



**The Executive Committee of  
Grand Rapids AGO  
2019-2020**

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# THE CIPHER

February 2020

**From Our Dean**

Hello Everyone!

I hope you have had a restful time to relax after a busy holiday season. We have some exciting and interesting things coming up in the next few months.

**This month (February)**, we are gathering to experience the pipe organ in different and artistic ways. First United Methodist in Grand Rapids is graciously welcoming us for a spectacular concert of Organ & Saxophone music. Eric Strand, organ; and Hugh DeWitt, saxophone; will present a jazzy and artistic expression of music that may be unusual to our traditional repertoire of organ literature. We will also be able to experience a gallery walk-through of the art exhibit for this year. **Our event begins at 7pm** and we will not be having a dinner. A reception during the gallery time will be served. I would also encourage you to check out some of the other special events offered during the "Celebration of the Arts" at First UMC.

**Annamae Rottman Organ Competition:** The deadline is February 15! If you are wanting to participate, please have your application in to Peter Kurdziel.

**Next Month (March)**, we will be inviting any and all young organists to take part in a recital. This is an opportunity for the Guild to support students in the area in their study of the organ. This will also be a wonderful time to invite family and friends. **Teachers and students:** we welcome all levels of literature, hymn improvisations, etc. If you plan to take part or have questions, please contact me by March 1.

Kevin Soodsma, Dean  
[kevin.soodsma@gmail.com](mailto:kevin.soodsma@gmail.com)



## Monthly programs for 2019 – 2020

Here is the lineup of AGO meetings for this season, 2019-2020. Our meetings take place at various venues throughout the area and are typically the third Monday evening of the month although there are certainly exceptions. We generally begin with a punch bowl and social time at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m.

**The cost for dinner is \$15 and to encourage attendance by younger members the board has underwritten the cost of meals for all AGO members and guests under the age of 30. The cost of these meals will come from a dedicated fund that has been recently established for this purpose.**

The program portion of the meeting follows at 8:00 p.m. and all programs are open to the public. On occasion free-will offerings will be accepted at the conclusion of some evening programs.

Dinner reservations are requested by the Wednesday prior to the meeting and members will be called by the Executive Council. You may also make your reservation by emailing [agodinner@grago.org](mailto:agodinner@grago.org) or calling our Treasurer, Errol Shewman at 307-7241.

**Monday, February 17, 2020**

**No Dinner at this program**

7:00 p.m. Program

**First United Methodist Church**

227 Fulton East

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

**Celebration of the Arts**



### Organ and Saxophone concert

Eric Strand, organist

Hugh DeWitt, saxophone

Following the concert will be the art show and reception



**Monday, March 16, 2020**

6:30 p.m. Punch Bowl

7:00 p.m. Dinner

8:00 p.m. Program

**AGOYO Recital****Calvin University Chapel**

1845 Knollcrest Circle S.E.

Grand Rapids, MI 49545



Our March meeting will present several young organists in a recital. Participants to be announced.

**Sunday, April 19, 2020****3:00 p.m. Organ Recital****Trinity Lutheran Church**

2700 Fulton Street East

Grand Rapids, MI 49506

**Renee Louprette Organ Recital**

Hailed by The New York Times as “splendid,” and “one of New York’s finest organists,” Renée Anne Louprette has established an international career as organ recitalist, conductor, and teacher. She is associated with a number of distinguished music programs in the New York City area, having served as Associate Director of Music at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Associate Director of Music and the Arts at Trinity Wall Street, Organist and Associate Director at the Unitarian Church of All Souls, and Director of Music at the Church of Notre Dame.

Upon receipt of a Master of Music degree in conducting from [Bard College](#) in May 2019, Ms. Louprette was appointed Assistant Professor of Music and College Organist at Bard. She continues as coordinator of the organ studio at [Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University](#), where she has been University Organist since 2013. She is a former member of the organ faculty at the Manhattan School of Music, The Hartt School of the University of Hartford, and the John J. Cali School of Music at Montclair State University.

Renée Anne Louprette has performed throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland, including at Westminster Abbey and the Temple Church in London, St. Giles Cathedral Edinburgh and Dunblane Cathedral (Scotland), Galway



Cathedral and Dún Laoghaire (Ireland). In 2018, she made her solo debuts at the Royal Festival Hall in London and the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris.

Additional European festival appearances include Magadino, Switzerland; In Tempore Organi, Italy; Ghent and Hasselt, Belgium; Copenhagen and Aarhus, Denmark; Bordeaux Cathedral and Toulouse Les Orgues, France. She appeared as organ soloist with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in Brisbane, Australia, in a performance of Saint-Saëns' Organ Symphony broadcast live on ABC Radio. She regularly performs at regional conventions of the American Guild of Organists and has been featured at two national conventions: the 2010 Convention in Washington, D.C., and the 2014 Convention in Boston where she presented the world premiere of Pamela Decker's Faneuil Hall. In July 2019, she presented a solo recital for the National Convention of the Organ Historical Society in Dallas, Texas.

Her recording of the "Great Eighteen Chorales" of J. S. Bach on the Metzler Organ in the chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge, England, was named a classical music Critics' Choice 2014 by The New York Times. In February 2018, she released a recording of 20th-century French organ repertoire – "Une voix française – A French Voice" – on the Acis Productions label to critical acclaim. Her upcoming recordings include Bach's *Clavier-Übung III* on the Acis label, recorded on the Craighead-Saunders organ of Christ Church, Rochester, New York, and a collaborative recording of original compositions and arrangements of traditional Irish repertoire with Ivan Goff, recorded at the Church of St. Ignatius Loyola in New York City.

Renée Anne Louprette holds a Master's degree in conducting from Bard College Conservatory where she studied conducting with James Bagwell and composition with Joan Tower, and a Bachelor of Music degree summa cum laude in piano performance and a Graduate Professional Diploma in organ performance from The Hartt School, University of Hartford. She was awarded a Premier Prix – mention très bien from the Conservatoire National de Région de Toulouse, France and a Diplôme Supérieur in organ performance from the Centre d'Études Supérieures de Musique et de Danse de Toulouse, studying with Michel Bouvard and Jan Willem Jansen and improvisation with Philippe Lefebvre. She completed additional studies in organ with Dame Gillian Weir, James David Christie, and Guy Bovet.

Renée Anne Louprette is represented in North America exclusively by [Phillip Truckenbrod Concert Artists, LLC](#).

**Monday, April 27, 2020**

6:00 p.m. Punch Bowl

6:30 p.m. Dinner

7:30 p.m. Competition

**First (Park) Congregational Church**

10 East Park Place N.E.

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

**Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition**

*The Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition was founded in 2013 by Dr. Richard Rotman in honor of his mother and is an annual competition. We thank him for his generous support of young organists.*

- Eligibility – A competitor must be under 24 years of age as of August 1 of the competition year and be a resident of Kent County, MI or any county adjacent to Kent County and/or a resident student attending a junior high school, senior high school, college, or university in Kent County or any county adjacent to Kent County (Ottawa, Muskegon, Newaygo, Montcalm, Ionia, Barry, or Allegan Counties)
- Previous first place winners of this competition are eligible to compete in this competition again in two years.
- Venue – Grand Rapids area pipe organ of high quality and versatility, varied from year to year
- Repertoire – Two or more pieces of contrasting styles and representing different time periods and a hymn

**[SEE MORE INFORMATION AND APPLICATION ON THE GRAGO WEBSITE](#)**

**Monday, May 18, 2020**

6:30 p.m. Punch Bowl

7:00 p.m. Dinner

8:00 p.m. Program

**Second Congregational Church**

525 Cheshire Street N.E.

Grand Rapids, MI 49505

**An Evening with Composer John S. Dixon**

Born in London, England, John S. Dixon (b. 1957) was classically trained in piano and organ. During his school years he was active in music in the Anglican church and was a founding member of The Southend Boys Choir, one of Britain's foremost youth choirs. He earned degrees from The Queen's College, Oxford University, and Harvard Business School. His composing has flourished since moving to America in 1988, largely through his involvement in the music ministry at Providence Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach, where he is currently organist and composer-in-residence. He has written hundreds of pieces for church and secular use.







MUSIC OF  
**JAPAN**  
FEATURING:

  

MARIMBA    TAIKO    ORGAN

RHONDA SIDER EDGINGTON  
CAROLYN KOEBEL  
MARK LOPEZ

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH    FREE ADMISSION  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN    SUNDAY, FEB. 16, 3 PM

Music from Japan will be the theme unifying an afternoon of powerful and evocative sounds, on Sunday, February 16 at 3pm at First United Methodist Church in Grand Rapids, as part of their Festival of the Arts. Featured instruments will be pipe organ, marimba and Taiko drums. Combining aspects of classical and world music, drawing on various facets of Japanese culture, and involving a group of talented and eclectic performers from across West Michigan, this concert will provide a soundscape ranging from the intimate to the thunderous.

One of the highlights will be the piece Fujin-Raijin by Japanese composer Tokuhide Niimi. In this version for organ and Taiko drums it will surround the listener with a sonic depiction of the Japanese God of Thunder and Wind. Another first will be a piece written for this ensemble by the composer-in-residence at Harvard University, Carson Cooman, and supported by a grant from the San Francisco AGO chapter.

Performers will include Rhonda Sider Edgington, Organist at Hope Church in Holland and Organ Instructor at Calvin University, Mark Lopez (Marimba), performer, arranger, educator and Lecturer in the Hope College Dance Department, Carolyn Koebel (Taiko), music therapist and world percussionist based in Kalamazoo, and JungWoo Kim, professor of voice at Hope College



## LAGRAVE AVENUE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

### MUSIC POSITIONS



LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church is searching for one or two choral directors to conduct multiple choirs within a fully-graded choral program (K-12 and adult Chancel Choir), and a handbell director to lead the adult handbell choir. Job descriptions and further information regarding the application process for each of these positions may be found on the church's website ([www.laggrave.org](http://www.laggrave.org)) and the church's Facebook page.

#### [Chancel Choir Director](#)

#### [Children's and Youth Ensembles Director](#)

#### [Handbell Director](#)

### Would you like to give a recital?

**St. Thomas Episcopal Church** in **Battle Creek** offers the service of Choral Evensong on the first Sunday of each month (October - June). Prior to this service, the historic 1929 E.M. Skinner pipe organ is featured in a 25 minute pre-service recital. More information about the instrument can be found at <https://www.stthomasbc.org/music>.

Any area organists interested in performing one of these programs should contact Dr. Stephen White at [music@StThomasBC.org](mailto:music@StThomasBC.org). Other than being sensitive to the liturgical season, repertoire selection is open to the performer.

### MUSIC AT MID-DAY

#### A Free Concert Series in the City

Concerts (12:15pm - 12:45pm) are free to all.

An optional \$6 lunch (11:15am - 1:15pm) is available before or after the performance. Soup, salad bar, bread, beverage, and cookies are served.

March 10	Dr. Larry Visser, organ
March 17	Diane Penning, soprano
March 24	River Rogues
March 31	MacRaven
April 7	No Concert
April 14	Jonathan Tuuk, organ
April 21	Grand Rapids Christian High Chamber Chorale
April 28	Mary Rademacher, jazz vocals
May 5	Bruce Robey and Friends

**First (Park) Congregational Church**  
**10 East Park Place N.E.**  
**Grand Rapids**

### Muskegon-Lakeshore AGO Chapter

#### **2019-2020 Programs**

**February 29, 2020 (Saturday) 9-11a.m. "Choral Workshop"** — Dr. Michael Match Mona Shores MS Choir Room—Muskegon

**March 15, 2020 (Sunday) 3 p.m. "In Memoriam: A Members' Recital"** First Congregational Church UCC—Muskegon

**April 19, 2020 (Sunday) 4 p.m. "Young Artist: Emily Amos"** First Presbyterian Church—Grand Haven

**May 8, 2020 (Friday) Time TBA "60th Anniversary Banquet and Celebration"** Prince of Peace Catholic Church—Muskegon

### Feeding the Soul of the City

#### **2019-2020**

All performances are held Tuesdays from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

**February 25, 2020** "Grand Valley Faculty Brass Quintet"

**March 24, 2020** "Grand Rapids Guitar Quartet"

**April 14, 2020** "Gregory Maytan, violin" May 26, 2020 "Quintessence, Woodwind Quintet"

**June 9, 2020** "Denise Newell, mezzo soprano and Caron Farmer, piano"

### **HOLLAND AGO CHAPTER EVENTS**

**February 4, 2020 (Tues) - 7pm - Clergy-Musician Forum with Dan Gillett and Rick Van Oss from First Reformed - at First Reformed in Holland**

In the third installment of this successful series, we will hear from another local musician-clergy team who have an enviable relationship - Rick and Dan will discuss what works well, how they have collaborated so successfully together for decades, offer tips for the rest of us, and answer questions about their working systems and relationships

**March 23, 2020 (Mon) - 7pm - Local Composers Forum with Larry Visser - Second Reformed Church in Zeeland**

Following the success of our local composers forum last year, we invite Larry Visser of LaGrave CRC in Grand Rapids and accomplished composer to share the evening with us. Members will play their Visser favorites, and Larry will share with us about his compositions and musical journey.

**April 20, 2020 (Mon) - 7pm - The Aging Voice with Prof. Linda Dykstra - Hope College, Jack Miller, Choral Rehearsal Room**

Many of us work with aging singers in our church and community choirs. Prof. Dykstra will share best practices for singing as we (all!) age, and how to get the best sound from a group, no matter what their age.

**May 18 (Mon) - 7pm - Handbells with Larry and Carla Sue - Third Reformed in Holland**

Larry and Carla Sue moved to Holland, MI recently, but are well-known in handbell circles nationally and internationally, and they travel around the country to perform and lecture, as well as composing for handbells. We'll learn handbell techniques from them, hear how they found love through handbell playing, and have the opportunity to ask our burning handbell questions!



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Celebration of the Arts Concert

MUSIC FOR  
*Organ and  
Saxophone*



**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9 • 3 PM**

Eric Strand, *organist*, is joined by Hugh Dewitt, *saxophonist*, in music of Paul Halley, James Whitbourne, and Hans-Andre Stamm. Seasoned and frequent performers in West Michigan, this music features diverse stylistic elements including jazz and the avant-garde.

**CELEBRATION**  
*of the*  
**ARTS**

First United Methodist Church  
227 Fulton St E  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503



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CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS CONCERT

# **MUSIC OF JAPAN FOR ORGAN, MARIMBA, AND TAIKO DRUM**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16**

**3 PM**

Carolyn Koebel, taiko drum  
Mark Lopez, marimba  
Rhonda Sider Edgington, organ

Featuring music of Japanese composers,  
this concert will feature each instrument in solo,  
as well as ensemble works.



**CELEBRATION**  
*of the*  
**ARTS**

First United Methodist Church  
227 Fulton St E  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503