

A Letter From the Dean

Dear Members and Friends,

Happy April! Though it's cold and dreary as I write this, I am thinking of those sunny, warm(ish) days we've recently experienced, and watching the tulip heads poking up from the ground on our tulip lane, so spring must be one the way. Spring means Easter and Tulip Time are coming too. Are you ready?

We hosted two fascinating meetings in March (one at the beginning, and one at the end), and are looking ahead to another session in April with a local clergy-musician pair, dialoguing about clergy-musician working relationships, the second in what I hope will be a continuing series.

Next Meeting – Tues, April 30

I hope you will be able to join us on Tuesday, April 30 at 7:30 pm at Hope Church, for a session with Musician Brian Carder and Pastor Gordon Wiersma on Clergy- Musician Relations. Brian and Gordon have been working together for over 20 years at Hope Church, and have a wealth of experiences to share from. If you remember fondly Steve and Jen's talk on this topic last spring at Grace Episcopal, as I do, you will not want to miss this session. Feel free to invite a clergy person in your life, or a colleague who either has a problematic relationship with his/her clergy, or doesn't. Bring your questions as well!

See below for Gordon Brun's write-up about Dr. Cohen's March 1 visit and presentation. We will be reading another member's take on our Sacred Dance session last Monday in next month's newsletter.

Don't forget that our member's recital is coming up in May at Second Reformed in Zeeland – if you'd like to play and haven't let Gordon or I know, please be in touch soon.

Organ Music for Sale – Name your Price! - Benefiting our chapter

I was contacted recently by an organist from Ohio who has run L K Drew Publishing Company, and for personal reasons, needs to close this business. She is willing to donate copies of the organ pieces she has in stock to our chapter, which we as a chapter can sell and then keep the proceeds. I will be "ordering" from her however many copies we'd like of each piece, and so will include below her list, with descriptions. You can also find me at the next meetings, and take a look at the pieces yourself (I have sample copies of each), and then let me know what you'd like to order. Pay me whatever you'd like for the music. Or maybe you know someone you'd like to give one of the pieces to – a student or newer player? A perfect gift!

Pieces by Joyce Hemenger

Chimes for Organ – A collection of tuneful pieces for chimes with accompaniment composed for church services, weddings and funerals

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly – Organ solo with chimes or solo stop

Gentle Mary Laid Her Child – Organ solo with chimes or solo stop

Pieces by John David Peterson

Camptown Mozart – This is the concert pieces that makes the audience smile. A humorous arrangement of Stephen Forster Songs interspersed with strains of Mozart’s Andante KV616. Can also be played on piano.

Freu dich sehr, O meine Seele – This little treasure for a prelude or recital shows the colors of the organ. You’ll find yourself humming the melody of this lovely, old chorale. (Nice for Lent, too.)

The regional AGO convention is taking place this July in Grand Rapids – we hope you can join us for what looks to be another great convention, planned by everyone’s favorite Peter Kurdziel and committees of organists from the greater Grand Rapids area.

Thanks for reading – hope to see you around town soon at a musical event!

Best wishes,

Rhonda

March’s Meeting -- by Gordon Bruns

A gathering of people with various interests gathered at Hope Church on March 1, to hear Dr. Mary Cohen of the University of Iowa describe her work in building a Community of Caring at the Oakdale Prison in Coralville, Iowa. For the past decade or so, volunteer singers from the community have attended weekly choral sessions in the prison, singing with residents, preparing for periodic concerts at the prison, and socializing for a while at the end of the evening. Attendees were interested in how this community choir serves a purpose of restorative justice, uses music to build a sense of humanity and dignity for those incarcerated, and reduces the social barriers between “us” and “them” with the volunteer singers.

As background for this project, Mary provided an overview of the current state of corrections in the US, and reflected on how these factors challenge this or similar programs. Factors include the racial and socioeconomic inequities of prison populations; impaired socialization skills of residents, and awkwardness of volunteers in relating to residents; unpredictable relocations of residents; and combating aggressive and hostile dynamics within the prison with kinder, restorative attitudes and behaviors with choir participants. Of significant importance to the success of this project is the warden, who has immeasurable influence on permissions, purpose, encouragement, and resources. Without the support and agreement on purpose by the warden, much less is likely to happen.

Dr. Cohen brings her own experience as a music educator to the prison choir. Video clips and her real-time presentation with us displayed an enthusiasm for the task much as one would expect from a dedicated and energetic teacher. In my opinion, she also displayed an indomitable spirit in facing the crushing challenges presented by this society’s departments of corrections.

A natural outgrowth of the choir is the writers’ project, encouraging original songwriting as a means of expression, healing, and reconciliation. Participants’ songs address emotional and relational effects of their incarceration, their crimes, and their consequences. Several of the original songs have been sung at the choir’s concerts, and many are posted on the choir’s website. (See below)

In this writer’s opinion, there is much to like about this. Whether one is loyal to the inherent value of music in enriching the human experience, or to spiritual and religious principles of restoration and forgiveness, or to humanistic virtues of common dignity and worth, or concerned about specific issues

related to how this society approaches questions of justice and corrections, the Oakdale Community Choir ticks a lot of the boxes for a project worth doing.

To learn more about the Oakdale Community Choir and to hear their music, go to: <http://oakdalechoir.lib>. More about Dr. Mary Cohen can be found at: <https://music.uiowa.edu/>.

Chapter programs for 2018-19

April 30 – 7:30 p.m. Hope Church – 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 Church 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

May 8-11 – Annual Tulip Time recitals at Hope College's Dimnent Memorial Chapel. Eight 20-minute recitals each day on the hour and half-hour beginning at 10:00 a.m.

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		
Tue April 30, 7:30 p.m.	Musician-Clergy Relations – Brian Carder and Hope Church Pastors	Hope Church, Holland
Sun May 19, 5:00 p.m.	Annual Member's Recital	Second Reformed Church, Zeeland
Jun TBA	Annual Picnic	TBA
Jun 30-Jul 3	AGO Great Lakes Regional Convention	Grand Rapids & Holland