



## GRAND RAPIDS

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# THE CIPHER

January 2025

Dear friends,

Happy New Year! Hopefully you are all enjoying some rest during these winter days.

Like the experience of a New Year's resolution, the best laid plans don't always come together, but may open up time for an unexpected opportunity. So here's how that looks for our chapter: Our previously scheduled Member's Recital has been canceled, however a new and exciting chapter meeting is scheduled for January.

Please plan to attend a chapter forum and discussion about young people and the organ on Monday January 27 at 7pm, hosted at Trinity Lutheran. Several members will share their experience teaching and organizing events for young organists. Come with your input, questions, and ideas to help brainstorm how we can continue to engage the next generation in organ music.

I also encourage you to extend this invitation to friends, colleagues, and students. If you know a piano teacher or student, music educator, or someone already studying the organ, all voices and ages are welcome as a valuable contribution to this discussion. Light refreshments will be served and members may join remotely by Zoom (link sent out closer to the event). See you then!

Sincerely,  
Matthew Jakubisin, Chapter Dean



**Member directories have been sent to all active members who did not pick one up at our Fall events. If you have not received one in the next week or think you should have received a directory, please email David Bading: [dbading@verizon.net](mailto:dbading@verizon.net)**

## Recap of New Year's Eve Concert

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



It has been a long tradition of the GRAGO to co-sponsor the New Year's Eve Concert of Central Reformed Church with guest organists, a wonderful way to introduce the New Year. Last evening was a special delight as it brought Christopher Houlihan to the bench of Central's five manual, 80 rank [Robert Dial/Schantz](#) organ. Mr. Houlihan played works with the idea of passing time. The opening selection was Jonathan Dove's 2014 "The Dancing Pipes" and dance they did through various meters and sounds! The Bach "Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor" gave another feeling of passing through what would seem a predictable set of notes in triple meter, but as all organists know, was far too simplistic for Bach. It holds surprises at every entrance of the theme, as Bach works his way through the passacaglia form to arrive at a glorious fugue to end this passage through triple time. The first half of the program ended with the most time-oriented theme, Vierne's Carillon de Westminster which presents the Westminster clock bell peal in glorious splendor and with all the fireworks the New Year needs. The second half was devoted to a single piece, the three movement, "Suite, opus 5," by Maurice Duruflé. The three sections are in turn somber, elegant, and raucous. The work is certainly a pleasure to hear and takes more

than a little musical insight and technical control to pull it off which Houlihan did admirably. The evening ended with the audience singing Auld Lang Syne, a standing tradition at these New Year's Eve concerts.

*Larry Biser*



## Upcoming Programs for the 2024-2025 year

**Monday, January 27, 2025, 7:00 p.m.**

### Forum/discussion on young people and the organ

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



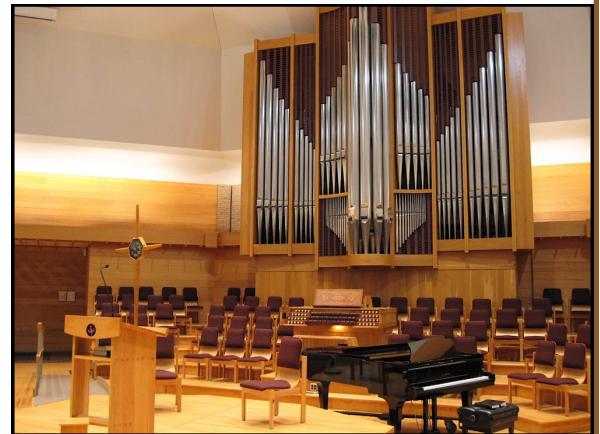
The Grand Rapids Chapter of The American Guild of Organists will host a forum/discussion on the topic of young people and the organ. The AGO offers many different avenues for introducing young people to the organ (Pipes, Pedals and Pizza, Orgelkids building kit, POEs) and our members have come up with some creative methods on their own. Panelists will present on many of these methods from first hand experience, whether they organized or attended an event. We invite members to come with questions and ideas to help us brainstorm about what has worked in the past and what they would like to support in the future to encourage young people's interest in the organ. Light refreshments will be provided.

**Thursday, February 6, 2025, 4:00 p.m**

**Friday, February 7, 2025, 3:45 p.m.**

### Calvin Symposium on Worship

**Calvin University  
3201 Burton St., SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546**



Join hundreds of other church musicians and leaders from around the country and the world at the annual Calvin Symposium on Worship.

Two services feature local organist Rhonda Edgington:

—“Thy Kingdom Come: Global Hymnody in Collaboration” – a vesper prayer service on Thursday, Feb. 6, 2025 at 4:00-4:45 p.m. in the **Calvin University Chapel (1835 Knollcrest Circle SE)**

— “The Persistent Widow” – a service of the Word and Sacrament on Friday, Feb. 7, 2025 at 3:45-5:00 p.m. in the **Calvin University Covenant Fine Arts Center Auditorium (1795 Knollcrest Circle SE)**

Other worship services featuring various musical styles are also free and open to the public. Learn more at <https://cicw.eventsair.com/wsypm25/>

**Sunday, March 9, 2025, 4:00 p.m.**

**First Presbyterian Church  
508 Franklin Street  
Grand Haven, MI 49417**

**Young Artist Recital: Sarah Simko**

Dr. Sarah Simko is the Associate Organist and Communications Coordinator at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, in Detroit Michigan. She is the Adjunct Faculty Instructor of Organ at Madonna University. A recent graduate of the University of Michigan, Dr. Simko completed her studies with Dr. James Kibbie and Dr. Kola Owolabi. She received her Bachelors degree from the Eastman School of Music, with Professors Nathan Laube, Edoardo Bellotti, William Porter and Hans Davidsson.



Dr. Simko is the recipient of a Graduate Award from the Presser Foundation, to be used to create a comprehensive set of recordings of organ music by living American female composers. The goal of this project is to expand the accessibility of a rich, and overlooked body of repertoire. More information, including purchasing information for this series of three CDs, can be found under the “Living Voices” tab on this website.

During her time at the University of Michigan, Dr. Simko served as a Research Assistant for a team headed by Dr. Kibbie and Dr. Daniel Forger from the Department of Mathematics. This collaborative project focused on how the brain processes music, through detailed study of the Johann Sebastian Bach’s Six Sonatas (BWV 525-530). Recorded rehearsals and performances of the Sonatas were processed using big data analysis techniques. In conjunction with this work, Dr. Simko has given coaching sessions on these Sonatas. This project concluded in Summer, 2019.

Dr. Simko has given recitals at such notable venues as Methuen Memorial Music Hall, Methuen, Massachusetts; St. Paul’s Cathedral (Anglican), London, Ontario, Canada; Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church, Detroit; the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (Episcopal), Detroit; Hill Auditorium, Ann Arbor; among others.

Friday, May 16, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

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

**Caroline Robinson Organ Recital**

Organist and church musician **Dr. Caroline Robinson** has been featured as a solo recitalist across the United States, in venues including New York City churches St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, St. John the Divine, Trinity Church Wall Street, and St. Patrick's Cathedral; in Boston: Church of the Advent, Harvard Memorial Church, Cambridge, Methuen Memorial Music Hall; St. James in the City, Los Angeles; and Kansas City's the Kauffman Center. She has also performed in England, France, and Germany. Her playing has been broadcast multiple times on American Public Media's "Pipedreams," "Pipedreams LIVE!," and Philadelphia-based public radio station 90.1 WRTI's Wanamaker Organ Hour. She has been a featured performer at conventions of the Organ Historical Society, the East Texas Pipe Organ Festival, and the American Guild of Organists, for which she performed on the closing concert at the 2022 National AGO Convention in Seattle, collaborating with Seattle Pro Musica on choral and organ works including James MacMillan's *Cantos Sagrados*.



Dr. Robinson is a laureate of the National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance (NYACOP), held as part of the 2018 AGO Convention in Kansas City. She holds First Prize from the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival (2008) and from the 10<sup>th</sup> annual West Chester University Organ Competition (2010). She was a semifinalist in the 2014 Dublin International Organ Competition. In 2016, she was chosen as one of the Diapason's "20 Under 30" promising young organists in the United States. Caroline Robinson is Assistant Professor of Organ at the University of Michigan. Previously she served as Organist and Associate Choirmaster at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta. There, under the direction of Canon Dale Adelman, she shared organ playing and accompanying responsibilities and led the cathedral's RSCM-based Chorister program. She is an active continuo player with early music ensembles, having performed at the Rochester Early Music Festival, San Francisco's American Bach Soloists Academy, and now regularly with the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra.

Dr. Robinson completed her undergraduate work at the Curtis Institute of Music, where she studied with Alan Morrison. Aided by a grant from the J. William Fulbright fellowship fund, Caroline studied at the Conservatoire à Rayonnement Régional de Toulouse with Michel Bouvard and Jan Willem Jansen (organ) and Yasuko Bouvard (harpsichord). Caroline holds the Doctor of Musical Arts and the Master of Music in Organ Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with David Higgs. Dr. Robinson also received from Eastman the Performer's Certificate and the Advanced Teaching Certificate in Theory Pedagogy.

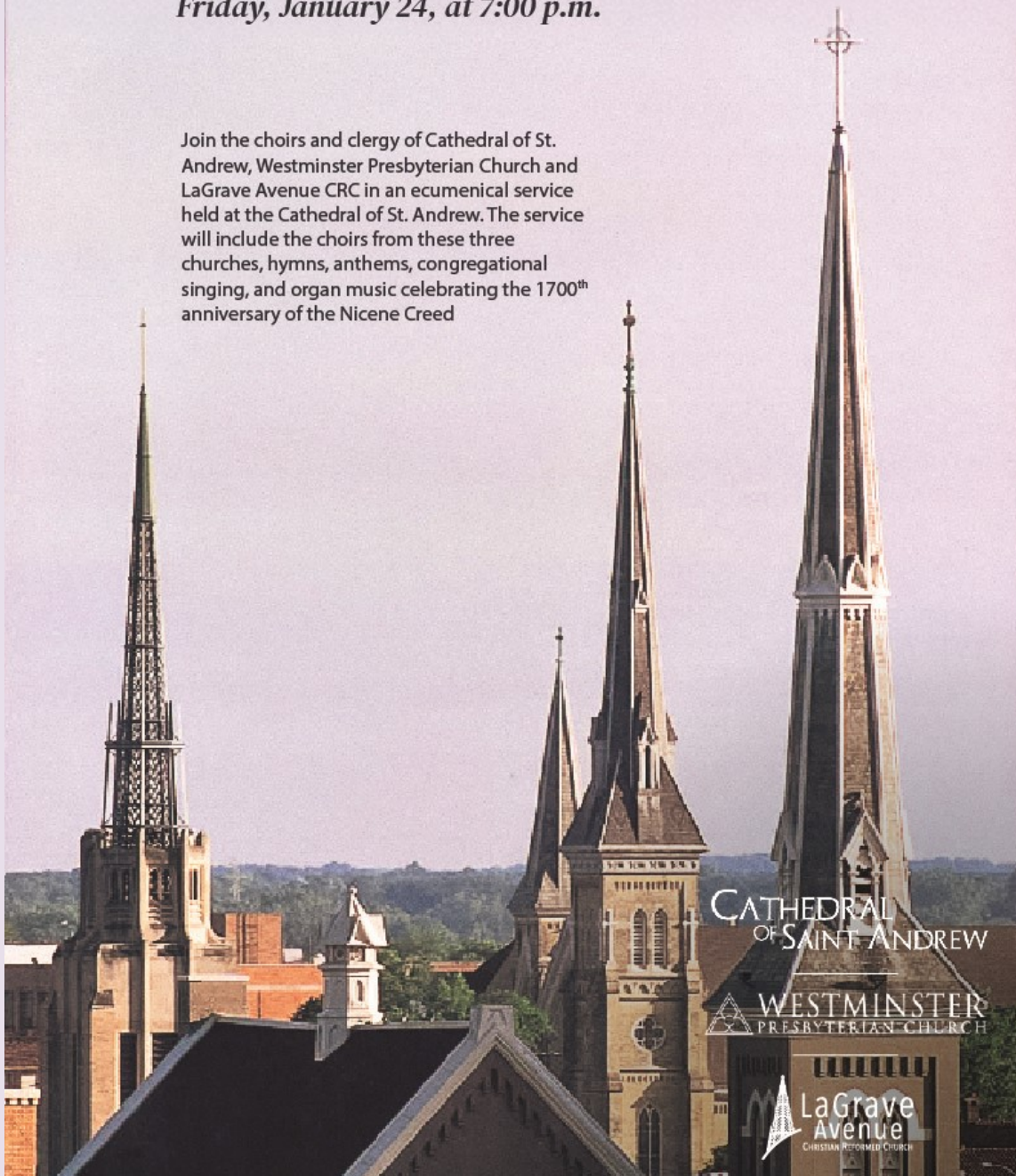
Dr. Robinson is represented in North America by Karen McFarlane Artists, Inc.

# We Believe

A Choral Worship Service Observing  
the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

*Friday, January 24, at 7:00 p.m.*

Join the choirs and clergy of Cathedral of St. Andrew, Westminster Presbyterian Church and LaGrave Avenue CRC in an ecumenical service held at the Cathedral of St. Andrew. The service will include the choirs from these three churches, hymns, anthems, congregational singing, and organ music celebrating the 1700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nicene Creed





# PALESTRINA 500

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE  
THE QUINCENTENNIAL BIRTHDAY OF  
CATHOLICISM'S PREEMINENT COMPOSER,  
HEARING HIS MUSIC AS IT WAS MEANT TO BE HEARD:  
IN THE HOLY MASS

## OPENING MASS • DECEMBER 9TH, 2024

CELEBRATED BY BISHOP WALKOWIAK • MASS AT 5:30PM • NO HOLY HOUR

## IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 2025

HOLY HOUR: 5:30PM • HOLY MASS: 7:00PM  
151 GARFIELD AVE SW, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49504

JAN 6	<b>SCHOLA ANTIQUA OF CHICAGO</b> <i>Missa Alma redemptoris Mater</i> Epiphany	<b>THE LONDON ORATORY SCHOLA CANTORUM</b> <i>Missa Tu es Petrus</i> Our Lady of Mt. Carmel	JULY 16
FEB 14	<b>THE GESUALDO SIX</b> <i>Missa Sine nomine</i> St. Valentine's Day	<b>HIS MAJESTY'S MEN</b> <i>Missa Regina caeli à 5</i> Assumption	AUG 15
MARCH 25	<b>HOPE COLLEGE CHAPEL CHOIR</b> <i>Missa Brevis</i> Annunciation	<b>GAUDETE GRAND RAPIDS</b> <i>Missa de Beata Virgine à 4</i> The Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary	SEPT 15
APRIL 25	<b>THE TALLIS SCHOLARS</b> <i>Missa Papae Marcelli</i> Easter Friday *Holy Hour at 5PM	<b>THE TRINITY CHOIR</b> <i>Missa O Rex gloriae</i> Our Lady of the Rosary	OCT 7
MAY 29	<b>VOX GR</b> <i>Missa Ascendo ad Patrem meum</i> Ascension Thursday	<b>SCHOLA CANTORUM DETROITENSIS</b> <i>Missa da Requiem (with duCaurroy's Requiem)</i> All Souls' Day (transferred)	NOV 3
JUNE 27	<b>FLORIANI</b> <i>Missa Aeterna Christi munera</i> Patronal Feast of the Sacred Heart	<b>SACRED HEART PARISH &amp; ACADEMY CHOIRS</b> <i>Missa ad Fugam</i> Immaculate Conception	DEC 8

PRESENTED BY  
**SACRED HEART of JESUS**  
CATHOLIC PARISH