



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

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# THE CIPHER

March 2024

## MUSINGS FROM OUR DEAN

I hope many of you were able to attend our last event at LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church. It was an inspiring concert! We gathered for a meal and fellowship with about twenty-five guild members. Then we had a wonderful recital by Dr. Larry Visser highlighting many of his organ compositions. The concert ended with the LaGrave choir singing a choral benediction composed by Dr. Visser. The concert was well attended with over 300 in the audience. It was also streamed online. If you would like to experience the concert, you can go online to <https://www.tinyurl.com/Visserconcert>. As of Wednesday this week there have been over 3500 views of the concert. The Board and I wish to thank Dr. Larry Visser, Dr. Rob Hobgood (choir director), the LaGrave Chancel Choir and LaGrave Church for sharing their space with us. It was a memorable time.

Because this year March is a time of Lent, Holy Week and Easter, the Board decided not to have a special concert. Instead, we encourage you to attend and support the many Lenten offerings happening across our city. If your church / school is having a concert you want to publicize to our guild, send your information to Dennis at

[dlbuteyn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dlbuteyn@sbcglobal.net)

We look forward to coming together again in April for the Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition.

Blessings to you all in this Lenten season.

Regards  
Carol McNally, Dean



## Recap of February Event

### Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

February 19, 2024 at 7:00 Pm

Lagrange Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, MI

The Grand Rapids Chapter was honored to present a program of music composed and played by Dr. Larry Visser presented on La Grave's 109-rank, five manual Austin-Allen Organ Opus 2765. What a proud pleasure for the large audience, not only the guild members, but many area musicians and a very supportive audience from La Grave Ave. Christian Reformed Church. The program was livestreamed, some 460 persons chose this form to view the program. The program is still available on You Tube at <http://tinyurl.com/Visserconcert>. In his career as a composer Dr. Visser has since high school written and published some 175 pieces of organ, hymns, choral and Handbell music. He is published by The Leupold Foundation, GIA Publications, Inc, MorningStar Music Publishers and Hinshaw Music. We were given samples of seven of his works. In some cases, complete works and in others only movements of pieces from larger works. He played portions of his latest works, *Partita on Trust and Obey* and *Triptych on Guide me, O My Great Redeemer*, both composed in 2020. Visser's interest in compositions is largely infused with settings of hymn tunes which are often commissioned by churches and friends. His most popular compositions have been "Peace I Give You" (GIA) for choir and "Four Preludes on Lobe den Herren" and "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" for organ. It was an honor to share Dr. Visser's talent and musicianship with so many people.



Larry Biser

## 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, 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/](https://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.





## ANNAMAE ROTMAN Young Organist Competition

Dear Colleagues -

It's that time of the year when we're gearing up for the Annamae Rotman Young Organist Competition. Help us spread the word to young organists and their teachers that the deadline is March 15. We are only able to accept four competitors so it's best to not wait until the deadline to enter! This competition isn't just for the performers - it's for all of us. If you are available to help as a room monitor and/or with other logistics, please let myself or Becky Snippe know. Even beyond that, we need everyone in attendance to support these young artists with enthusiastic hymn singing. We are blessed to be hosted this year by Darlene Kuperus at Trinity Lutheran Church. We hope to see all of you there for this great community event.

Peter Kurdziel, DMA  
Competition Co-chairperson



Peter Kurdziel



Becky Snippe



Darlene Kuperus

**Now is the time to encourage entrants for this 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.*

### ANNAMAE ROTMAN YOUNG ORGANIST COMPETITION – 2024

- 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)
- Competition Date – April 15, 2024
- Application Date – Due by March 15, 2024. A maximum of four applications will be accepted based on date of receipt.

Go to <https://grago.org/competitions/> for details and the registration form.

# Mid-Winter Songs

MARCH 16TH | 7:30 PM

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
GRAND RAPIDS, MI



VOX GR is supported by the  
Michigan Arts and Culture  
Council, administered by the  
Michigan Arts and Councils Act



[CLICK ON IMAGE TO PURCHASE TICKETS](#)



## 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.



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](http://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*





First (Park) Congregational Church UCC  
10 E Park Pl NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503

✦  
The Vienna Boys Choir  
the 525th  
season

In Concert  
@ Park Church

Friday, March 8  
at 7:30pm



First (Park) Congregational Church  
invites you to celebrate the 525th season of

## *The Vienna Boys Choir*

One of the most famous choirs in the world,  
the Vienna Boys Choir has been enchanting  
audiences for centuries with their pure and  
pristine sound and charming performance style.

These gifted musicians with voices of  
unforgettable beauty are a beloved institution,  
presenting a diverse array of vocal music that  
appeals to audiences of all ages.

*Please join us for this memorable concert.*



Friday, March 8, 2024 at 7:30pm

General Admission \$25.00

General Admission Students \$10.00

[www.parkchurchgr.org](http://www.parkchurchgr.org)



photo credits: Lukas Beck