



The Windchest

Newsletter of the Delaware Chapter,
American Guild of Organists

JUNE 2022

www.delawareago.org

Letter from our Dean

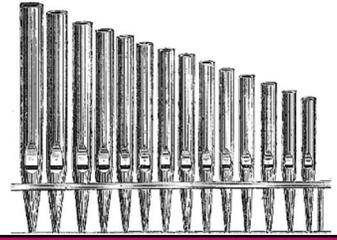
Our successful year is almost at a close! Despite pandemic problems, the Delaware Chapter has carried off a busy year that reached into many aspects of church music with excitement and inspiration, as well as social times together. Our wonderful board has done much of the “lifting” to make all of this happen. Subdean Gabriel Benton deserves your hearty thanks for being in charge of each program!

Our final program on the evening of Pentecost (June 5) promises to be an inspirational and memorable close to the year. I have experienced Rev. Dr. Victoria Sirota speak about the role and calling of musicians working for the church, and can honestly say that her message is one of power and inspiration. You and the clergy person you bring as your guest will be moved! Check out the details of this event in the subdean’s report and make your reservation today if you have not done so already.

If you have not yet voted for board members, please do so today. This is a good way to insure the continued flourishing of our chapter. The link to vote is here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/F89BXXH>
It is only available until the May 31.

Finally, the AGO national convention takes place this summer in Seattle beginning on July 3. I’ll be there and would love to see other Delaware faces at this time of rich musical experiences and camaraderie of friends from all over the country. It is not too late to register and attend. I hope you will consider this.

—David Schelat



Delaware AGO Chapter Officers

David Schelat, *dean*

Gabe Benton, *subdean*

Don McFarland, *secretary*

Mike Bareham, *treasurer/registrar*

Members-at-large

Dalaie Choie

Joe Loudon

Steven Patchel, *newsletter*

Jane van Valkenburg

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**Delaware AGO
Member Spotlight**

Don McFarland



From our Subdean

We hope you will join us for this final program sponsored by the Delaware AGO!

Sunday, June 5, 5:00-7:00 pm **Annual banquet featuring guest speaker** **Rev. Victoria Sirota**

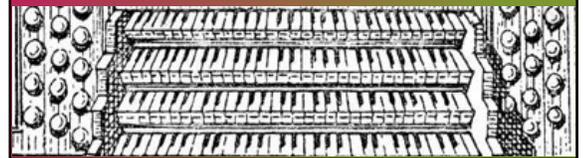
Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew,
719 N Shipley St. Wilmington, DE

We hope you will join your AGO family for our closing banquet this year! This is not to be missed - besides some wonderful food and company, guest speaker Victoria Sirota will speak on the vocation of the church musician and their clergy partners. As both a fabulous organist and pastor, Victoria Sirota is uniquely well-suited to speak on this topic. This is intended for them as much as for you, so please do invite your pastors!

Entree choices are Herb Chicken with Lemon Caper Butter Sauce, Beef Filet Tips Au Poivre, and Herbed Lentil Stuffed Peppers (vegan), along with a variety of appetizers, sides, desserts, and wine. Tickets are \$30 per person, and you can RSVP to Gabe Benton at gabriel.r.benton@gmail.com.

DELAWARE AGO 2022 Final Event

Sunday, June 5
5:00-7:00 pm
Annual banquet
with guest speaker
Rev. Victoria Sirota



BANQUET MENU

Herb Chicken with Lemon Caper Butter
Beef Filet Tips Au Poivre
Herbed Lentil Stuffed Peppers

Pear and Candied Walnut Salad
Rice pilaf
Roasted baby potatoes

Mixed Berry Cobbler
Assorted Cookies
and Brownies



REV. VICTORIA R. SIROTA, Episcopal priest, musician, lecturer and author, holds degrees from Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Boston University and Harvard Divinity School. She has given recitals in the United States and Europe, and has taught at Yale Divinity School and Institute of Sacred Music, The Ecumenical Institute of Theology at St. Mary's Seminary and University, and Boston University. Former National Chaplain for the American Guild of Organists, she is the author of articles, reviews and texts for hymns, cantatas and song cycles. Collaborations with her husband, composer Robert Sirota, include

"Prelude and Spiritual for Mother Emanuel" premiered at the Concert for Peace at Saint John the Divine (2015). She is recorded on Northeastern, Gasparo and Albany Records and her book *Preaching to the Choir: Claiming the Role of Sacred Musician* is available from Church Publishing. Honors include awards and grants from the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst, The Newington-Cropsey Foundation, Woodrow Wilson Foundation and Episcopal Diocese of Maryland.

Prior to her nine years as Canon Pastor and Vicar at The Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine in New York, she was Vicar of The Church of the Holy Nativity in Baltimore. Retired as Rector of Saint John's Episcopal Church in Getty Square, Yonkers, NY, she is currently Chaplain for the Association of Anglican Musicians and living in Searsmont, Maine.

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

MAY

Sunday May 29 at 3:00 pm
New Ark Chorale
Love, Healing and Remembrance
 Dr. Michael Larkin's "Requiem"
 Tickets at newarkchorale.org
 St. Paul's Lutheran Church

JUNE

Sunday 5 June 4:30 pm
The Rainbow Chorale of Delaware
 Anthony Condoluci-Smith, Director
 With special guests Joyful Noise
 Rob Kennan, Director
 Freewill Offering
 Presbyterian Church of Covenant

Sunday 5 June
4:30 Prelude / 5:00 Evensong
 David Brensinger, organ prelude
 Christ Church Christiana Hundred

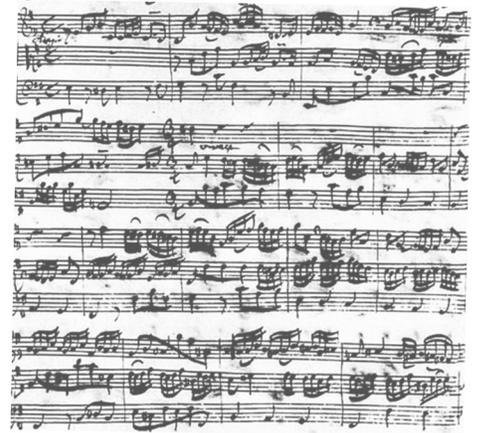
Sunday 5 June 5:00 pm
Annual AGO Banquet
 guest speaker Rev. Victoria Sirota
 appetizers, wine, supper,
 Saints Andrew and Matthew

Sunday 12 June 3:00 pm
Wilmington Handbell Ensemble
 Newark UMC
 69 East Main Street

Sunday 12 June 4:00 pm
Choral Evensong for Trinity Sunday
 Immanuel on the Green
 Combined choirs of Immanuel
 and St Peter's, Lewes
 Jack Burnam conducting
 T. J. Thomas, David Kelley, organists
 A Reception honoring Jack Burnam
 on the occasion of his retirement
 follows the service.

AUGUST

Sunday 7 August 1:00 pm
Wilmington Concert Opera
The Great American Songbook
 Part of Summer Community
 Concerts on the East Lawn
 Presbyterian Church of Covenant
 Free admission



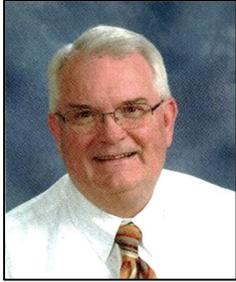
FOR SALE

Kawai SR70 digital organ, 3 manual, full pedalboard, full midi, hundreds of presets, self-contained speakers, disk drive, excellent condition, asking \$2200.00. Call Bob at 302-373-5046 or via email bobc1227@icloud.com



**MEMBER
SPOTLIGHT**

by Jane van Valkenburg



Don McFarland

Richardson Park UMC

You have been an exemplary AGO Board Secretary for the past two years, but that is not the only job from which you're

retiring. Please tell us about Richardson Park UMC and Cunningham Music.

It has been my privilege to serve Richardson Park UMC for a total of 20 years, from 1996 to 2006 and then from 2013 to now. In between, I served at St. Alban's Episcopal Church from 2006 to 2010.

I have been in the business of selling pianos and organs from 1984 (at Wilmington Piano Company) until retiring from Cunningham Piano Company in 2019. As soon as they found out I could play the organ, it was off to the races and my niche became church organ sales.

Through the years I have had some wonderful experiences, met some delightful people (and a few stinkers) along the way. Presently, I am still consulting for R. A. Daffer Church Organs, out of Jessup, Maryland, who have once again accepted sales and regional service responsibility for Rodgers Organs. I have enjoyed the opportunity to serve the AGO for many years and as Dean in Abilene, TX, and Subdean for our Delaware AGO.

Tell us about your background and what brought you to Delaware.

My birthplace was Birmingham, Alabama and my summers were nearly always spent in Mobile fishing, swimming, boating, along the Bay. After two years at the University of Alabama, "home" became Johnstown Pennsylvania. I met my wife Claudia there

and we were married in 1974. Three kids later, I went back to the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown to complete my BA in English Literature and Speech Communications.

How did you become interested in the organ? Who inspired you? Who encouraged you?

I began piano lessons at age 5. My parents were both musicians, including a very successful company in Mobile – The Bayley-Arnold Music Company, who were dealers for Mason & Hamlin organs/pianos and also were dealers for products of the Baldwin Piano Company. My grandmother's sister was organist at Trinity Episcopal Church in Mobile for many years. My mother and my grandmother both encouraged me to "stick to music" as a means of broadening one's personality. At age 15, I took my first lessons on an 1849 Henry Erben organ at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Mobile. It was the beginning of a "love affair" I've had since.

Tell us about your family.

Claudia and I are the proud parents of 4 wonderful children, Elizabeth, Robert, David, and Edward. They are all married and living in the Wilmington area where we have the great pleasure of spoiling 7 grandchildren as well as assorted grand-dogs and cat. They are all musical but alas, no organists are showing up just yet. Family gatherings include lots of singing and playing of musical instruments with granddad at the piano!

You'll have more time to travel once you've retired. Do you have any trips planned?

Honestly, traveling these days is easiest staying right here in the USA. We have plenty of family to visit from time to time and there are a few places we'd like to see, such as Mt. Rushmore, the "Badlands" and Yellowstone Park.

The organ at Richardson Park UMC is clearly a source of pride. Tell us about designing it.

The organ I met in 1996 at Richardson Park was truly a "Heinz 57." The heart of the organ was an 1890 Roosevelt of 20 ranks that the church acquired in 1953 through the generosity of two men who worked for the Wilmington Pipe Organ Company as teenagers, Jay Cummings and Branson Frye, the organ grew to 57 pipe ranks and 8 electronic voices. It had a 4' Harmonic Flute in every division, but no Pedal Reed until I found an E. M. Skinner Pedal Trombone to add!

By 2013, the organ's console and internals were becoming unreliable, so we had to make some decisions about moving forward. In the end, the Organ Committee recommended the Rodgers Digital Console and asked me to select the best ranks of pipe work to interface with the digital organ. We kept all of the Roosevelt, some nice Aeolian Strings, and, of course, the Skinner trombone.

Do you have any non-music hobbies?

My non-musical hobbies are whatever my wife wants to do, and watching my grandkids at sports, dance recitals, and concert performances at their schools.

What advice do you have for a young person who is interested in the organ?

1. Learn to play hymns well and confidently.
2. Practice diligently and remember, not everyone who will hear you play understands organ literature as you might.
3. Don't ever be afraid to play the chimes!

Singing For Life

April 30 Workshop
by Mike Bareham

Drop your gut! Raise your hat! Find your snort! These were some of the words of wisdom imparted to us at "Singing for Life" presented by Suzanne DuPlantis on Saturday, April 30 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Newark. This DE AGO event was well-attended and well-received by over fifty participants!

Suzanne teaches voice at Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges. She has been a vocal coach for Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church's Sing for Life choir for over a decade. As our guest clinician, she inspired us with her love of and belief in singing for life!

The two-hour workshop was live streamed on our FaceBook page and can be found there under videos or with this link: <https://fb.watch/cJ9ZSNcMro/>. We hope you find the techniques and tips presented just as helpful and enlightening as did those who attended the event.



Our Pedals, Pipes & Pizza Event on March 19 had 8 young organists participating.

Wonderful presentations were made by Jack Burnam, Paul Fleckenstein, David Schelat, Jane van Valkenburg, Michael Davidson and Margaret Love.

Chapter Directory Update

By Jane Van Valkenburg

All our members received an email about their contact information for our chapter roster. The Chapter receives your information from AGO's National Headquarters, but it is often outdated or incomplete, and not in a format that is easy to edit.

The Board decided to get our membership roster in shape, and the first step in doing that was to enter all the data into a spreadsheet. That was done for all 63 of our members, then that spreadsheet was emailed to everyone with the request for each member to confirm or correct their information. Many thanks to the forty-three of you who responded!

We are now in the process of contacting the remaining twenty members so that we will have a list that is as accurate as possible.

Once that is done, we will periodically remind everyone to let us know when you move or change positions or add a new phone number. Changes can easily be made in our master spreadsheet.

Our plan is to print a Chapter Directory, probably once a year. The Directory can include a list of officers, the dates and locations of our programs for the year, and our membership roster. Each member's information can be printed in block format from our master spreadsheet. The spreadsheet can be updated as soon as you report any updates to us. Perhaps we'll eventually have a protected "members-only" area on our website where the updated list will be available.

Our goal is to have a Chapter Directory ready for distribution as we begin our 2022/2023 program year.

Thanks for keeping us up-to-date!

Substitute List

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



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Enjoy Your Summer!