

A Letter From the Dean

Dear AGO Friends,

Happy New Year to all of you. I saw a cute cartoon this week. Person 1 says, "I wonder what 2022 will bring?" Person 2 says, "It will bring flowers." Person 1 says, "How do you know?" Person 2 says, "I'm going to plant them." That's the spirit!

Thanks to our chapter members who provided us with some inspirational organ music during December. I am also still relishing the presentation by Brenda Portman in November. It was an enjoyable evening and was nice that we had a pretty fair turnout. Thanks to our Sub-Dean, Linda Fulton, who hosted a nice meal for Brenda and the board before the program.

We also owe a huge thanks to Linda for a generous monetary gift she made to our chapter in December. We can use a little boost like that right about now. Thanks, Linda! It is appreciated very much.

Two of our board members have tested positive for COVID this past month. With the current spike, it seems wise to postpone our Epiphany Party that was to have been January 10. In addition, Third Reformed has just lost another choir member to COVID. Maybe we can transform it into a Mardi Gras party. Stay tuned.

The good news is that we have five new members. Talk about a boost! I am anxious for you to be acquainted with them.

Ruth Baker was born in Muskegon and also lived in Montague and South Haven. Her dad was a minister and her family had a lot of ties to Hope College. Her grandfather was a philosophy professor at Hope, and her parents and numerous relatives attended there. Ruth went to Central College in Pella, Iowa, majoring in music, with organ as her primary instrument. She held the organist position at First Presbyterian Church in Davenport, Iowa for nearly forty years. That is where she met her husband who had immigrated from Australia. They raised four children there. In recent years, after being widowed, she moved to Wisconsin to be near a son, and more recently to South Haven, where she has a daughter. Some of you met Ruth at the September meeting.

Jerry Belsema also hails from Central College in Pella, and graduated two years ahead of Ruth. He majored in music, with organ as his major instrument, as well. Here the two of them are in South Haven, and rediscovered each other through the Holland AGO chapter! Jerry taught music in several places in Michigan (Battle Creek, Grand Rapids, and Muskegon) and during this time he worked on a Masters Degree in Organ Performance at University of Michigan, studying with Robert Glasgow. He served a one year interim term at Park Church in Grand Rapids, just preceding George Shirley. Jerry learned to play the carillon at Rockefeller Chapel, University of Chicago and currently plays weekly at Grand Valley State University in Allendale. His two primary jobs near Chicago were at Trinity Lutheran Church in Des Plaines and First United Methodist in Evanston. He currently serves at Peace Lutheran in South Haven.

Maddy Burton attended the Brenda Portman program in November. She has not had any formal lessons, but is teaching herself by using videos. She graduated from Grand Haven High School and now lives in Spring Lake. Maddy has a fun job at a new chocolate factory at the corner of Lincoln and 40th in Holland! She is the oldest of three sibs. Her place to practice is on the electronic organ at her boyfriend's house. She is joining us through the Year of the Young Organist program.

Jacob Brents is Maddy's boyfriend who owns the electronic organ. He graduated from Black River High School in Holland, and most recently from Grand Valley State University, with a major in electrical engineering. He has not had any organ lessons yet, but is very interested, now that he has finished college. He currently works at Bissell Home Care in Grand Rapids. Jacob has one younger brother.

Kelli Trudeau attended her last two years of high school at Interlochen Arts Academy. She is now a junior at Hope College, with a double major in organ performance and classical studies, studying with Huw Lewis. Her hometown is Suttons Bay, Michigan. She must be very dedicated to her position at Christ the King Catholic Church in Acme, Michigan, because she commutes up there twice a month! Her local apartment is on 9th Street, near the Jack Miller Music Building. Kelli is the 2nd of nine children in her family. Her youngest sib is 18 month old.

Kelli and Jacob are also joining through the Year of the Young Organist program.

We will be so enriched by you five new members. It is so good to have you with us, and we hope you will be enriched by knowing us, too. I pray that we can all come together safely before too long.

With warm wishes,

Julia Colingsworth.
Holland AGO Dean

Rewards and Challenges in the life of a Part-Time Organist

Rewards and Challenges in the life of a Part-Time Organist: a discussion between students and professionals, facilitated by Prof. Rhonda Sider Edgington of Calvin University with Aaron Goodyke (Holland, MI), Randall Engle (Troy, MI), John Deppe (Grand Rapids, MI), John Tiemstra (Grand Rapids, MI), and the organ students of Calvin University.

Monday, January 31 6:30-7:30pm at Calvin University, as part of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship Symposium 2022

A majority of church organists in the US are working part-time in this capacity, though it can be easy to forget this fact when reading professional publications, or attending conventions. Why would someone with a full-time job in another field choose to work extra hours as a church organist? What are the challenges of squeezing a secondary vocation in to an already-full life of work, family, home, and other responsibilities? What rewards can make it worth working on holidays, evenings, and weekends? We've invited four part-time organists to share why they enjoy playing for church, and to dialogue with Calvin's organ students (all of whom are non-music majors). Area organists in Grand Rapids and members of the AGO are also invited, either in person, or via zoom, to join this conversation. Email Alexis at aav27@calvin.edu for information about location at Calvin, or the link to attend online.

John Deppe is currently a mechanical engineer at Automatic Spring Products in Grand Haven, MI. In addition to engineering, John studied organ with Huw Lewis at Hope College and currently plays occasionally at Central United Methodist Church and Dr. Martin Luther Lutheran Church in Muskegon.

Aaron Goodyke studied organ at Hope College with Huw Lewis, while earning his Bachelors of Music degree in Vocal Music Education. He is now the Middle School choir director at Caledonia Community Schools, Co-Music Director at Second Reformed Church in Zeeland, and State Honors Choir coordinator.

John Tiemstra is Professor Emeritus of Economics at Calvin University, where he taught from 1975 to 2012. While working at Calvin, he served as a substitute organist at various area churches, and was Organist for 10 years at St. Paul's Episcopal in Walker. He serves now as an occasional Assistant Organist at Calvin Christian Reformed Church.

Randall Engle studied organ first in Pella, Iowa, with Gerald Van Dusseldorp, and then at Calvin College with John Hamersma. After graduation from Calvin Theological Seminary, he studied with John Ferguson at St. Olaf prior to earning his PhD. Currently, Dr. Engle is pastor of the North Hills Christian Reformed Church of Troy, MI, and Professor of Religious Studies and Director of Christianity Studies at Oakland University. Each day he relies on his liberal arts education, musical training, and theological knowledge to guide his work.

Rhonda Sider Edgington teaches organ at Calvin University. She earned a Bachelors Degree in Piano Performance from Wheaton College, a Masters in Organ Performance from Indiana Univeristy, and a performance degree from the Hochschule fuer Kuenste in Bremen, Germany (during her time there as a Fulbright scholar.) She is now a part-time church Organist and Music Director at Hope Church in Holland, MI, and performs concerts regularly in the US and abroad.

2021-2022 Calendar		
Mon Jan 10, 6:00 p.m.	Annual chapter Epiphany Party/Soup Supper CANCELLED due to COVID	
Mon Feb 21, 7:30 p.m.	South side Holland organ crawl, ending up at the First Reformed Church's music library	Starting location TBA
Mon Mar 21, 7:30 p.m.	Larry Visser's Music	2 nd Reformed Church, Zeeland
Mon Apr 25, 7:30 p.m.	Music for organ with other instruments	TBA
Mon Jun 20, 6:00	Annual members picnic	Judy Koeman's house

Chapter Officers for 2021-2022

Dean – Julia Colingsworth

Sub-Dean - Linda Fulton

Secretary - Karen Howells

Treasurer - Gordon Bruns

Board Member - Rick Van Oss

Student Board Member - Alex Cross

Newsletter Editor - Paul Dalman

Website – hollandareaago.org