

## **A Letter From the Dean**

Dear Members,

Happy New Year! The board had a productive meeting last week, and I'm thankful for all those folks who help this chapter run smoothly. We made some plans for upcoming events, and since there's so much going on, I'll use my letter to highlight some things.

Our next meeting will be on TUESDAY (note change from Monday), Feb 3 at 7:30 pm, now held in the Nykerk Organ Studio (Hope College) - Huw Lewis will be giving a presentation on teaching yourself and others, so whether you are a teacher of students, or simply a life-long learner, this talk should have something for everyone.

We changed that date to give people the opportunity on Monday night, Feb. 2 to drive up to Grand Rapids to hear the former AGO president, Eileen Gunther, present on Clergy-Musician relations. See below for more details. Jane and I will attend, so talk with us if you'd like to ride together. I'm excited for the chance to hear a woman who was exemplary in her support of hospitality and outreach for the guild.

At the end of the month, on Monday, Feb 23, we have rescheduled Bob Batastini's talk that was cancelled in November due to weather, again held at 7:30pm at 14th St CRC in Holland. Entitled New Hymns, Bob explained his topic this way.

*As organists we are often confronted by worshippers desiring more "contemporary" music. The solution is often to scheduling two services: traditional and contemporary. Perhaps there is another option that does not involve leaving the organ bench. By becoming acquainted with some of today's best hymn writers, we'll explore the practice of wedding 21st century hymn texts, to sturdy, time-tested tunes.*

Bob also passed on a note about this fascinating-sounding talk coming up in the area. On Saturday morning, March 7th, the Grand Rapids Chapter of NPM is hosting a workshop on working with aging voices. Our presenter is Cal Langejans, director of the very young sounding Evergreen Chorale, comprised of singers over 50! (More details below.)

Stay tuned, because Monday, March 2, our own amazing Jim Folkert will be giving us some tips and advice on how to deal with small organ technical problems, and Gordon Bruns will host us at Second Reformed in Zeeland, where word has it, there may be some technical problems already arranged, on which to demonstrate.

Our annual members recital is coming up in April - Sunday afternoon, April 12 at Western Seminary. Be getting your pieces ready, because we're looking for players! If I haven't called you, and you'd like to play, please let me know.

I have a note from Loraine Brugh at Valparaiso University, about their upcoming POE this summer. (See below as well.)

And the regional AGO convention will be taking place in Indianapolis this summer. I will be giving one of the workshops, and there will be some great performers as well. Hope to see some of you there!

Looking forward to seeing you over the upcoming months.

Best wishes,  
Rhonda

## **Meet the Students**

Rhonda interviews another Hope College organ student:

1. Tell us your name, where you're from, your major, your year.

My name is Jonathan Bading, and I hail from Chantilly, VA, a suburb of Washington, D.C. I am a freshman at Hope College and hope to pursue a B.M. in Organ Performance with an English minor.

2. When and how did you become interested in the organ?

My father is an organist and a longtime member of the AGO (a former treasurer of the Northern Virginia Chapter). Thus, I've been exposed to organ music since practically the womb. Yet I myself did not seriously take up organ until around my junior year of high school, after attending a POE the previous summer at Shenandoah University in Winchester, VA.

3. What compelled you to include organ study as part of your college life?

Organ has played a sort of salvational role in my relationship with the keyboard. When I was 15 or 16, my commitment to piano was waning due to other academic and social interests and, frankly, poor discipline, as well. Contrarily, I was heavily invested in choral music and through it (and other means) became very interested in the history, theology, and vocation of sacred music. I began studying the organ, and knew that if I was to play a part in the world of church music, I would need to establish competency on the instrument. Yet the more I play, the more my desire for competency turns into actual passion and interest in the organ and its central, foundational role in the worship of the Western church.

4. What specific piece or general kinds of organ music do you enjoy playing the most right now?

I love studying English service music. Anglican chant, in particular, I find sublime.

5. How do you envision organ-playing fitting into your life post-Hope College?

I would love to work as a church musician, especially one who oversees liturgics and the choir as well as the organ. I would love to use the organ (and the choir) as means of educating the Church on the transcendent, nurturing, and rich quality of our musical heritage. I wish to humbly lead the congregation in true worship so, as St. Bernard of Clairvaux puts it, "that our own voice may be in harmony with the voice of majesty."

## **GRAGO Presents Author Eileen Guenther**

Former President of the AGO

Author of *Rivals or a Team? (Clergy-Musician Relationships)*

Kretschmer Recital Hall, Aquinas College

Monday, February 2, 8:00 p.m.

Dr. Eileen Guenther is Professor of Church Music at Wesley Theological Seminary, where she teaches music and worship courses and is Director of Chapel Music. Her role as teacher extends to churches and musical and denominational organizations, where she leads workshops on music and social justice, global music, spirituals, and clergy-music relations. Her book on clergy-musician relations, "*Rival or a Team: Clergy-Musician Relationships in the 21st Century*", was published in June, 2012 by MorningStar Music Publishers. It has received a great deal of media attention and interviews with Eileen have been published in a variety of venues from blogs and denominational newsletters to The Huffington Post and Christian Century.

Her book on *The Power of Spirituals* is in progress and will be published by MorningStar Music Publishers in the near future.

In her recent book, Dr. Guenther explores how leaders in the church should relate to one another. She includes some of the horror stories caused by musical elitism or the pursuit of pastoral power. She goes on, however, to suggest paths to positive partnerships, based on respect for the complementary role of one's colleagues.

This is a topic of relevance not only for clergy and musicians, but also for seminary students, worship leaders, and worship committee members. Please invite your colleagues and persons in your congregation who would profit from a presentation of this sort.

## **2015 Regional AGO Convention Registration**

Registration is now open for the AGO 2015 Great Lakes Region Convention, July 12-15 in Indianapolis. Early bird registration is \$260 for regular members, and the cut-off date is Feb 28. The convention website is [www:ago-racetoindy2015.org](http://www:ago-racetoindy2015.org).

## **Job Opening**

Organist and pianist, East Congregational United Church of Christ, 1005 Giddings SE, Grand Rapids MI 49506.

East Congregational Church UCC, seeks an organist/pianist for an interim period of Mid-January through August, 2015. This period is to allow time for the church to better define its music program in the context of an overall visioning process, beginning this January. East Church has two pipe organs: sanctuary and chapel. The sanctuary organ is a 61-rank, 4-manual instrument maintained by Lauck Organ Company.

The organist/pianist would work in conjunction with the Director of Choirs. At some time in the second half of the Interim period, we will be seeking candidates for a Permanent position (to be from September onward). The interim organist may be eligible to be a candidate for this permanent position. East Church is an open-and-affirming congregation.

If interested / have questions please direct your inquiries to any of the following:

Karen Johnson, Personnel Committee: (616) 309-7894

Ed Bolt, Personnel Committee: (616) 885-6307

Ruth Fitzgerald, Pastor: (616) 245-0578

## **Valparaiso University POE**

Valparaiso University and the Northwest Indiana Chapter of the AGO are undertaking a Pipe Organ Encounter (POE) this summer between July 5<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015. Thirty two young musicians will spend five days being introduced to the pipe organ. They will have both private and group instruction, and learn the principles of the instrument as well as some of the literature and history. Visits to organs and organ builders will expose them to construction and design. Throughout their experience, they will associate with other young musicians, chapter members, the best and brightest organists in the area and teachers of national renown. All information is now online at [www.valpopoe.com](http://www.valpopoe.com).

## **A Workshop for Church Choir Directors**

Choral Directors Workshop: Working with Aging Voices

Saturday Morning: March 7<sup>th</sup> / 9am – Noon

St. Paul the Apostle, GR

2750 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids

Clinician, Cal Langejans, is the founder of the Holland Chorale, and served as its conductor from 1960 until 2000. He currently conducts the Evergreen Chorale—a well-balanced ensemble of 100+ voices, for singers 50 years of age and older—chosen by audition.

Aging is part of life. As singers get older it can become more and more difficult to consistently produce good vocal sounds, but it's not impossible. Choral directors are faced with bringing out the best possible sounds from their singers, including seniors. Younger choral directors often find themselves working with singers twice their own age or more. This workshop offers help, no matter which side of 50 we are on these days.

Choral directors from all SW Michigan churches are cordially invited. For more information and registration details go to: [www.npm-gr.org](http://www.npm-gr.org).

## **Chapter Officers for 2014-2015**

Dean - Rhonda Edgington

Sub-Dean - Stephen Jenkins

Secretary - Judy Koeman

Treasurer – Gordon Bruns

Board Member - Julia Collingsworth

Hope College Student Board Member - Aaron Goodyke

Webmaster - Rick VanOss

Newsletter Editor - Paul Dalman

Hospitality - Mike VanDoornik

Website – [hollandareaago.org](http://hollandareaago.org)

## 2014-2015 Calendar

2014-2015 Calendar		
Tue Feb 3	Huw Lewis - On Teaching and Learning the Organ	7:30 p.m., Hope College Organ Studio (Note Change)
Mon Feb 23 (rescheduled from Nov)	Bob Batastini - New Hymns	7:30 p.m., 14th St. Christian Reformed Church, Holland
Mon Mar 2 (note change from earlier calendars)	Jim Folkert - What to do Before the Organ Repair Person Arrives	7:30 p.m., Second Reformed Church, Zeeland
Sun Apr 12	Member's Recital	Western Theological Seminary Chapel, Holland
Fri May 15	End of Year Potluck	6:00 p.m., Home of Gordon Bruns