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Grand Rapids AGO
2023-2024**

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THE CIPHER

February 2024

MUSINGS FROM OUR DEAN

It was a January to remember! The weather made some of the weeks a challenge to do anything. Yet, we managed to get in our event at Grace Episcopal Church. It was a beautiful member recital. Each of our participants chose a piece of music that showcased the beauty of the instrument with their selections of Baroque music. We thank our six performers for making time to prepare and perform for this beautiful concert especially getting out to practice in the midst of a blizzard. Many thanks also to Board Member, Larry Biser, for his countless hours coordinating the event. Finally, we are grateful to Grace Episcopal and Mary Baas, Director of Music, for letting us use their space and experience the instrument there.

For February we will experience the sacred space at LaGrave Christian Reformed Church. We will meet **February 19** beginning with a meal at **6pm**. Our meal will include lasagna with Caesar salad, bread and dessert. Cost is \$15 per person. Please make your reservation to Matthew Jakubisin at matthew@grcathedral.org. Reservations must be received by **Wednesday, February 14**.

Our program at **7pm** will be by Dr. Larry Visser, Minister of Music at LaGrave Church. Larry will speak to us as composer. He will showcase some of his organ compositions as well as choir music that he has composed. 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. We are truly blessed to have someone of his talent and vision who is a member of our guild.

I look forward to seeing you all on **February 19**, when we can fellowship together and hear new music for us to both play and use.

Regards
Carol McNally, Dean



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, February 19, 2024

Dinner – 6:00 p.m.

Email for Dinner Reservation: matthew@grcathedral.org

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 Tune 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/



Sunday, May 5, 2024, 3:00 p.m.

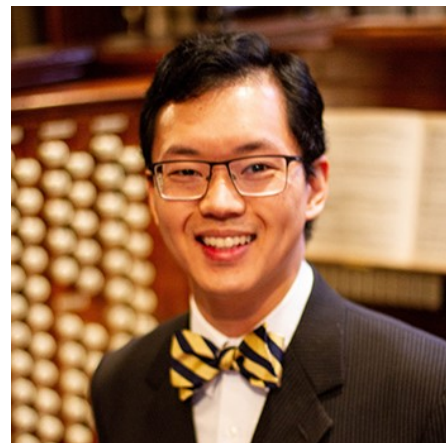
First United Methodist Church

227 Fulton Street East

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Aaron Tan Organ Recital

Organist Aaron Tan will present a recital in celebration of the music ministry of Richard DeVinney at First United Methodist Church. The recital will be at the conclusion of the 2024 Celebration of the Arts which was founded by him and his wife, Marion, 50 years ago.



Concert organist Aaron Tan is a leading young artist in North America. In October 2021 he was awarded First Prize at the 2021 Canadian International Organ Competition as well as several additional awards for performances of specific works at the competition (The Sir Ernest MacMillan Award for Canadian competitors, the award for best performance of a work by Marcel Dupré, and best performance of a work by a Canadian composer). Originally from the Philippines and Canada, he is an organist and pianist who enjoys multi-faceted careers as a musician and a materials scientist.

Aaron's primary musical tutelage has been with John Tuttle, David Palmer, Joel Hastings, Martin Jean, and David Higgs. His musical upbringing started on the piano and later added the violin and organ. He received his Associate (ARCT) diploma in Piano Performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, Canada at the age of twelve and went on to earn his Licentiate (LTCL) and Fellowship (FTCL) diplomas in Piano Performance from Trinity College of Music, London, England, at 13 and 15 years of age, respectively. When he was 18, he also completed his ARCT diploma in violin performance.

In 2004, under the auspices of the Barwell Scholarship (awarded to pianists interested in learning the organ), he began organ studies with John Tuttle while concurrently entering as a freshman in Engineering Science at the University of Toronto. Since then, he has gone on to complete both Associate (ARCCO) and Fellowship (FRCCO) diplomas in organ from the Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO). In addition, he has also won numerous noteworthy competitions and scholarships including First Prize at the American Guild of Organists 2018 National Young Artist Competition in Organ Performance, the Toronto RCCO Young Organists Competition, the Osborne Organ Competition of the Summer Institute of Church Music (Ontario), the RCCO's National Organ Playing Competition, the Charlotte Hoyt Bagnall Scholarship for Church Musicians, the Lilian Forsyth Scholarship, the 2012 Poland International Piano Festival Competition, the West Chester University Organ Competition, the Arthur Poister Scholarship Competition, and the Sursa American Organ Competition.

Having recently received both MM and MMA degrees in organ from Yale University, Aaron is currently pursuing doctoral studies at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester New York. Aaron also holds a

Ph.D. in Materials Science and Engineering from the University of Michigan and worked there as a post-doctoral researcher in the University's Laboratory for Complex Materials and Thin Films Research, studying the dielectric and thermal properties of polymer thin films.

Aaron has served as Organ Scholar at St. John's Episcopal Church in Detroit, Michigan, Artist in Residence at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Detroit, Assistant Organist at Christ Church Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and Organ Scholar at the Church of the Resurrection, New York City, and currently serves as Director of Music at St. Alban's Catholic Church in Rochester New York.

Recap of January Program

January 22, 2024 7:00 PM

Grace Episcopal Church, Grand Rapids

The Grand Rapids Chapter presented their Members' Program for the season on the Noack organ, Opus 94 at Grace Episcopal Church. The church's Noack is the perfect organ to present music of the Baroque. Therefore, we asked each artist to play a selection from that period and entitled the program *The Glory of the Baroque*. Compositions from different countries were represented and they covered the entirety of the period from 1685 until 1750. The program began with a sparkling rendition of the Bruhns *Praeludium in E minor* played by Dr. Julia Brown. Her choice of registrations was well suited to the piece, and it was a delight to watch her play and pull stops in an effortless manner. *Suite du Deuxième Ton* was presented by Eric Strand, complete with a schola singing the chant verses from the rear gallery. Again, the player and organ shone with each organ verse, having a distinct French voice and style. Dr. Gregory Crowell presented Muffat's *Toccata Prima* and his Baroque registrations and technique were to be greatly admired. Bach was represented by our youngest member, Stephen Rumler-McClusky, with his insightful interpretation of *Pièce d'Orgue BWV 572*. This was followed by Stanley's *Voluntary in D minor, Op.5, No 8*, played by David Bading, clearly echoing Stanley's English voice. The program closed with *Die Kinder des Höchsten sind rufende Stimmen*, by George Philipp Telemann beautifully presented by Dr. Alexis Van Zalen, Organ; Jenni Judd Reyes, Soprano; Dr. Letitia Jap, Violin; and Dr. Robert Johnson, Bass. The program drew a good crowd, including guild members, family, friends, and members of Grace Church. It was filled with variety, color, and delightful playing. Grand Rapids has much to be proud of in its organs and those who play them!





MUSIC AT MID-DAY

First (Park) Congregational Church

10 East Park Place

Grand Rapids, MI 49503

A Free Concert Series in the City

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

Spring 2024

March 12 - Dr. Larry Visser, Organ

March 19 - Phyllis Ann Miner and Robert Edwards, Piano Duo

March 26 - Grand Rapids Christian High School Chorale

April 2 - Mark Jackson, Baritone

April 9 - Karen Krummel, Cello; Robert Edwards, Piano

April 16 - Leslie Van Becker, viola; Robert Byrens, piano

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.



MONDAYS
AT
MAYFLOWER

We invite you for a time away from the busy world and hectic schedules. Join us in the quiet of Mayflower's candlelit atrium for a simple meal and gentle music.

MAYFLOWER CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
2345 Robinson Road SE, GR, MI 49506
616-459-6255 | MayflowerChurch.org

LENT BY CANDLELIGHT

6:30 pm *Simple Meal* | 7:00 pm *Music*



FEBRUARY 19
PAUL AUSTIN
*horn, alto horn,
and Alphorn*



FEBRUARY 26
SCOTT BOSSCHER
baritone



MARCH 4
KATHLEEN GOMEZ
English horn



MARCH 11
DUO TARASQUE
*Howell Petty, voice
Luce Burrell, lute*



MARCH 18
**KAROLIN
RAVENS-BANIK**
flute