

A Letter From the Dean

Dear members and friends,

I don't know how the Polar Vortex has affected you, but it's probably a safe bet that some plan or the other (from Wednesday night choir rehearsals to traveling) has had to shift because of it, in the last weeks. As someone who gets most of my work done in the hours when my children are in school, with so many snow and ice days recently, it's not been a productive month!

However, your AGO has had a few productive meetings in the last month. In January, we had a lovely Epiphany-ish party at Julia's place, eating a delicious feast together and singing from the Oxford Book of Carols. Earlier this week, Rick and Cheryl were gracious hosts at First Reformed. Thank you all for sharing your many gifts!

We are looking ahead to a special meeting on Friday, March 1 at 7 p.m. at Hope Church (note location). While many of us lead choirs, I think it's fair to guess that none of us has lead a choir in a prison before. However, if you remember Brad Richmond's inspiring talk at St. Francis a few years ago, on the many health benefits (both physical and emotional) of singing, especially singing in groups, you may begin to see why this could be significant. Our presenter on March 1, Dr. Mary Cohen is a professor of Music Education at the University of Iowa, and an innovator in the area of using arts in prisons to bring transformation to lives both inside and outside the prison. Her choir combines inmates with outside volunteer members, who rehearse and perform together. She is internationally-known in this field, and we are very lucky to have the opportunity to hear from her!

If you'd like to learn more about her work, this is a link to a short video produced by Iowa Public Television about Mary and her choir in Iowa.

<http://www.iptv.org/gfi/story/32612/episode-oakdale-community-choir-coralville-iowa>

And this is an article from Iowa Public Radio about how her choir was chosen to be included as the chorus for an opera production in NYC!

<https://www.iowapublicradio.org/post/iowa-prison-choir-makes-its-new-york-city-debut>

One audience member shared these reflections: "I have been to prisons in the system hundreds of times as part of my work, and I have to say this is the first time in 35 years I have seen anything in the system that inspired me. I was particularly moved by the decision to sing songs composed by the 'inside' members of the choir."

If you cannot make the Friday evening presentation, but are still interested in hearing Mary, she will speak at Calvin College on Thursday, February 28 at 12:30 p.m. in the Covenant Fine Arts Center (sponsored by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship), and also on Friday at 3 p.m. in the Choral Rehearsal Room of the Jack Miller Center in Holland, in a special presentation for Hope College music students, but other local musicians are also welcome to attend. We are grateful to have the support of many area groups to make this visit happen, including Hope Church, Grace Episcopal, and various departments at Hope College, including the Music Department, the Sociology/ Social Work Department, and Peace and Justice Studies.

And, you can look forward in March to another Organ Marathon Sunday of concerts! On March 24 at 3 p.m. at Grace Episcopal, Nicholas Palmer and friends will be presenting his choral composition Suffering Servant. Then at 5 p.m. in Zeeland at Second Reformed, in the next in the monthly series of concerts showcasing the newly renovated sanctuary and organ, Ronald Krebs, Vice President from Reuter organ company and a concert organist, will perform.

In upcoming events, mark your calendars for our Member's Recital, on Sunday, May 19 at Second Reformed in Zeeland at 5 p.m. I was just over there to play their newly refurbished two-manual Reuter, and I can promise, you will really enjoy both playing and hearing it! The space looks gorgeous too.

This issue we include the introduction of the Hope College organ student whose Guild membership we sponsor – Brooke Van Wyke. I asked her to tell us a little bit about herself. Brooke will also be performing at our Member's Recital, so you can look forward to hearing more from her then.

Hello members of the Holland AGO!

I grew up in Jenison and am very glad to now be a sophomore at Hope college, studying organ under Dr. H. Lewis. My primary major is a B.S. in Biology, and I'm a pre-veterinary student. I also plan to do a B.A. in music, if scheduling allows. I'm currently on the executive board for Club Animalia, the pre-vet club at hope, and I just recently joined Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE).

I chose to continue studying music here at Hope because music has always been a huge part of my life, really balancing my STEM interests so that I don't become consumed by only one area of study. I chose organ because I wanted to use music to serve the church, and organ is so fundamental to worship. I really love studying organ; it's so rewarding to practice and improve on the repertoire I'm learning, and to learn so much more about the history of music in the church and how we still carry on many worship traditions!

Also, thank you to the Holland AGO for sponsoring my membership in the guild!

Sincerely,

Brooke Van Wyk

If you are looking for a sub, and needing a new name for your list, look no further than the Holland native Norene Walters. Having grown up in Holland and attended Hope College, studying with Roger Davis back in the Jim Folkert years, Norene is no stranger to this town, or many of you! If you contact her in enough time (because good subs fill up their schedules fast!), you can take advantage of her brief time here in Holland (before moving on to bigger and better things) to snag a very experienced church musician and organist. Norene was at our February meeting, so look for her at events coming up. Norene's email is norene.walters@gmail.com

We also have another new member, Karen Howells, who moved recently to Holland from Muncie, Indiana, and lived earlier in Flint, MI. I hope to include a short blurb about Karen as well next month.

Finally, if you attended the November (Election Night) recital I played at Hope Church, as a AGO benefit for Pipedreams 35th Anniversary, you may enjoy learning that we raised \$351 at that event (kind of interesting, since we were celebrating the 35th anniversary, no?) which we donated, with a little bit extra from our chapter coffers, to Blue Lake Public Radio to support their underwriting of Pipedreams, which airs Sunday mornings. In appreciation, they have gifted us four Day Sponsorships, some of which we will be using to publicize our upcoming Member's Recital. And we received \$100 from

National AGO headquarters, for taking part in the Pipedreams Anniversary concert idea. So everyone was a winner as a result of that evening! (Well, except for one of my candidates, but alas...)

Don't miss this Sunday's Grace Notes Concert, with local favorite Jane Bosko, who will be playing solo organ works, as well as works for organ and soprano and organ and flute, at 1 p.m.

Thanks for reading, and I look forward to seeing you at an organ event soon!

Rhonda

Chapter programs for 2018-19

March 1 – 7:00 p.m. – Hope Church – Cultivating Communities of Caring: Choral Singing in Prisons , by Dr. Mary Cohen of the University of Iowa. An expert in the field of arts in prisons, Dr. Cohen leads a ground-breaking ensemble in Iowa City, that combines inmates with volunteers who make music together.

March 25 – 7:30 p.m. - 14th CRC - Sacred Dance with Hope College Prof. Linda Graham - The head of the dance department at Hope College, Linda will answer questions you have about sacred dance, how it can be used in worship, and some best practices for collaborating with dancers.

April (after Easter - TBD) – Musician-Clergy Relations, with Brian Carder and the Pastors at Hope Church – the second in our series, after last year's very successful event at Grace Episcopal.

May 19 – 5 p.m. – Second Reformed of Zeeland – Members Recital (on the newly installed organ!)
Start thinking about what you'd like to play.

June – End of year Potluck, location TBD

Other local programs of interest

February 10 at 1 p.m. – Jane Bosko – another former Holland AGO dean, and organist at Harderwyk
Sunday March 24 – 3 p.m. – Grace Notes at Grace Episcopal - Nick Palmer and his Suffering Servant
Lenten Choral work

Sunday, March 24 – 5 p.m. - Organ Concert at Second Reformed in Zeeland – Ronald Krebs, VP of Reuter Organ Company

AGO Great Lakes Regional Convention in Grand Rapids

Mark your calendars, because this year's Great lakes regional convention will be held in Grand Rapids, June 30-July 3 and features a Holland day! Early bird registration is available until March 15. Even if you can't attend the entire convention, daily rates are also available. Look for both regional artists and nationally known names.

On the Holland day (July 2) Rhonda will play the Pasi at Grace, David Heinze will play the Skinner in Dimment, Huw Lewis will play the Casavant in the Jack Miller concert hall, and the evening concert will be Lynne Davis at the Cathedral of St Andrew in Grand Rapids.

Chapter Officers for 2018-2019

Dean - Rhonda Edgington

Sub-Dean – Linda Fulton

Board Members – Roberta Kraft, Rick Van Oss

Ex Official:

Treasurer - Gordon Bruns

Newsletter Editor - Paul Dalman

Website – hollandareaago.org

2018-2019 Calendar		
Fri, Mar 1, 7:00 p.m.	Cultivating Communities of Caring: Choral Singing in Prisons - Dr. Mary Cohen of University of Iowa.	Hope Church, Holland
Mon Mar 25, 7:30 p.m.	Sacred Dance in Worship – Linda Graham from Hope College	TBA
April (after Easter), TBA	Musician-Clergy Relations – Brian Carder and Hope Church Pastors	TBA
Sun May 19, 5:00 p.m.	Annual Members Recital	Second Reformed Church, Zeeland
Jun TBA	Annual Picnic	TBA
Jun 30-Jul 3	AGO Great Lakes Regional Convention	Grand Rapids & Holland