Quartet**  
*Old Town Hall, 510 N Market St.*  
*Wilmington*

**Sunday 11 November 7:00 pm**  
**Sunday 13 November 4:00 pm**  
**Nathan Laube, organist**  
**Fisk Organ Dedication Concerts**  
Featuring Fisk op.164 and  
musicians from Tempesta di Mare  
\$20 Adults / \$10 Students  
*Christ Church, Chapel of Christ Child*

**Sunday 13 November 4:00 pm**  
**First State Flute Choir**  
St. Paul's Lutheran, Newark  
Free concert

**Thursday 17 November 12:30 pm**  
**Shelby Yamin, violin;**  
**Joyce Chen, harpsichord**  
Animal-inspired baroque music  
*Old Town Hall, 510 N Market St.*

**Saturday 19 November 3:00 pm**  
**David Schelat, organist**  
Bach, Bruhns, Vierne, and Franck  
celebrating Franck's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday!  
\$25 advance \$30 door \$10 students  
*First & Central Presbyterian*

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

by David Schelat



### Jack Burnam

*Immanuel on the Green, retired*

**You have had such a long life of service in the church! What are your earliest memories of church music?**

I grew up in an observant Baptist household, so church every Sunday—that's to say, Sunday School *plus* the morning service *and* the evening service—was a regular part of my life. The Sunday morning service was fairly formal, with choir anthems, organ, and hymns; the evening service was more unbuttoned, with a song leader and cascading gospel-style arpeggios on the piano joining the organ. I can still hear in my head the way every Sunday night service ended, with the congregation singing, unaccompanied: "Turn your eyes upon Jesus..."

**When did you first feel a call to be a church musician?**

That came about gradually, beginning with my interest in the organ. Margaret Stirling, our church's fine organist, had always impressed me with her playing, but it never occurred to me that *I* could play the organ; until a junior high friend became the recipient of the six free lessons that came with his family's new Lowrey spinet. As I watched him play "Drink to me only with thine eyes" with three left-hand chords and a left-foot bass, it dawned on me that this was actually something I could do.

I was fortunate to have the guidance of a family friend—Frank Thompson, then organist of West Presbyterian—who plied me with books and recordings and fed my growing appetite for anything about the organ. Frank advised me to resume the piano study I had abandoned, and

he eventually connected me with my first organ teacher, J. Harrison Walker at (what used to be) St. Andrew's Church in Wilmington. When Harrison gave me my very own copy of *The Hymnal 1940*, that pretty much set the hook.

Meanwhile, my chorus teacher at Mount Pleasant, Starr Cole, had invited me to sing with the little church choir he led at Brandywine Methodist Church. It's where I first sang Beethoven's "Hallelujah" from *Christ on the Mount of Olives*. I can't imagine there was much polish to anything we sang, but I do know it's where I learned to sight-read!

All of these experiences began to feed my growing notion that church music might work as a career. Dad strongly advised me to major in Music Education, so I'd have "something to fall back on." I gave the Music Ed major a shot, but abandoned it after one semester. I think it was the Instrumental Methods course that did it.

**Are there any moments in your church music career that stand out as mountain top experiences?**

Hmm. I think a life in church music mostly feels like a long walk through hill country, made up of steady ups and downs. The "mountain-top moments" are the exception, and usually unexpected.

But there are a few markers and events that stand out in retrospect. My first decade working in the Episcopal Church—1975 to 1985—saw a new, dramatically revised Book of Common Prayer, and a new Hymnal. I collaborated with the Rev'd Victor Kusik, the visionary rector of Immanuel, Highlands, a brilliant liturgist, preacher, pastor—and a generous friend and mentor—to develop a rich pattern of liturgy and music that inspired and nourished several generations of worshippers in that place.

In that same time period I also served Congregation Beth Emeth as they welcomed a new book, *Gates of Prayer*, to replace the old Reform *Union Prayer Book*. The restored

traditional sung prayers for the ritual blowing of the *shofar* during *Rosh Hashanah* were a good example. I wrote my own setting—an Anglican chant in a faux-oriental mode. I think they may still be using it!

In 1986 I was greatly honored to receive a commission from the Delaware Chapter of the AGO to write an anthem in celebration of our Chapter's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. "Rejoice in the Lord, You Righteous," for SATB choir, organ, and brass quintet, was performed at a special service in St Stephen's Lutheran Church. I also remember meeting the new young Music Director of First and Central Presbyterian, David Schelat on that very occasion!

In 1993 the Immanuel Choir of Girls created, almost incidentally, a recording—originally on cassette, later remastered to CD—which I feel has held up rather well. It marks a particularly special moment in time for me, when four members of the group that made the recording were Burnams: my own two daughters, and two of my nieces.

In 1995, in observance of my 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Immanuel, Highlands, I was the recipient of a harpsichord kit: a single manual, two-rank Italian-inspired design by Zuckerman. Along with the gift came the commitment of two choirmen, both of them engineers, to assemble said kit. They did meticulous work, and it took them nearly two years of weekends to complete the assembly; but the result was spectacular, and continues to be a source of joy.

And I must mention one other small thing—not exactly a mountain top experience, but the thought still evokes a satisfied smile. During a term as Dean of our Chapter—around 1977-78, I think—I instituted an occasional AGO chapter newsletter, which I thought should have a catchy title. I decided to call it... "The Windchest." That is still a thing, isn't it?

#### **Any moments that were particularly funny?**

I've probably experienced more moments of irony than comedy. Let's see—in the early '70s

when "Scripture choruses" were all the rage in evangelical and charismatic circles, I wrote one for the Baptists ("I am the Bread of Life") that now appears in the Episcopal supplemental hymnal *Wonder, Love, and Praise*—ecumenism in action, I suppose. Around the same time, I also made friends with a new "Jesus People" recruit and terrific drummer, and together we concocted a hard rock anthem for Pentecost Sunday that was Really Loud. It was well-received by most of the congregation, but apparently offended several folks who previously expressed distaste for my crypto-Anglican musical choices.

There have been some comedic moments, too. At one point I worked for a priest who felt entitled to sing the Evensong Psalm along with choir, with no awareness of key or pitch, and without turning off his lapel mic. He also enjoyed singing the "Hallelujah Chorus"—again, without any obvious reference to Handel.

I should tell one on myself: At a Holy Cross Day service, the hymn before the Gospel was "The Head that once was crowned with thorns" to the grand tune *St Magnus*, in Common Meter (86.86). I somehow found myself looking at the Communion hymn, "When I survey the wondrous cross," to the tune *Rockingham* in Long Meter (88.88). I introduced *Rockingham*, and off we went: "The Head that once was crowned with thorns / is crowned with glory now-ow-ow-ow-ow..." We all stopped right there and mild hilarity ensued. The choir assured me that my blunder had been a wonderful source of encouragement!

#### **You were music director of CoroAllegro for many years. How did that organization form?**

As best I can recall, in 1987 a small group of singers, members of a symphonic chorus conducted by our colleague David Christopher, prepared and presented a concert under David's direction. Its success left them eager to continue singing as a small vocal ensemble. David, however, had decided at that time to focus his

time and energy in other directions, and he encouraged them to seek another director, who turned out to be me.

They adopted the name Delaware Chamber Choir, and from the very first they were an independent, self-governing group with a Board of Directors drawn largely from the membership. Five years later, the name was changed to CoroAllegro.

CoroAllegro was, for me, a nearly three-decade seminar in choral music. The repertoire list from those years runs to an astonishing seven pages. I'm forever grateful to the amazing people who made that ensemble work—musically, but financially and organizationally, and most importantly as a caring family.

### **In retirement, how will you remain active in church music?**

I'll always be open to opportunities to lead workshops or rehearsals with interested choirs. Working with singers to boost their skill and confidence has been one of the most rewarding and enjoyable aspects of my time in church music; and it's been my experience that choral singers often benefit from hearing familiar advice come to them in a different voice.

I also plan to go back through the sizeable stack of choral compositions I've produced, to see what might possibly be of use to other musicians. There's a ton of things that I wrote to fill a specific need at a particular moment. I've been encouraged to create a website where some of these smaller creations could be made available; but that will depend on my acquiring a whole new skill set, so I guess we'll see.

And I look forward to the fascinating adventure of substitute playing and/or conducting, so I'll be happy to hear from any of my AGO colleagues in need of a break. Terms and conditions apply, of course!

## **Annual Banquet Recap**

Guest Speaker Rev. Victoria Sirota  
by Steven Patchel

The Annual Banquet capped off a year that featured mostly in-person, well-attended events as we emerged from the pandemic. We had first contacted Rev. Victoria Sirota in 2019 to speak in 2020, so her appearance was much-anticipated.

Rev. Sirota spoke of her own career as an organist/musician, as a woman-daughter-wife-mother who was raised Lutheran, and became an Episcopal priest later in life. What a journey with many insights gathered along the way!

She spoke passionately about her multi-faceted life and shared compassionately about the joys and challenges of being a church musician. She also inspired her listeners to realize their vocation and purpose. She encouraged clergy and musicians to remember these vocations and to pray together in order to unite our visions and hopes for our congregations.

It was a bright early summer evening, with lively conversation, good food, wine and dessert. The delicious menu was prepared by *Food for Thought* Catering with wine from David Schelat. Thanks to Gabe Benton, and all who planned and participated!



# AGO Membership Directory

By Jane Van Valkenburg

Many of you have participated in our Membership Roster project over the past few months, checking your listing for accuracy and providing additional information, such as mobile numbers, degrees and positions. Thank you for your assistance! It has helped us create the most comprehensive Membership Roster our chapter has ever had!

That said, this is a somewhat fluid document. Our chapter welcomes new members throughout the year, members move, change positions, add positions – all the things that active creative people do. You are receiving a digital version of the Roster via email. You are welcome to print it out or save it on your computer or in the cloud. In addition, you can now find the latest edition of the roster on our web site: [www.DelawareAGO.org](http://www.DelawareAGO.org). In the banner of the home page, hover over the button that says “About Us” to access a drop down menu that includes a “Members Only” section. Click on that, then enter the password (**see email**), and you’ll see a link to the most current Membership Roster. This tool will allow you to check your own listing, as well as to find out who and where your colleagues are. Let’s all continue to keep it up to date!

## Nominating Committee

Our chapter’s Nominating Committee is now forming and starting to work on a slate of four new board members to begin service in July 2023. This will be chaired by Dalaie Choi [dalaiechoi@gmail.com](mailto:dalaiechoi@gmail.com) and Joe Loudon [jlouden@ursuline.org](mailto:jlouden@ursuline.org). You may hear from them to participate, OR feel free to contact them if you are interested in volunteering your time and energy for your DE AGO Chapter.

## Substitute List

KEY: (S) Sunday, (C) choir, (HB) Handbells, (SS) Special Services, (W) Weddings, (F) Funerals



Richard L. Allen, DMA—SS, W, F (c) 410-937-1790  
(h) 302-368-0120 [richard.l.allen@verizon.net](mailto:richard.l.allen@verizon.net)

Julie Allport—SS, W/F (302) 690-0517;  
[juallport@yahoo.com](mailto:juallport@yahoo.com)

Michael Bareham—SS, W/F (443) 243-4722  
[splcmusmin@gmail.com](mailto:splcmusmin@gmail.com)

Barb Bayers—S, C, HB (203) 260-4295  
[babayers@gmail.com](mailto:babayers@gmail.com)

Stephen Bencoter—C, HB, SS, W, F (570) 690.3330  
[stephen.bencoter@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.bencoter@gmail.com)

David Bowlsbey—S, SS, W/F (302) 761-0536  
[dbowlsbey@hotmail.com](mailto:dbowlsbey@hotmail.com)

Jack Burnam—W/F (302) 994-6029  
[jwbgedeckt@gmail.com](mailto:jwbgedeckt@gmail.com)

Kerry Dietz—S, C, SS, HB, W/F (302) 494-5733  
[kwdietz56@comcast.net](mailto:kwdietz56@comcast.net)

Paul Fleckenstein—S, C, SS, W/F (302) 753-9569  
[pfleck@comcast.net](mailto:pfleck@comcast.net)

Sue Fuhrmann—S, C, SS, W/F (410) 920-8641  
[suefuhr@udel.edu](mailto:suefuhr@udel.edu)

Melissa Heieie—SS, W/F (302) 792-2596  
[melheieie@gmail.com](mailto:melheieie@gmail.com)

M. P. Moon—S, SS, F (302) 529-8650  
[mpm5s@yahoo.com](mailto:mpm5s@yahoo.com)

Steven Patchel—SS, W/F (302) 658-7328  
[spatchel@immanuel-highlands.org](mailto:spatchel@immanuel-highlands.org)

Mary Ann Quarry, Ph.D.—F(302)-584-8822  
[maquarry@comcast.net](mailto:maquarry@comcast.net)  
[maquarry@comcast.net](mailto:maquarry@comcast.net)

Patrice Roman—S, SS, W/F (302) 798-8377  
[patrice.roman@sainttom.org](mailto:patrice.roman@sainttom.org)

David Schelat—SS, W/F (302) 740-5786  
[davidschelat@gmail.com](mailto:davidschelat@gmail.com)

Jane Van Valkenburg—S, C, HB, SS, F  
(979) 220-0168; [javan211@gmail.com](mailto:javan211@gmail.com)

*Happy Autumn!*