



GRAND RAPIDS

The Executive Committee of Grand Rapids AGO 2025-2026

Officers

[Rob Hobgood](#), *Dean*

[David Bading](#), *Sub Dean,
Membership*

[Chris Witte](#), *Treasurer*

[Alexis VanZalen](#), *Secretary*

Council Members at Large

[Barbara Dulmage](#)

[Caron Farmer](#)

[Ronald Krebs](#)

[Noah Smith](#)

Members Ex-Officio

[Dennis Buteyn](#),
Webmaster, Cipher Editor

[Rhonda Edginton](#)
Education Coordinator

[Rebecca Snippe](#)
Competitions

THE CIPHER

May 2026

Happy May!

Our final program of the year will be at Calvin University. On Monday, May 4th at 7:30 PM, Canadian organist Andre Knevel will present a recital focused on the Psalms. The program is offered in conjunction with the Calvin Institute for Christian Worship in celebration of Calvin's 150th anniversary. The program will include music by Dutch composers, improvisations by Mr. Knevel and some hymn singing, so I hope you will plan to attend this event!

I want to continue to remind you of how you can support young organists in our area through the annual Summer Organ Encounter program. There are many opportunities to support this program financially such as sponsoring a student's lessons, music or organ shoes. At least as important are the non-financial ways you can support this program. Please share information about the SOE with young piano students you know through your churches or in your families. I would also strongly encourage you to attend one or both closing programs (June 25th in Holland, and June 26th in Grand Rapids - locations TBA). It is quite inspiring listening to these young people perform what they have been working on for only three weeks! If you are interested in supporting the SOE, please contact any of our chapter officers or you may contact soewestmi@gmail.com.

Finally, our program year for next season is nearly finalized - please look for an email with details about next year's schedule later this month. However, I hope you will go ahead and put Friday, September 4th on your calendar. British organist, Martin Baker will be performing at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Parish on their newly installed Fratelli Ruffatti organ. This is the first new large pipe organ in Grand Rapids in a number of years and you won't want to miss this event.

If you have any thoughts about the chapter or ideas about programming you would like to see considered by the GRAGO, please reach out to me sometime this summer and let's chat. I would love to hear from you!

Sincerely,
Rob



ORGAN RECITAL



DWELLING IN THE
PSALMS



GENEVAN FANTASIES

CALVIN UNIVERSITY CHAPEL

MAY 4, 2026 | 7:30 PM



Organist **André Knevel** presents variations on Genevan psalm tunes by Dutch composers from the 19th century to the present.

worship.calvin.edu/events



Damin Spritzer Organ



LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church

Friday, May 8, 7:00 pm

Internationally recognized performer Damin Spritzer will present an organ recital on Friday, May 8, at LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church at 7:00 p.m. Damin will present music by Bach, Tournemire, Howells, Wright, and a variety of American composers on the church's five-manual, 107-rank Austin-Allen organ.

Mark Billy & Robert Ragoonanan

in recital



May 8th at 7 PM
Westminster Presbyterian Church
Grand Rapids, MI

Nationally-performing Choctaw baritone and cedar flautist will perform with longtime collaborator Robert Ragoonanan on our new piano in the chapel. Mark Billy is the leading Indigenous baritone of his generation. He is a Verdi baritone, clarinetist, and Native flutist of Indigenous (Choctaw tribe) ancestry from Finley, Oklahoma. He enjoys a multi-faceted career in opera, recitals with piano, concerts with orchestra, and Indigenous classical music education. Mark is at the forefront of the current musical movement which combines the sacred cultural music of the Indigenous peoples and Western concert music.

 **WESTMINSTER**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

47 Jefferson Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
westminstergr.org

Music Celebration Sunday

May 10th at 10 AM



Join us for Music Celebration Sunday! The Westminster Sanctuary Choir will present Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo's (b. 1978) *Song of the Universal*, for choir and chamber orchestra. The choir will then be joined by baritone Mark Billy in a presentation of Ralph Vaughan Williams' (1872-1958) *Five Mystical Songs*. Mark will also share music on the cedar flute during the service. It will be a powerful morning of music making centered around the ideas of grace and the goodness of creation!

Join us after worship at 11:30 in the chapel to hear Mark discuss his work as a nationally-performing artist at the forefront of the current musical movement which combines the sacred cultural music of the Indigenous peoples and Western concert music.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
47 Jefferson Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
westminstergr.org

Grand Rapids Choir of Men and Boys

A Place Where God's Song Finds its Voice in Us

Two very special performances in the life of our choir marking the conclusion of Scott Bosscher's 25 years of leadership.

Saturday May 16 @ 7 pm

Sunday May 17 @ 3 pm

**Basilica of St Adalbert
654 Davis Ave NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504**

No Tickets Necessary



These will be two very special performances in the life of our choir as they will mark the conclusion of Scott Bosscher's 25 years of leadership, as well as introducing our Choir's next Director of Music, Dr. Eric Reyes. Reflecting how Scott has viewed the music and ministry of the choir through the past quarter century, he has titled the program: "A Place Where God's Song Finds its Voice in Us."

Musical settings by Durufle, Stopford, Meador & Gjeilo of the ancient Ubi Caritas text: "Where charity and love are found, there is God also" will anchor each the concert's four movements. Filling out each section around them will be some of the most loved choral works from the British Cathedral tradition.

To list a few, the choir will sing Henry Purcell's verse anthem "O God, Thou Art My God" as well as Mendelssohn's double anthem "Hear My Prayer" and "O For the Wings of a Dove" each with their soaring extended boy soprano solos. Two of the most famous grand English Cathedral anthems will also be performed: C.H.H. Parry's monumental anthem "I Was Glad When They Said Unto Me" and John Ireland's "Greater Love Hath No Man." Other selections by C.V. Stanford, Will Todd, Ralph Vaughan Williams & Taylor Scott Davis will fill out the program.

Please join us for share in these thrilling English Anthems, to say farewell to Scott & Jane Bosscher, and to greet GRCMB's next Director of Music, Dr. Eric Reyes along with our newly appointed Associate Director, Jordan Malone.

All concerts are offered free of charge with a free-will offering taken.

No tickets are necessary. Arrive early for best seating doors open 45 minutes prior to start time

GRANGER PIPE ORGAN SHOP INVITATION

An open invitation to all members of the Grand Rapids and Southwest Michigan chapters of the AGO, organ students, and anyone curious about what goes on in a pipe organ shop, to the **Granger Pipe Organs** open house. After an exhaustive move starting in January, we've finally settled into our new facility in Grand Rapids.

The open house will be held on **Saturday, May 16th** from noon to 5pm at **3536 Roger B Chaffee Memorial Blvd. SE** in Grand Rapids, MI. This is an opportunity for organists of all ages to get a behind-the-facade look at what all goes in to pipe organ restoration and maintenance.

We have several exciting projects currently going through and coming into the shop this year, including components from Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, bellows from the 1957 J. W. Walker we helped bring over from London, England that is currently being restored by the Buzard firm and will be reinstalled in the Episcopal Cathedral in Chicago, a 1949 Aeolian-Skinner getting a full restoration, and several consoles being rebuilt and getting upgrades.

In addition to the wood shop, there are work stations for leather and electrical work, many organ parts in various stages of restoration, dozens of ranks of historic pipework, and a full length E. M. Skinner 32' wood Contra Bombarde out on the shop floor for demonstration.

We welcome anyone with an interest in the pipe organ to come and take a tour and meet some of our staff and get up close to things they might not have an opportunity to see (and hopefully stoke some interest in the next generation of pipe organ technicians). Light refreshments will be served and we look forward to seeing you.

Joe Granger



J Granger Pipe Organs, LLC
Grand Rapids, MI
Harbor Springs, MI
248-259-2461

www.jgrangerpipeorgans.com

Member AIO, AGO, OHS



SUMMER

ORGAN ENCOUNTER

A FREE COURSE FOR PIANO STUDENTS AGES 12 TO 18



JUNE 2026

GRAND RAPIDS + HOLLAND, MI

**SPONSORED BY THE AMERICAN GUILD
OF ORGANISTS (GRAND RAPIDS CHAPTER)**

APPLY AT SOEGR.ORG

Summer Organ Encounter

A PROGRAM FOR TEENS

The Summer Organ Encounter of West Michigan is a program designed to introduce students to the pipe organ through classes, private lessons, and performance. Open to all students in West Michigan, the program is 100% underwritten by donors, friends of the program, and local organists.

Started by Bob Houskamp in 2014, the program has “graduated” over 75 students in the West Michigan area ages 10-18. We encourage any students, especially those studying piano, to apply for this program.

The Scholarship Program

Each year, students are recommended for the scholarship program, a facet of our organization that is funded by additional donors. Students will be notified of their acceptance into the scholarship program by the end of the summer.

Organ Tours

As an extension of the three-week classes, we have arranged for our students to tour selected organs in the area. Students have had the opportunity to play historically preserved instruments and even recent builds.

**Do you know a student who might be interested in learning how to play the pipe organ?
[Invite them to apply!](#)**

Guild members:

You may have gotten an email from me regarding this year’s SOE, which is, for the first time, a program of GRAGO!

Could you publicize the following blurb (feel free to add to it) and attached poster in your church, studio, social media platforms, etc.

Blurb:

We are happy to announce this year's Summer Organ Encounter, an annual 3 week program in June for high school piano students to learn the fundamentals of the pipe organ...entirely free of charge!

More details and applications can be found at soegr.org Applications due May 1.

[DOWNLOAD, PRINT AND POST FLYER ON PREVIOUS PAGE](#)