



**The Executive Committee of
Grand Rapids AGO
2023-2024**

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THE CIPHER

September 2023

Musings from Our Dean

I love this time of year. Gardens are abundant and beautiful. Butterflies and dragonflies flutter about the yard. Hummingbirds play amidst the flowers and feeders. Here we are ready to embark on another new season whether it is at your church or at your school. Our lives revolve around these seasons. And so, your AGO Board is getting ready to launch the next season for our Guild. This year we will visit many churches in our community to hear the beautiful organs, each similar, yet different in their own ways. We will sit in these sacred spaces to hear the music and drink in the beauty that surrounds us.

Our first program is on **September 18, 2023, at 6pm**, at the Basilica of St Adalbert. We will begin with dinner in the lower level. Dinner will cost \$20 per person. Reservations may be made to Matthew Jakubisin at matthew@grcathedral.org. Reservations are needed by **Monday, September 11th**. This is a time to reconnect with your friends and colleagues and share what will be happening in the programs of the churches around the city.

After the meal, we will venture into the sanctuary to share in a brief service of installation for your new board. Peter Kurdziel will play the beautiful instrument while we share in a couple of hymns and affirm our desire to work together to bring beautiful music to our congregations. After the short service, we will ascend to the balcony, where Peter will show us the instrument including the new console. There will then be a time for those who wish to try out the instrument.

As we continue to return to "normal" following the time of Covid 19, I hope many of you will come and renew friendships. I hope that you will share what your church is doing or not doing. Maybe talking and sharing together you will get some new ideas to inspire you in your work.

Your Board is working hard to put together programming for the upcoming year to inspire and challenge you as you continue to grow as a musician. I hope to greet you as we begin our season with worship in this beautiful, sacred space.

Cordially
Carol McNally,
2023-24 GRAGO Dean



DIRECTORY

We plan to print a directory this fall. We encourage you all to remain up to date on your membership to the AGO. We will pull our list of members from a list generated on September 20th, 2023. If you want to be included in the directory you must be current in your membership. We hope to have directories ready to hand out by the October program.

Monthly programs for 2023 – 2024

Here is the lineup of AGO meetings for this season, 2023-2024. Our meetings take place at various venues throughout the area and are typically the third Monday evening of the month although there are exceptions.

Monday, September 18, 2023

Dinner – 6:00 p.m.

Service – 7:00 p.m.

Service of Installation

Basilica of St. Adalbert
654 Davis Ave. N.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

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Monday, October 9, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Organ Recital

**Mayflower Congregational Church
2345 Robinson Rd. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506**

Mondays at Mayflower in conjunction with the Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild of Organists presents Richard Elliott, Principal Organist of the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, Salt Lake City, in concert.

Richard Elliott is the Principal Organist for the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square in Salt Lake City, Utah. For the past 31 years he has accompanied the choir on its weekly radio and TV broadcast, "Music and the Spoken Word," as well as in general conferences of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, on dozens of CDs and DVDs, and in the choir's annual Christmas concerts, which are broadcast each year on PBS. As accompanist for the Tabernacle Choir, he has performed in many of the world's great halls and appeared on numerous TV and radio programs, including the NBC "Today Show," the "CBS Morning Show," "A Prairie Home Companion," and the nationally syndicated "Pipedreams" radio program. In his work with the choir, Dr. Elliott has collaborated with many guest artists including Andrea Bocelli, the Canadian Brass, Kristin Chenoweth, Renée Fleming, Evelyn Glennie, the King's Singers, the Sesame Street Muppets, Robert Shaw, James Taylor, and Bryn Terfel.

He also has a busy solo career, having given thousands of organ concerts on Temple Square as well as numerous performances on five continents. He appears on seven organ CDs and is a published composer and arranger of music for organ, choir, and orchestra. In June 2022, Dr. Elliott was awarded the Governor's Mansion Arts Award by Utah Governor Spencer J. Cox and First Lady Abby Cox. The annual award recognizes Utah artists who have a positive impact on the arts and their communities. A Fellow of the American Guild of Organists, Dr. Elliott has been a featured performer at national and regional conventions of the guild.

Before becoming a Tabernacle organist in 1991, Dr. Elliott was an assistant professor of organ at Brigham Young University, and for several years he served as assistant organist at the John Wanamaker Department Store (now Macy's) in Philadelphia, home to the world's largest functioning pipe organ. A native of Baltimore, Maryland, he received his early musical training at the Peabody Conservatory. He holds a Bachelor of Music degree in organ from the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, and MM and DMA degrees from the Eastman School of Music. His organ teachers have included David Craighead, Marjorie Jovanovic, Dale Krider, William Watkins, and John Weaver. For more information on the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square, visit www.thetabernaclechoir.org.



Monday, November 13, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Young Organists' Recital

**First (Park) Congregational Church
10 East Park Place NE
Grand Rapids MI 49503**

Young organists from our area will present a varied program of organ music.



Saturday, December 31, 2023, 7:30 p.m.

New Year's Eve Concert

**Central Reformed Church
10 College Avenue N.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49503**

There is no shortage of organists who make their instruments roar; and while her power was never in question, Demers made the instrument sing." (Peter Reed, Classical Source.com, England, 2016)

With playing described as having "bracing virtuosity" (Chicago Classical Review) and being "fearless

and extraordinary" (Amarillo-Globe News), Isabelle Demers has enraptured critics, presenters, and audience members around the globe.

She has appeared in recital throughout Europe, Oman, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and Canada, including at the Cathedrals of Cologne and Regensburg (Germany); the ElbPhilharmonie (Hamburg); the Royal Festival Hall, St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey (London); City Hall (Stockholm); the Royal Opera House of Muscat (Oman); the Forbidden City Concert Hall (Beijing, China); Victoria Hall (Singapore); Melbourne Town Hall (Australia); Auckland Town Hall (New Zealand); Disney Hall (Los Angeles), Davies Hall (San Francisco), the Meyerson Symphony Center (Dallas), the Kimmel Center, and the Wanamaker Organ at Macy's (Philadelphia); and the Maison Symphonique (Montréal).

Dr. Demers is in continual high demand by her colleagues as witnessed by performances for numerous regional and national conventions of the American Guild of Organists, the Institute of Organ Builders and International Society of Organbuilders, the Royal Canadian College of Organists, and the Organ Historical Society. She has released multiple CD recordings on the Acis and Pro Organo labels. Her latest CD, recorded at Chicago's Rockefeller Chapel, was released in January 2020, and includes works of Reger, Laurin, Dupré, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, and Macmillan.



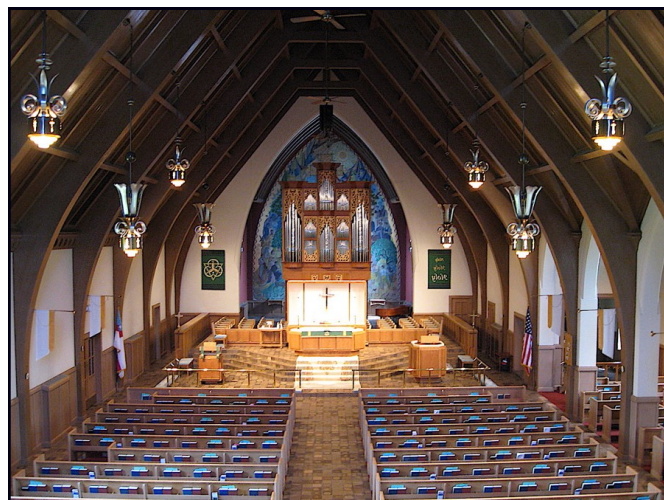
A native of Québec and a doctoral graduate of the Juilliard School, Dr. Demers is Associate Professor of Organ at McGill University (Montréal, Québec). She was formerly the Joyce Bowden Chair in Organ and Head of the Organ Program at Baylor University (Waco, Texas).

Sunday, January 22, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

Member Recital

Grace Episcopal Church
1815 Hall St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49506

Members of the Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild of Organists present a program featuring Baroque music.



Monday, February 19, 2024

Dinner – 6:00 p.m.
Program – 7:00 p.m.

The Organ Music of Larry Visser

LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church
107 LaGrave Avenue SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Dr. Larry Visser, Minister of Music at LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church and long-time member of the American Guild of Organists, presents a program of his organ compositions.

Larry Visser's musical career combines a church position, performing, and composing. He has been Minister of Music and Organist at LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church in downtown, Grand Rapids, Michigan since 1999. In this role, he plays the organ for a majority of services, accompanies choirs, and oversees the administration of the church's extensive music ministry. Larry has produced several recordings during his tenure at the church—two solo organ discs and three additional recordings, each dedicated to a specific season of the liturgical church year—that feature the church's vocal and handbell choirs and instrumentalists.



Larry's formal education took place at Calvin College (BA, 1989, Music History, Theory, and Composition) and the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance (MM, 1991, Church Music and Organ; DMA, 1995, Organ Performance). Upon graduating from Calvin College, Larry was awarded the highest honor given by the Music Department, the Anna Bruinsma Award. While a student at the

U of M, Larry served as a graduate student teaching assistant, took harpsichord lessons, and participated in the world's most prestigious organ competition, the Grand Prix de Chartres in Paris and Chartres, France, at which he was awarded a finalist medal. His organ teachers were Dr. John Hamersma and Dr. James Kibbie. From 2003–2010, Larry served as an adjunct faculty member at Calvin College, teaching organ and studio classes.

Larry has been a published composer of organ and choral music since the mid 1990s. His organ music is published by Leupold Editions (a division of The Leupold Foundation) and MorningStar Music Publishers, and his choral music is represented in the GIA Calvin Institute of Christian Worship Music Series. His anthem "Peace I Give to You" has been sung by choirs around the globe.

During a 2014 sabbatical, Larry completed a collection of 200 descants for hymns in the 2013 hymnal "Lift Up Your Hearts: Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs." Titled "Praise God in the Heights: Descants by Larry Visser," the collection was published by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. In 2019, he was the recipient of two-first prize awards in hymn tune competitions sponsored by the Eastman School of Music (the Utech Hymn Tuine Competition) and the St. Joseph's Mercy School in Navan, Ireland. Larry holds memberships in the Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and the Hymn Society in North America and Canada.

Monday, April 15, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

**Trinity Lutheran Church
2700 Fulton Street East
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competitions**

The **Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition** was founded in 2013 by Dr. Richard Rotman in honor of his mother and is an annual competition. Eligibility – A competitor must be 24 years of age or under 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)

For more information visit grago.org/competitions/



Notes from Around the Area

Park Church creates new music staff position

First (Park) Congregational Church is pleased to announce the creation of a new staff position. The Choral Resident, a position designed to give an exceptional musician the opportunity to grow his/her skills as a choral musician and conductor, will also give administrative and musical support to the Music Ministry. Rev. Dr. Patrick Coyle, Minister of Music, has selected Evan Snyder to fill the position, which will be a one-year appointment, with an option for extension.

Mr. Snyder currently lives in East Lansing, Michigan, where he is active as a performer and composer. He completed his undergraduate degree in Vocal Performance and his Master of Music degree in Music Theory, both at Michigan State University, with additional graduate study at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. His first opera, "A Capacity for Evil", was performed at Opera Las Vegas in January 2023 and Opera MODO in Detroit in 2021.



Mr. Snyder has served as a Choral Scholar at Park Church since April, 2023 and is "so excited and grateful for this new and innovative opportunity to both learn and contribute." Dr. Coyle thinks as highly of Mr. Snyder: "Evan is immensely talented. His musicianship, initiative and professionalism will take him far. He is a perfect fit for this opportunity."

Mr. Snyder will continue in his work as Choral Scholar, and his new work begins officially on September 1, 2023.



MUSIC AT MID-DAY

First (Park) Congregational Church

10 East Park Place NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

A Free Concert Series in the City

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

Announcing Music at Midday 2023-2024

Fall 2023

October 10 - Dr. Gregory Crowell, Harpsichord,

October 17 - Dr. Chris Dekker, Organ

October 24 - Grand Rapids Guitar Duo

October 31 - Roger MacNaughton with

Charlie Hoats, and Steve Anzivino

November 7 - Dr. Julia Brown, Organ

November 14 - Robert Edwards, Piano

November 21 - Eric Strand, Organ

November 28 - River Rogues

December 5 - Caledonia Choralaires

Spring 2024

March 12 - Dr. Larry Visser, Organ

March 19 - Karen Krummel, Cello; Phyllis Miner,
Piano

March 26 - No Concert Scheduled

April 2 - Mark Jackson, Baritone

April 9 - Phyllis Ann Miner and Robert Edwards,
Piano Duo

April 16 - Jonathan Tuuk, Organ

April 23 - Rhonda Edgington, Organ

April 30 - Bruce Robey and Friends

May 7 - Mary Rademacher

An optional \$7.00 lunch (11:15am - 1:15pm) is available
before or after the performance.

Soups, sandwiches, beverages, and cookies are served.



**CELEBRATION OF MUSIC CONCERT SERIES 2023/2024:
an outreach to the church & community**

**Events held in the beautiful acoustical space of
Trinity Lutheran Church
2700 E. Fulton, Grand Rapids MI 40506**

Sunday, September 24, 2023, 3:00 pm

FANFARES & FLOURISHES: Music for Brass & Pipe Organ

Sunday, October 29, 2023, 3:00

DEBORA DeWITT & COMPANY: Music for duo grand pianos + viola solo and piano

Tuesday, December 19, 2023, 7:30 pm

VOXMas: Christmas Choir Music sung by VoxGR

Sunday, January 28, 2024, 3:00 pm

Voices of Extraordinary Youth: Mandala, Bella Voce and Chamber Chorale

Saturday, February 10, 2024 (Location: Centennial Hall), 2:00 pm

An Afternoon at the "Silent" movies: an event for families, children and the young at heart

Sunday, March 3, 2024, 3:00 pm

Karen Krummel, cello

Monday, April 15, 2024, 7:00 pm

Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition

Sunday, April 24, 2024, 3:00 pm

Trinity Mosaic: Dr. Darlene Kuperus, Organist & Pianist

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES HANDBELL



Workshop



featuring Malmark's
JANET VAN VALEY



SATURDAY

SEPT | 23rd | 2023

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

St. Francis de Sales - Wilma Hall
2929 McCracken St.
Norton Shores, MI

FREE!

lunch will be provided

CALL (231) 755-1953 TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT



Bring your bells/chimes* and have some *fun*
enhancing your skills!



*Tables and chairs will be provided. Please bring pads, covers, mallets, and gloves.

DONIA ORGAN CONCERT

Jack H. Miller Center for Musical Arts
Hope College
221 Columbia Avenue
Holland, MI

CHERRY RHODES



Tuesday, September 26, 7:00 p.m.

PROGRAM:

Präludium und Fuge e-moll, BWV 548 - Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)
Reverie - William Grant Still (1895-1978)
Ballade Ossianique No. 2, Op. 23, Les chants de Selma - Jean Guillou (1930-2019)
Afternoon of a Toad - Clarence Mader (1904-1971)
Pièces de fantaisie, Suite No. 2, Op. 53, Clair de lune - Louis Vierne (1870-1937)
Fantasie und Fuge d-moll, op.135b - Max Reger (1873-1916)



CONCERT 1: AN OLD BELIEF

Location: Central Reformed Church GR
Date: Saturday October 14, 2023, 7:30pm
Admission is free

Location: Hillsdale Chapel - Hillsdale College - Hillsdale MI
Date: Sunday October 15, 2023, 3:00pm
Admission is free

Vox GR's 2023 - 2024 Season opens with *An Old Belief*, a concert anchored around Hubert Parry's similarly titled piece from his set *Songs of Farewell*. The program explores the themes of loss and reunification, "That Old Time Religion," and "A Tale as Old as Time - Love." Renaissance gems and pieces from the "Seashores of Old Mexico" fill out this varied program which is offered at Central Reformed Church of Grand Rapids and in the Hillsdale College Chapel in Hillsdale, Michigan.

CONCERT 2: VOXmas 2023

Location: Trinity Lutheran Church GR
Date: Tuesday December 19 2023, 7:30pm
Admission is free

Weaving together the best of the season's music, Vox GR Choral Ensemble presents *VOXmas 2023*. From sacred to secular, historic to modern, and classical to folk, the choir will sing music from across the globe and tunes close to your heart. Come explore wonder, mystery, and joy with us through the intimate expressions of the human voice. You will be able to join in the fun, too, by singing some familiar carols.

CONCERT 3: the little match girl passion

Location: First United Methodist Church GR
Date: Saturday March 16 2023, 7:30pm
Tickets: visit voxgr.com for ticketing

the little match girl passion by David Lang is the centerpiece of this mid-winter concert. Pairing the Hans Christian Anderson fable and a modern minimalist aesthetic, composer David Lang weaves together the icy tale of love, yearning, and transcendence. The work is presented alongside pieces about sparrows, little lambs, and heavenly flight.

CONCERT 4: Tongues of Fire

Location: First United Methodist Church GR
Date: Saturday May 18 2024, 7:30pm
Tickets: Visit voxgr.com for ticketing

Location: First Reformed Church, Holland, MI
Date: Sunday May 19, 2024, 3 PM
Admission is free

The music selections from our final concert of the season, *Tongues of Fire*, will explore texts on the theme of burning hearts, those in love and for God. The program features organist Julia Brown and will be offered in Grand Rapids and Holland, Michigan.