



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

## Chapter Leadership News

March 2022

### *Leadership Is Commitment in Action*

Dear Chapter Leaders,

I want to thank everyone who attended **Leadership 2022**. We used new meeting software and a new format, both of which were well received overall. On Sunday evening, prior to the opening session, chapter leaders table-hopped for 15 minutes, to engage with as many attendees as possible. The second night featured gamification, with everyone playing bingo during 15 minutes of “speed networking.” Congratulations to Zach Bowyer, sub-dean of the Charlotte chapter and COMDACS member, for completing his bingo card in record time! Both nights featured extraordinary keynote speakers. Rev. Dr. Andrea C. White, associate professor of theology and culture at Union Theological Seminary, spoke about “Practicing Justice with Pedals, Pipes, and Stops.” She discussed the entanglement of music and art as being politically autonomous and stressed that music transcends the human experience. Arreon A. Harley-Emerson, director of music and operations at the Choir School of Delaware, addressed DEIB: diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. If we truly want to be inclusive, we must have culturally relevant content, be culturally responsive in our teaching, and create culturally responsive practices. He stated that “leadership is commitment in action.” Dr. White’s presentation can be accessed [here](#); Mr. Harley-Emerson’s presentation can be accessed [here](#). I encourage you to consider including these dynamic presentations in future chapter programs. I want to thank the National Council, president Michael Bedford, and all of the regional councillors, district conveners, and chapter leaders who served as facilitators for the leadership discussions that occurred each night. Coming soon will be a series of webinars highlighting key issues from these discussions that are impacting all chapters.

This issue of **Chapter Leadership News** will cover the following:

- ✓ Leadership Profile: Evelyn Lim, Dean, Singapore Chapter
- ✓ Year of the Young Organist Recruitment Tip #9
- ✓ Southern Illinois Chapter’s Young Organist Membership Initiative
- ✓ Ocean County’s Festival of Sacred Organ and Choral Music
- ✓ Woman Composer Sunday
- ✓ Singapore Chapter’s Innovative OrganBytes
- ✓ AGO San Francisco Honors Black History Month
- ✓ Lyn Francisco, Our Newest AGO Mask Model



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## Evelyn Lim, Dean, Singapore Chapter



**What's sitting on my desk right now:** schedules, music scores, a laptop, and snacks.

**If I weren't doing this,** I would probably be doing something related. There is not much else I'd like to do.

**When I'm not at work** I'm watching movies, exploring, checking out new music, chilling with family and friends.

**The best advice I ever got:** Find a job that doesn't feel like "work," and trust God that paths will open.

**What keeps me motivated serving as chapter dean:** Seeing members bond and working together, then "infecting" others to do the same!



## The Year of the Young Organist Chapter Recruitment Contest Win \$1000 for Your Chapter!

Beginning July 1, 2021, and ending June 30, 2022, how many young organists can you recruit? Each month, we will be sending you a **new recruitment tip** to help your chapter recruit as many young organists as possible. We've created a page on our website that will include each tip and additional resources: <https://www.agohq.org/year-of-the-young-organist-recruitment-contest-2/>.

### Currently in the lead:

**Small Chapters:** Central North Carolina and Grand Rapids are tied, with a net growth of nine new young organists.

**Medium Chapter:** Denver Rocky Mountain has a net growth of twelve new young organists.

**Large Chapter:** Los Angeles has a net growth of twelve new young organists.

**TIP #9:** Young Organists attending the 2022 National Convention in Seattle are in for a treat. The



**SEA  
2022**

AGOYO Committee will be hosting a private young organist reception and has planned some special off-site excursions. In addition to the \$10,000 that Seattle has offered (to assist young organist members with costs associated with attending the convention), young organists can apply for the Suzanne and Mark Anderson Convention Housing Scholarship at [www.housing.AGOyo22.org](http://www.housing.AGOyo22.org).

## A Special Incentive Offered to Southern Illinois Young Organist Members

*The Southern Illinois chapter celebrated the New Year with a very special announcement.*

What is new in this New Year? New members and young members. Almost 25 percent of our membership is now under 30. We have been encouraged by National Headquarters to make an extra effort to retain these members, especially those who joined because of the Year of the Young Organist membership incentive. In response to this challenge, our executive committee approved an additional free year of membership to any member under 30 who would attend a Zoom meeting or any other chapter event before June 30, 2022. We felt that this would be an important investment for our chapter.

*Kudos to the chapter for offering their young organists an additional year of free membership by encouraging them to become more active in their chapter!*

The Ocean County (NJ) chapter offered the **42nd Festival of Sacred Organ and Choral Music** on February 4, 2022, at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Beachwood. This was an in-person and livestreamed event. Titled “An American Tribute,” the program was a musical journey through American history, focusing on celebration, reflection, healing, and hope. Some of the American hymns featured were “Blessed Assurance,” “Gather Us In,” and “Soli Deo Gloria.” Other American anthems featured were “A Simple Thanksgiving,” “Hark, I Hear the Harps Eternal,” “This Little Light of Mine,” and “Amazing Grace.” The program ended with a rousing patriotic set, featuring “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” “Heal Our Land,” “Song for an Unknown Hero,” “God Bless America,” and “The Liberty Bell March.”

## The 42nd Festival of Sacred Organ and Choral Music

*Presented by*

### The Ocean County Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

#### An American Tribute

*Our music will take you on a journey through American history, focusing on celebration, reflection, healing and hope.*



All the organ soloists, conductors, and accompanists were members of the chapter. The Festival Choir was made up of 44 singers representing 19 local churches. The concert can be viewed [here](#).

## Woman Composer Sunday, March 6, 2022



The AGO, the Society of Women Organists (SWO), and the Royal College of Organists (RCO) will celebrate **Woman Composer Sunday** on March 6, 2022, as a lead-in to **International Women’s Day** on March 8. Join in the celebration! Plan to program at least one piece of choral or organ music by a woman composer during your worship service, or at any other time during that weekend, and help to highlight the talents of women in advance of International Women’s Day.

Please upload your performances on social media to the hashtags #WomanComposerSunday and #SWomenOrganists. Repertoire

suggestions can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

## OrganBytes: A Community Initiative Presented by the Singapore Chapter



*Program director Wai Hoong Yap and dean Evelyn Lim recently sent me some wonderful information about a new and innovative chapter initiative that I would love to share with you.*

The Singapore chapter recently launched a community initiative that was birthed from long-term COVID-19 restrictions on concert and education activities in 2020–21. With venues remaining inaccessible and borders closed, we were in almost dire straits as to how to keep members’ interest and involvement alive. We decided to highlight organs in little-known venues and heritage spaces. This entailed bringing a video team, presenter, and organist (all volunteers) to various parts of Singapore—not just the usual concert halls. Episodes would be pitched to the non-organist, as if to say, “Look: here’s a pipe organ! Let’s see and hear what it sounds like.” Being mindful of potential screen fatigue, each episode of **OrganBytes** would be as short and informative as possible.

Happily, this online initiative coincided with the country’s efforts at promoting local tourism. If everyone else in the country was going forward with exploring local points of interest, so could the organists! As there are fewer than 15 pipe organs in Singapore, we included digital installations, especially if the venue had some significance within local culture and heritage. To date, we have completed five episodes, with two more in production. Although we had some funds available in our chapter coffers, we relied largely on the resources and volunteer spirit of our members, happily tapping into newly found talents. Since churches have resorted during the pandemic to streaming and recording services and worship music, it was timely to use these technical skills—such as filming, audio recording, and editing—with script writing from within our membership. Other members contributed music to **OrganBytes** by recording featured pieces or supplying background music to go with narration and action events. Thankfully, these in-house contributions meant that we were able to contain costs, except for the outsourced video editor and other necessary expenses, such as organ tunings and various incidentals.



A typical episode begins with the presenter giving a brief history of a nearby well-known landmark, for the cultural/heritage element. The audience then follows the presenter into the church or venue, to watch an interview with the venue representative. A description of the organ is included, followed by a ten-minute performance by a member of the chapter.

It has been an interesting and enjoyable experience (despite a challenging learning curve) for all the members who have been involved in bringing the project to fruition. More importantly, we have learned more about what non-organists think about organ music, and how we might creatively engage them from various angles. So far, we have received very positive responses from our hosts and from general members of the public, and some have expressed their keenness to continue to work with the chapter. This has resulted in the possibility of three extra episodes being produced.



**Episode 1** begins with the Laukhuff organ at the Singapore Bible College. <https://youtu.be/3zW4UJLFDaw>



**Episode 2** features Prinsep Street Presbyterian Church and its red brick facade. <https://youtu.be/ibsiKkUKWXI>



**Episode 3** brings viewers to a quaint location overlooking the sea: the Norwegian Seamen’s Mission and their Starup & Son cabinet organ.  
<https://youtu.be/IQvUkEddg7A>



**Episode 4** explores the J.W. Walker organ in Freemasons’ Hall, along Coleman Street.  
<https://youtu.be/Gy5OYA5E8s>



**Episode 5** takes a look at a cabinet organ that’s housed in the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory.  
<https://youtu.be/I3TVagA6bfc>

We’re in the midst of preparing to film our next episode—stay with us for more details!

Congratulations to the Singapore chapter! It is so amazing to see what can be achieved during challenging times to stimulate ingenuity, creativity, and innovation.

The AGO San Francisco Chapter Celebrates Black History Month

SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER OF THE  
AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

*Celebrates*  
Black History Month

PREMIERES LIVE AT SFAGO.ORG  
FEBRUARY 27 at 2pm Pacific Time

 <b>RASHAAN ALLWOOD</b> <i>Director of Music</i> St. Ansgar Lutheran Church	 <b>DR. WAYNE BARR</b> <i>Director of Choral Activities</i> Tuskegee University	 <b>PATRICK WHITEHEAD</b> <i>Director of Music</i> Historic 16th Street Baptist Church	 <b>WOLFF VON ROOS</b> <i>Concert Organist</i> Broadway United Methodist Church	 <b>LAWERENCE SUMPTER</b> <i>Organist</i> Belvedere Seventh Day Adventist Church
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Tuskegee Atlanta  
Toronto **FEATURING** Indianapolis Birmingham  
ORGANISTS AROUND  
THE AFRICAN DIASPORA!



American Guild of  
ORGANISTS



## Stylish and Safe COVID Protection That Also Promotes the AGO

The AGO store now has masks available for purchase. Our masks have three layers, are washable and durable, have a wire insert around the nose, and are extremely comfortable to wear for long periods of time.

They can be purchased for \$10 from the AGO store on our website:  
[https://ams.agohq.org/members\\_online/members/createorder.asp](https://ams.agohq.org/members_online/members/createorder.asp)



Durham-Chapel Hill dean Lyn Francisco shared this photo of her wearing the new mask.

Please send me photos of you wearing the mask, so that I can share them in future issues of this newsletter.

### **Upcoming Events**

AGO Seattle 2022: Early, discounted registration rates for the AGO National Convention in Seattle this summer will be available only through Monday, February 28. Register now to reserve your seat at the recitals, concerts, and workshops you want to attend this summer, July 3-7. It's going to be a magnificent event. <https://agoseattle2022.com/>.

AGO Endowment Fund Distinguished Artist Award -- Recital and Gala Benefit Reception honoring Karen McFarlane, Friday April 29, 2022. Join us as we honor Karen McFarlane at Riverside Church followed by a gala reception. Performers include George Baker, David Higgs, Marilyn Keiser, and Frederick Swann (virtual appearance). For tickets and details, visit <https://www.agohq.org/2022-GALA/>.