



GRAND RAPIDS

The Executive Committee of Grand Rapids AGO 2024-2025

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[Matthew Jakubisin](#), Dean

[Chris Witte](#), Treasurer

[Alexis VanZalen](#), Secretary

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[David Bading](#), Membership

[Barbara Dulmage](#)

[Rob Hobgood](#)

[Chan Gyu Jang](#)

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[The Rev. Dr. John D. Witvliet](#)
Chaplain

THE CIPHER

May 2025

Dean's Letter

Dear Friends:

As we come to the close of our chapter's program year, I invite you to our final event: a solo recital by Dr. Caroline Robinson on Friday May 16 at 7pm at LaGrave Ave CRC. The program will feature works by Bairstow, Howells, Bolcom, Bach, Price, and Dupré. A reception will follow. Special thanks to LaGrave Ave CRC for cosponsoring and hosting this recital!

I would also like to announce the board transitions for the upcoming program year. I will conclude my term as Chapter Dean and extend my gratitude to Chan Gyu Jang for his service as Member at Large and Dr. John Witvliet for his service as Chaplain.

[Please follow this link to vote for the new board.](#) The following members are proposed to the chapter for consideration: Rob Hobgood (Dean), David Bading (Sub-Dean), Alexis VanZalen (Secretary), Chris Witte (Treasurer), Barbara Dulmage, Caron Farmer, Ron Krebs, and Noah Smith (Members at Large). Bios and pictures can be viewed on the next pages of the newsletter.

Thanks to all these members for their leadership and commitment to the chapter. We will be in great hands in the year ahead!

Sincerely,
Matthew Jakubisin
Chapter Dean

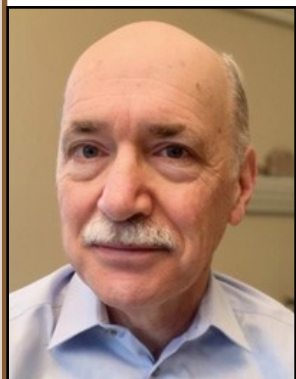


2025-2026 GRAGO Board

[Click here to vote for these members.](#)



Originally from Raleigh, NC, **Rob Hobgood (Dean)** has received music degrees from Covenant College, Westminster Choir College and the University of Kansas. Additionally, Rob has studied choral conducting in Oxford, UK, and organ in Haarlem, The Netherlands. He also studied carillon at KU and received the Carillonneur Certification from the Guild of Carillonneurs in 2022. Prior to coming to Grand Rapids, Rob was the Interim Director of Choirs at Dordt University. He is currently the Director of Vocal and Handbell Choirs at LaGrave Avenue CRC.



David Bading (Sub-Dean) served as a church organist and interim choir director in Virginia for more than 35 years. Following retirement and a move to Grand Rapids, he joined the GRAGO board a year ago. He holds a M.M. degree in music history from the University of Kansas, where he also pursued graduate organ study.



Alexis VanZalen (Secretary) began her organ studies during high school in her hometown of Holland, MI. She went on to complete a BM in organ performance at Lawrence University and an MM in early music at the Eastman School of Music. Dr. VanZalen also earned her PhD in Musicology from Eastman and specializes in 17th c. French organ music. Alexis currently serves as Program Coordinator at the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship and as Organ Scholar at St. Mark's Episcopal Church.



Chris Witte (Treasurer) grew up in Grand Rapids, attended Calvin College, and graduated with an accounting degree in 2012. He is a member of LaGrave Avenue CRC. Chris is a CPA and works locally as a senior tax manager for the public accounting firm Plante Moran. Chris enjoys the organ as a hobby. He learned to play while in college and has served as a volunteer worship planner and service organist for his previous church, as well as substituting for other churches on an occasional basis. Chris brings both financial acumen and passion for the organ to his role as Treasurer.



Barbara Dulmage (Member at Large) has served numerous churches throughout her career, most recently at Second Congregational Church in Grand Rapids. She also taught organ and courses in church music while Artist-in-Residence for two years at Park College in Kansas City, Missouri. Her education includes a MM from the University of Kansas, where her primary instructors were Delores Bruch and James Moeser. She completed a DMA with Delbert Disselhorst at the University of Iowa, where she also studied choral conducting with Don Moses.



Caron Farmer (Member at Large) is a free-lance musician in West Michigan. She has held several positions in the AGO and has the Associates certificate (AAGO). Her other activities include serving on the board of the Friends of Hackley Public Library and is a tutor in the ESL program for Read Muskegon.



Ronald Krebs (Member at Large) recently returned to Grand Rapids following retirement from his position as Vice President of the Reuter Organ Company in Lawrence, Kansas. Prior to his work at Reuter, he held church music positions in GR, first at Second Congregational UCC, and then at Central Reformed Church. Ron is a native of nearby Lowell and received both Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from the University of Michigan. He is pleased for the opportunity to serve on the GRAGO council once again!



Noah Smith (Member at Large) is an accomplished organist and pianist whose work spans sacred music, choral accompaniment, and solo performance. Currently serving as Organist at Fountain Street Church in Grand Rapids, MI, he brings dynamic artistry and a collaborative spirit to a vibrant and growing congregation. He has a deep commitment to liturgical music that enhances the beauty and continuity of services. With prior roles as Organ Scholar at Christ Church in Raleigh and Saint John's Episcopal in Tulsa, Noah has conducted choirs, managed instrumentalists, and performed at prestigious venues including Westminster Abbey and St. Patrick's Cathedral. He is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma with dual degrees in Piano and Organ Performance, both with special distinction, and is known for his musical sensitivity and technical excellence.

The Grand Rapids AGO and LaGrave Ave CRC present



Dr. Caroline Robinson



A solo organ recital by the new Assistant Professor of Music at the University of Michigan, featuring music by

**BARISTOW - HOWELLS - BOLCOM -
BACH - PRICE - DUPRÉ**

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 7:00 PM

107 LaGrave Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503



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 11th annual Albert Schweitzer Organ Festival (2008) and from the 10th 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.



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

PRESENTED BY

SACRED HEART of JESUS
CATHOLIC PARISH