



# THE CIPHER

September 2021

## The Executive Committee of Grand Rapids AGO 2021-2022

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Chaplain

## From Our Co-Deans

Dear GRAGO friends and colleagues,

It is hard to believe that it has been a year and a half since we were last able to meet together in person. In the last eighteen months we have all experienced things we never thought possible. We never thought we would see churches close their doors to the people. We could never have dreamed that working with or singing in a choir could be one of the most dangerous jobs to have. We didn't see a global pandemic on our horizon. Yet, here we are in the midst of one. We all crave the ability to come together. We need each other more than ever.

Fall 2021 is almost here, and we are cautiously optimistic that we can meet in person this year. The Executive Board met in early August and made the decision that we cannot safely gather for a meal yet. We hope to bring back our traditional dinners and fellowship in 2022. We have an exciting year ahead, with a mix of programs rescheduled due to the pandemic, and new programs. Please take a moment to look at the listing in this newsletter and mark your calendars. We look forward to seeing you at our meetings this season!

Our first program is Monday, September 20 at 7pm - a beautiful worship service at Calvin University Chapel which will include the Installation of Officers. This is a joint program with the Muskegon Chapter. There will be an extended prelude with Handbell Duo from Holland, Carla and Larry Sue, and Calvin University organist Rhonda Edgington. Dr. Larry Visser will be the organist for the service, and we will include one of his recent hymns, *Out of Silence Music Rises*, text by Carl Daw, winner of the 2019 Utech Hymn Tune Competition. The Muskegon Chapter Dean and Countertenor, Michael Match will sing. Ben Zuzelski, one of our chapter's new young members, and a chorister of the Grand Rapids Choir of Men and Boys, will also sing. The service will contain a litany of lament and of rejoicing as part of our first time coming back together. We are pleased to have John Witvliet, director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, leading us in this service, along with our Regional Councilor, Caron Farmer. The evening promises to be inspiring and uplifting.

We will offer a reception following the service. We hope you will be able to reconnect with colleagues old and new.



Julia Brown



Carol McNally

## Introducing our new Chaplain for 2021-2022 year!



The Rev. Dr. **John D. Witvliet** is director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship and professor of worship, theology, & congregational and ministry studies at Calvin University and Calvin Theological Seminary. His responsibilities include teaching courses at both the college and seminary, and oversight of CICW's practical and scholarly programs, including the Calvin Symposium on Worship and the Vital Worship Grants Program.

His areas of interest include the history of Christian worship, worship practices in various denominations, biblical and systematic theology of worship, the role of music and the arts in worship, choral and congregational song and consulting with churches on worship renewal.

A graduate of Calvin College, Dr. Witvliet holds graduate degrees in theology from Calvin Theological Seminary, in music from the University of Illinois, and the Ph.D. in liturgical studies and theology from the University of Notre Dame.

He is the author of *The Biblical Psalms in Christian Worship: A Brief Introduction and Guide to Resources* (Eerdmans, 2007), *Worship Seeking Understanding: Windows into Christian Practice* (Baker Academic, 2003), co-author of *Proclaiming the Christmas Gospel: Ancient Sermons and Hymns for Contemporary Christian Inspiration* (Baker, 2004), and co-editor of *The Worship Sourcebook* (Faith Alive Christian Resources, Baker Books, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, 2004), and *Worship in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Change and Continuity in Religious Practice* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2004), and the children's books *At Your Baptism* (Eerdmans, 2011) and *At God's Table/ En La Mesa de Dios* (Calvin Press, 2017).

For many years, he has been active on hymnal and congregational song projects, including *Renew! Songs and Hymns for Blended Worship* (Hope Publishing, 1995), *Sing! A New Creation*. (CRC Publications, 2001), *Singing the New Testament* (Faith Alive, 2008), *Psalms for All Seasons: A Complete Psalter for Worship* (Faith Alive, 2012), *Lift Up Your Hearts* (Faith Alive, 2013), and a bilingual Spanish-English hymnal, *Santo, Santo, Santo/Holy, Holy, Holy* (GIA, 2019).

Dr. Witvliet serves as editor for three series of books—the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship Liturgical Studies Series (Eerdmans), Vital Worship, Healthy Congregations (Alban Institute), Church at Worship (Eerdmans)—as well as co-editor, with Pearl Shangkuan, of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship Choral Music Series (GIA). He is also the editor of *A Child Shall Lead: Children in Worship* (Choristers Guild, 1999).

He is the recipient of the Jubilate Deo award from the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, The Charles H. Flax Excellence in Church Award from Hampton Ministers Conferences and Choirs Directors and Organists Guild of the Hampton Ministers Conference, and the Collaborative Change Award from Calvin University.

He also served as president of the board of directors for The Choristers Guild; music director of churches in Michigan and Indiana; research associate at Notre Dame's Center for Pastoral Liturgy; and guest lecturer at worship conferences in several states and provinces, as well as in Hong Kong, Mexico City, Northern Ireland, England, and the Netherlands.

We welcome John as our Chaplain for the coming year

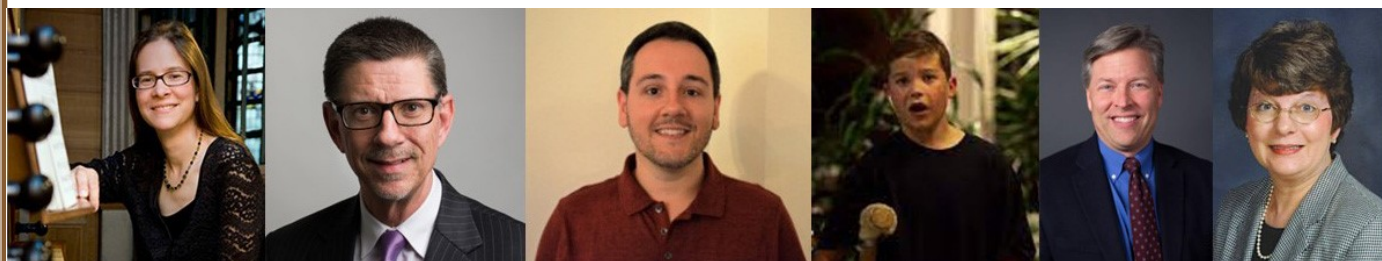
## 2021-22 Program Year

Here is the lineup of AGO meetings for the 2021-22 season. Our meetings take place at various venues throughout the area and are typically the third Monday evening of the month with some exceptions.

**Monday, September 20, 7:00 p.m. – “Out of Silence Music Rises”**

**Calvin University Chapel  
1845 Knollcrest Circle S.E.  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546**

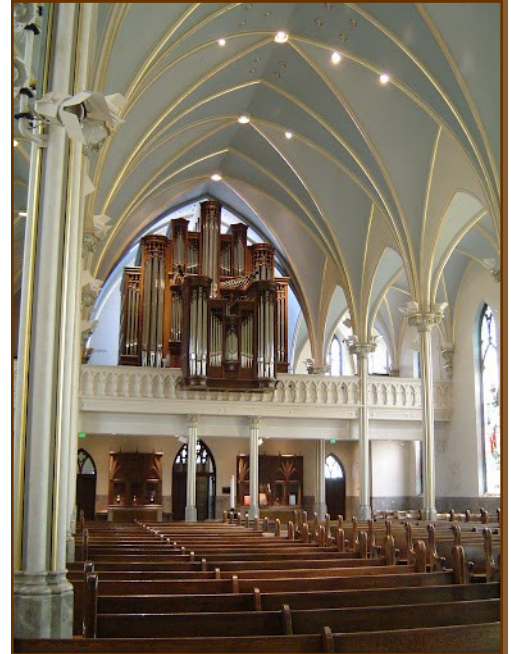
Service of Installation of New Officers for Grand Rapids and Muskegon Lakeshore Chapters, followed by a reception. Featuring Handbell Duo, Larry and Carla Sue, organists Rhonda Edgington and Larry Visser, countertenor, Michael Match, treble Ben Zuzelski, our Chaplain, The Rev. Dr. John Witvliet, and our Regional Councilor, Caron Farmer.



**Monday, October 18, 7:30 p.m. – “Year of the Young Organist: Investing in our Future”.**

**Cathedral of St. Andrew**  
**215 Sheldon Blvd SE**  
**Grand Rapids, MI 49503**

Eight young organists will be featured in recital at the Cathedral of St. Andrew. We have a great representation of ages, colleges and denominations with our performers: Chan Gyu Jang, Bethany Dame, Aaron Goodyke, Audrey Thomas, Jordan Malone, Ben Honeyford, Jonathan Bading and Andrew Chesebro.



**Sunday, November 14, 3:00 p.m. – Renée Anne Louprette in recital**

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
**2700 Fulton Street East**  
**East Grand Rapids, MI 49506**



Hailed by The New York Times as “splendid” and “one of New York’s finest organists”, Renée Anne Louprette performs widely as organ recitalist, accompanist, and teacher. Based near New York City, she has performed with many of the city’s premiere ensembles, including the Mostly Mozart Orchestra and the New York Choral Society, and she has appeared in Carnegie, David Geffen Hall (formerly Avery Fisher Hall), Alice Tully, and Merkin Halls. Her recording of J. S. Bach’s “Great Eighteen Chorales” (on the Axis label) was named Critics’ Choice 2014 by The New York Times. In February 2018, Acis released her new CD, *One Voix Française: A French Voice*. She frequently collaborates with Irish pipes Ivan Goff and the American Brass Quintet. Ms. Louprette is University Organist and Coordinator of the Organ Department at Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University.



**Friday, December 31, 7:00 p.m. – New Year's Eve Concert****Central Reformed Church****10 College Avenue N.E.****Grand Rapids, MI 49503**

Featuring Gregory Hand from University of Iowa. Childcare available. Reception following

Gregory Hand is associate professor of organ at the University of Iowa. Prior to this appointment he held the position of University Chapel Organist at Northwestern University, where he also taught in the Music Theory department. He was awarded the Doctorate of Musical Arts degree from the University of Michigan, where he studied organ with James Kibbie and harpsichord with Edward Parmentier.

Dr. Hand is in high demand as a performer and pedagogue. He was recently appointed to a five-year term on the jury of the Internationale Orgelwoche Nürnberg (ION), and has given recitals and masterclasses in the United States, France, Spain, Germany and Brazil.

His debut CD, "The Complete Gospel Preludes of William Bolcom" on the Naxos label marked the world premiere recording of all twelve of these landmark pieces. Critics praised the recording as "stunning" (American Record Guide) and noted the "sonorous and probing performances" (Gramophone), and the "brilliance of his technique" (allmusic.com).

**Monday, March 14, 7:00 p.m. - 2022 Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition****Mayflower Congregational Church****2345 Robinson Road S.E.****Grand Rapids, MI 49506**

The Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition was founded and underwritten by Dr. Richard Rotman in honor of his mother, Annamae Rotman. The competition is for young organists under 24, residing in or a student in Kent and adjacent counties. Location is Mayflower Congregational Church, and updated information is on our website. The application will be available on our website after January 14, and deadline to apply is February 15. Encourage all young organists in your circle to apply! For more information please visit our website. <https://grago.org/competitions/>

**Monday, March 21 – John Dixon, composer**

6:30 p.m. Punch bowl

7:00 p.m. dinner

8:00 p.m. program

**Second Congregational Church, U.C.C.****525 Cheshire Drive N.E.****Grand Rapids, MI 49505**

Born in England, composer/organist John S. Dixon has lived in Virginia for thirty years. Since 1990 he has written more than 800 pieces, mostly for organ, but also for choirs and instrumental ensembles. He is the organist at Providence Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach, and serves as the executive director of the Academy of Music, a community music school based in Norfolk. Currently he holds the office of Treasurer/Councilor for Finance and Development of the American Guild of Organists. John will play a program of his own compositions, including arrangements of familiar melodies, and explain why and how the pieces were composed. After the concert he will have complimentary pieces available for organists to take home.

**Sunday, May 15, 3: p.m., Basilica of St. Adalbert****Basilica of St. Adalbert****654 Davis Avenue, N.W.****Grand Rapids, MI 49504****Monday, May 16, 6:00 p.m. dinner, 7:00 p.m. concert, LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church****LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church****107 LaGrave Avenue S.E.****Grand Rapids, MI 49503****César Franck Bicentennial:**

Scott Dettra performs the complete organ works of César Franck in two recitals, at the Basilica of St. Adalbert and at LaGrave Avenue Christian



Reformed Church. Thanks to his mature harmonic language and ability to write achingly beautiful melodies, Franck's music has become an enduring foundation of the organ repertoire. Praised for the clarity, rhythmic intensity and musical elegance of his playing, Mr. Dettra will bring his hallmark poeticism and suave sense of expression to this beloved music, which is rarely performed live in its entirety.

## YEAR OF THE YOUNG ORGANIST

National AGO has named 2021 "Year of the Young Organist." This means that any young organist (defined as under 30) can join the guild or renew their current membership for free. This is the perfect time to engage more young organists in our chapter. More information about the membership subsidy can be found at [agohq.org/free-membership](http://agohq.org/free-membership)

## Find us on Facebook

We would like to invite you to join the Grand Rapids AGO Facebook Page.

We post updates about upcoming events, and you can post your events there as well.

<https://www.facebook.com/GrandRapidsAGO>

## Our Chapter website can be found at: <http://grago.org/>

There is lots of useful information including history of the Grand Rapids Chapter, listing of substitute organists and music instructors. You will also find a page with much information about organs in Grand Rapids including some audio and video files, a comprehensive listing of programs for the year, an archive of several years of The Cipher, updated information about the organ competitions and many links to organizations such as all of our Michigan Chapters of AGO; performing groups; colleges and universities; various music societies and Associations; music supply firms and a number of musical periodicals.

**If you have any events you would like publicized, positions available or anything you would like disseminated to our membership please send to Dennis Buteyn at [dlbuteyn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dlbuteyn@sbcglobal.net).**