

THE COUPLER

THE DEAN'S MESSAGE



Concert + lunch = good time

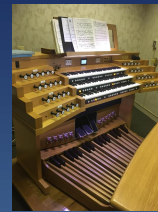
As a parish musician, I have often thought it would be lovely if the chapter could have a gathering/event during the day on a weekday, perhaps even on my day off -- Friday. And how many times have you wished you could hear a fabulous organ concert in the daytime (so you wouldn't have to drive at night) and see some friends for lunch? Well, grab your calendar!

You--especially the retired members of our crew--are invited to join me on the last Friday of each month for the Music at Midday concert at National City Christian Church (at 12:15 pm), and lunch together (Dutch treat) afterward at the Washington Plaza Hotel with the concert musician.

During this time together, you will "have the ear" of the dean and enjoy fellowship with your colleagues. Our outings were first called "Lunch with the Dean" but have since been christened the "Senior Special" by Tom Cowan. Our next gathering will be Friday, April 29. Past-Dean Irvin Peterson and I will co-host.

- David Houston

APRIL 2022 IN THIS ISSUE



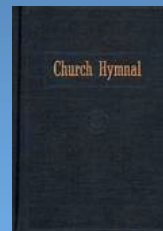
Come try out the Scottish Rite temple's new Rodgers digital organ April 29.

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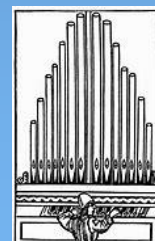
The Member Spotlight shines on Karl Robson, who recently earned his doctor of musical arts degree.

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The Hymn Society reveals the presenters for its conference in DC in July.

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Check out a slew of organ recitals taking place in the DMV this month.

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Mark Your Calendar

Our chapter is planning a full day of workshops and performances for the Juneteenth federal holiday to be celebrated on June 20.

See Page 2.

CHAPTER NEWS

Juneteenth workshops in the works

Mark your calendar for Monday, June 20, a holiday for many of us, when our chapter will present a full day of workshops and a recital. Topics under consideration include conducting from the keyboard and incorporating global song into our repertoire.

Seeking new board members



**American Guild of Organists
District of Columbia Chapter** Would you be willing to serve a two-year term, 2022-2024, on our

chapter's board? It is a great way to meet fellow organists and promote your passion for music. Meetings are monthly with an option to participate via Zoom. To volunteer, send an email to dcagochapter@gmail.com. A member of our nominating committee will be in touch.

Congratulations

Chapter member Adedotun "Ade" Olayemi passed his CAGO exam in November. The colleague certificate is one of five offered by the national AGO. The exam is entirely practical and has seven basic requirements that fall into two

categories: repertoire and keyboard skills. For more information on AGO certification, go to agohq.org/certification.

Pipe Organ Encounters Plus (POE+) in Richmond

The Richmond AGO chapter is planning a Pipe Organ Encounters Plus (POE+) Aug. 7-12 for students ages 19 or above with any level of experience – including none. The fee is \$500 (\$450 if paid by June 1) and includes a double room in a hotel and all meals. Registration is done via the AGO website's POE page, with the payment being mailed to the chapter. See the full description, the brochure and the registration information at

<https://www.agohq.org/education/poe/poe-plus/>.

For more information, email poeinfo@richmondago.org.



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THE COUPLER

A monthly newsletter published by the DC chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Send submissions to dcagochapter@gmail.com.

Studio 32 to visit Rodgers organ at Scottish Rite temple

On Friday, April 29 our chapter's monthly Studio 32 program will visit the new Rodgers digital organ at the Scottish Rite temple at 2800 16th St. NW. We will explore the varied palettes electronic sampling can offer with the push of a button – American Classic, German Baroque, French Classic and English Cathedral. Bring your shoes and some music to play, or just come and listen. The program begins at 7 pm. The Columbia Heights metro stop is three blocks away.

By Paul D. Dolinsky
Supreme grand organist of the temple

The thrilling sound of the pipe organ immediately sets a mood of grandeur and anticipation for any occasion. The Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, Valley of Washington, Orient of the District of Columbia has benefited from having a fine organ in its auditorium at its temple at 2800 16th St. NW. Music has always been associated with the many processions, rituals and festivities held there.

The original pipe organ in the building's auditorium was installed in 1937 by the DC firm of Lewis & Hitchcock. The two-manual organ with pedals had 657 pipes and nine ranks. It represented the small-scale orchestral organ popular during the pre-World War II era with many of the sounds

borrowed, shared and extended with upper and lower registers among the keyboards and pedals.

Although it was well-maintained and serviceable for 80 years, the instrument was in need of a substantial rebuilding. The significant cost of this project suggested exploring other alternatives.

Consequently, we began considering digital organ companies. Digital organs use audio samplings of significant pipe organs around the world to create an authentic organ sound through extensive technology and speaker systems. Four digital organ companies were studied, and Rodgers Organs was chosen.

Rodgers Organs, based in Oregon, was established in 1958 by two engineers and organ enthusiasts, Rodgers Jenkins and Fred Tinker. They were committed to capturing the essence of pipe organ sounds and making it economically accessible to places of worship, universities, music schools and enthusiasts around the world.



Rodgers' early organs utilized transistor-based oscillator circuits, but they have continuously
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explored new and cutting-edge technologies to reproduce authentic pipe organ sounds.

The new Scottish Rite organ is a Rodgers Artist Series 599T and equivalent to a 48-rank American Classic pipe organ spread over three manuals and a pedalboard. Three additional digital organ “sounds” sampled from famous installations around the world are available at the push of a button.

- The German Baroque option has the characteristics of an organ built by Arp Schnitger, the 17th century German organ builder of instruments known for their bright tonal spectrum.
- The French Romantic option has warm ensembles and fiery reeds characteristic of the 19th century French instruments built by Aristide Cavaille-Coll.
- The English Cathedral option has broad fundamental tones and smooth reeds characteristic of organs built by “Father” Henry Willis, one of the foremost English Victorian organ builders, and the prestigious firm of Harrison & Harrison.

The stops total 192. Additionally, we have a MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) library of 92 stop options, plus an orchestral library of 31 stops featuring many options such as chimes, handbells, harps, trumpets and timpani.

Here is the base specification of the new Rodger’s Artist 599T:

Great Division		Swell Division		Choir Division		Pedal Division	
16’	Violone	8’	Geigen Principal	8’	Diapason	32’	Contre Bourdon
8’	Principal	8’	Bourdon	8’	Holzgedackt	16’	Principal
8’	Bourdon	8’	Viola Celeste II	8’	Unda Maris II	16’	Subbass
8’	Gemshorn	4’	Prestant	4’	Principal	8’	Octave
4’	Octave	4’	Flute Traverse	2’	Octav	8’	Bass Flute
2-2/3’	Quinte	2-2/3’	Nazard	1-1/3’	Larigot	4’	Choral Bass
2’	Super Octave	2’	Block Flute	IV	Rauschwerk	16’	Bombarde
IV	Fourniture	1-3/5’	Tierce	16’	Corno di Bassetto	8’	Trumpet
8’	Waldhorn	IV	Plein Jeu	8’	Clarinet	4’	Clarion
		16’	Trombone	8’	Fanfare Trumpet		
		8’	Trumpet				

The organ console is located in the choir loft along the south wall of the auditorium. A new speaker system has been installed along the rear, east wall. The console is constructed of white oak and emulates the tradition of classical French organ building with the draw knobs arranged in tiers flanking the keyboards.

The old Lewis & Hitchcock organ has been removed and is being rebuilt for a new church home.

For information about the temple, see Page 5.

Did you know that...

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, one of history’s most notable masonic composers, wrote no fewer than 10 pieces for use in masonic lodge ceremonies. His opera *The Magic Flute* is rich in masonic symbols. His *Masonic Funeral Music* (K.477) is among his most moving works.

About the temple...

Built in the 1910s, the Scottish Rite temple is the headquarters of the Supreme Council of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Thirty-Third Degree of the Ancient and Accepted Rite of Freemasonry in DC.

One of the most unusual buildings in the eclectic Sixteenth Street Historic District, the temple was



designed by John Russell Pope, who also designed the National Archives and the Jefferson Memorial. Pope used the Tomb of Mausolus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, as his inspiration for the Temple.

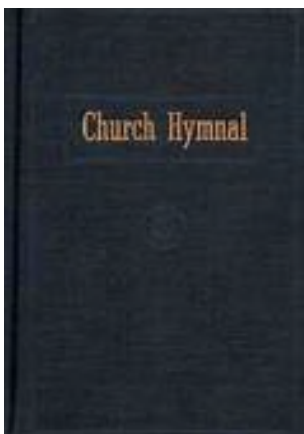
Outside, guarding the temple doors, is a pair of monumental sphinxes, representing wisdom and power.

The temple is laced with symbolism in its design and decor, much of which requires close attention to detail and may not be obvious to non-Masons.

The temple's library, which was the first public library in DC, contains one of the world's largest collections of materials on and by Scottish poet and Freemason Robert Burns.

The library was opened to the public at the request of Albert Pike, who donated his personal collection of books with the stipulation that they be available for use, free of charge, by the general public. Today, visitors can [tour the Temple and the library](#).

-- historicsites.dcpreservation.org



Old hymnals still available

A variety of denominational hymnals have been donated to the chapter for free distribution to our members or anyone else interested.

To see what is available, go to dcagochapter.org, click on the Media tab, and view the March Coupler.

To claim one or more hymnals, send an email to pathenry33@gmail.com.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Karl Robson

Each month The Coupler focuses on one of our chapter members. To nominate someone to be featured in a future Member Spotlight, send an email to dcagochapter@gmail.com.

What got you interested in the organ?

My parents were always pretty involved in their church (i.e., I was there a lot, grew up in choir, etc. -- surprise!), so much so that my dad wound up switching careers and going to seminary when I was in elementary school.

I started piano lessons after a family move to Minnesota in fifth grade and almost immediately began to “sneak” onto the organ console; my parents agreed to find a teacher for me a short time later.

For a few years I received an organ lesson scholarship offered to young people through the AGO’s Southeast Minnesota chapter, sponsored by a generous donor.

What is your educational and professional background?

I’ve held church positions across multiple denominations since I was 16. I earned my BM magna cum laude with departmental distinction in church music and organ performance from St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN, where I was a student of Dr. Catherine Rodland.

I then moved to Rochester, NY, where I completed an MM in organ performance and literature at Eastman, as well as doctoral coursework and the two major degree recitals, studying with David Higgs. For a time I served as music assistant at St. Paul’s Rochester (see photo at right).

I left Eastman in 2018 to take my current position as director of music at St. John’s Episcopal Church, Norwood Parish in Chevy Chase. In an ironic twist, the whole COVID situation granted me the flexibility needed to finish my DMA. I completed comprehensive and oral exams from DC in February 2021. After a lot of travel to and from Rochester last fall, I completed my final doctoral requirement (the lecture recital) in January. I got the “piece of paper” in the mail about a month later, and wore my new hood for Evensong on March 6.

What are the biggest joys and challenges for you as an organist?

For me, this question is unfortunately wrapped up in the pandemic situation. As a church musician I find joy leading and accompanying a group of volunteers and staff singers, working together to achieve new levels of musicality. Fortunately the pandemic shutdown and emergence of Zoom

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socializing and “Logic Pro X Choir” have given way to a more “normal” method of in-person music making, albeit masked and distanced. But we all know that this latest form is not the same as in the “before times,” and indeed, not the most pleasant experience for any involved.

While we all have our groups of dedicated singers who follow us wherever we lead, I worry what the prolongation of this period means for us in terms of long-term recruitment and viability.

Why are you an AGO member?

AGO membership is a great way to network with local and national colleagues, keep informed about events and participate in a supportive artistic community. The instrument, its literature and an audience to hear it won't survive without its best advocates -- us!

What do you like to do when you are not on the organ bench?

To maintain sanity, I run 5-6.5 miles, five to six times a week -- usually on the Sligo Creek Trail near my home in Silver Spring.



Having upgraded our home sound equipment during the pandemic, my partner, Adam Detzner (pictured at right with me in Brooklyn), and I have become classical vinyl snobs. We have a rotation of stores we raid on a monthly budget, and this has turned into a fun hobby for us.

I love exploring the craft cocktail scene wherever I go; my current favorite spot in the District is Silver Lyan near Gallery Place.

As a native Midwesterner, I find the opportunity to visit friends in New York and Boston via Amtrak's Acela corridor pretty magical. Yet my true “happy place” remains my best friend's family cabin on Caribou Lake in Lutsen, MN.

AGO National Convention: The Well-Tempered Future



Seattle, Washington | July 3–7, 2022

Go to [AGO Seattle 2022](#) for more information and registration.

Booking your flight to Seattle? Receive a 5% discount from Alaska Airlines for AGO convention travel and fly round-trip from [cities](#) across

the U.S. and Canada. [Book online](#) with the exclusive AGO convention discount code **ECMD864**.

Questions? Email info@agoseattle2022.com.

Hymn Society Conference to be held in DC in July



*By J. Michael McMahon,
chapter member and
executive director of The
Hymn Society in the
United States and
Canada*



THE HYMN SOCIETY

100 YEARS OF SONG

The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada will celebrate its 100th anniversary during an Annual Conference to be held July 17-21 at Catholic University in Washington, DC. This year's conference, "Sing the World God Imagines," will have an international and multicultural focus, drawing participants from at least 10 countries on six continents. Both in-person and online registrations are available.

The conference will include an abundance of opportunities for learning, connecting, celebrating, singing and more:

-- A centennial hymn festival late Tuesday afternoon, followed by a gala banquet celebration (included in the price of registration)



-- Five hymn festivals in all, led by Stanley J. Thurston (pictured at left), Carlos Colón, Peter Kolar, the compilers of Voices Together, Benjamin Brody and Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra

-- Five plenary presentations by Cynthia A. Wilson, Martin Hoondert, Tanya Riches, Mikie Roberts and a panel of international leaders

-- Six featured sessions, led by Patrick Alston, Mikako Arase, Sarah Eyerly, Marcell Silva Steuernagel, C. Michael Hawn, FHS, and I-to Loh, FHS

-- Three short-meter sessions by international leaders John Crothers, Miki Yamamoto and David Scott Hamnes

-- More than 40 sectionals on a wide variety of topics by presenters from Argentina, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States

-- A pre-conference organ recital by Eileen Guenther

-- A bookstore, silent auction and centennial photo displays

-- Times to eat, sing and share conversation

Advance registration rates are available through June 15. [Click here](#) for complete information or to register online.

ORGAN RECITALS

Sunday, April 3, 4 pm: Dr. Caroline Robinson will present a recital at St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 6800 Columbia Pike, Annandale. She is the associate choirmaster and organist at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta and won second prize in the AGO's 2018 National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance. Free-will donations will support the Muldoon Memorial Concert Series at St. Alban's.

Sunday, April 3, 5 pm: Choral Evensong with prelude recital by Janet Yieh at Christ Church Episcopal, 118 N. Washington St., Alexandria.

Tuesday, April 5, 12:10 pm: Washington Bach Consort performs a cantata preceded by J.S. Bach's Fantasia and Fugue in C minor and Chorale Prelude on An wasserflüssen Babylon played by Marvin Mills. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

Sunday, April 17, 2 pm: Free Easter Day recital at Washington National Cathedral played by Thomas Sheehan and George Fergus. If you would rather view the concert online, you must register on the cathedral website.

Tuesday, April 26, 12:10 pm: Steinway artist Sandro Russo will present a piano and organ double-bill program of The Four Scherzi by Chopin and Fantaisie et Fugue sur le nom de BACH by Liszt. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

Tuesday, April 26, 7:30 pm: Northern Virginia chapter members' recital, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 2609 N. Glebe Rd., Arlington.

Sunday, May 1, 5 pm: Hymn Festival with Michael Smith and Patrick Scott at Christ Church, 118 N. Washington St., Alexandria.

Tuesday, May 3, 12:10 pm: Washington Bach Consort performs a cantata preceded by Nicolaus Bruhns' Praeludium in G major played by John Walthausen. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

Sunday, May 8, 5 pm: Chuyoung Suter, organist at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, plays a recital at the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land, 1400 Quincy St. NE.

Friday, May 20, 7:30 pm: Kimberly Marshall recital, St. George's Episcopal Church, 915 N. Oakland, Arlington. Sponsored by the Northern Virginia AGO chapter.

Tuesday, May 24, 12:10 pm: Organist Jeff Kempeskie, director of music at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, performs works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Howells and Persichetti. Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW.

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Sunday, June 12, 4 pm: Organist Peggy Haas Howell of Lynchburg, VA, plays selections from Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier on the Baroque temperament Howell organ at Georgetown Lutheran Church, 1556 Wisconsin Ave. NW, as part of organist Stephen Ackert's series commemorating the WTC's 300th anniversary.

Tuesday, June 14, 12:10 pm: Celebrating Juneteenth at Church of the Epiphany, 1317 G St. NW, with organist Paul Byssainthe Jr., director of music at Sligo Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Takoma Park.

Music at Midday

Music at Midday organ concerts take place 12:15-1 pm each Friday at National City Christian Church, 5 Thomas Circle NW. The spring season's musicians hail from 10 U.S. states and three European countries. Free admission; donations accepted. Detailed information at www.nationalcitycc.org or contact the Rev. Dr. J. Michael McMahon at mmcmahon@nationalcitycc.org.

April 8: Organist Loreto Aramendi is traveling from San Sebastián in the Basque Region of Spain to perform masterworks by Nicolaus Bruhns, Sergei Rachmaninoff (in an arrangement by Louis Vierne), César Franck and Olivier Messiaen.

April 15: No recital (Good Friday)

April 22: Chad Pittman and Mark Thewes (Canton, Ohio) will perform music for two organists, four hands by Denis Bédard, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Charles Callahan and Dale Wood.

April 29: Organist Pierre Zevort is traveling from Paris, France, to perform great works by Louis Marchand, Sergei Rachmaninoff (in a transcription by Louis Vierne), Pierre Cochereau, Louis-James Alfred Lefébure-Wély, and Joséphine Baker.

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POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Please advise the web administrator at pathenry33@gmail.com if any position has been filled.

District of Columbia

Protestant music director/organist: Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling. 1099 contractor with Music Ministry International. Part-time. Click [here](#).

Maryland

Director of music ministries: Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church, Bethesda. Full-time. \$65,000-75,000 per year. Position begins in August. Go to the AGO jobs listings at agohq.org. For the best chance of consideration, apply by April 10.

Director of music and organist: Good Shepherd United Methodist Church, Silver Spring. 20 hours per week. Initially \$30,000 with review after three months. Go to goodshepchurch.org, click on Current News and scroll down for details.

Music director and principal organist: St. Catherine Laboure Parish, Wheaton. Full-time. For details, click [here](#). Send resume and cover letter to the Rev. Francisco Aguirre at aguirref@adw.org.

Catholic music director/pianist/organist: Fort Meade. 1099 contractor with Music Ministry International. Click [here](#).

Virginia

Director of music: Immanuel Presbyterian Church, McLean. Full-time. \$75,000-85,000 plus benefits. Lively-Fulcher pipe organ. Click [here](#).

Music director/worship leader: Wilson Boulevard Christian Church. Part-time. \$100-300 per week. Click [here](#).

Organist/pianist: Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Vienna. \$20,000-25,000. Click [here](#) for details from the agohq.org website.

Director of liturgical music: Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Manassas. Full-time. Click [here](#).

Music and worship coordinator: Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, Alexandria. 8-10 hours per week. One Sunday off per month. \$10,000 yearly. Work with pastor and organist/accompanist to coordinate the church's music and worship life. Click [here](#) or email the Rev. Bob Melone at bmelone61@gmail.com.

Assistant director of music ministries: Westminster Presbyterian Church, Alexandria. 10-15 hours weekly, \$18,000-22,000 annually. Moeller organ, 47 ranks, three manuals. Two Sunday services, two weekday rehearsals. Email b.hutchens@wpc-alex.org for details or to apply.

Director of music and worship

Christ Crossman United Methodist Church, Falls Church. Half-time. \$25,000 annually. Click [here](#).

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome new chapter members Robert Scherer and Andrew Fellows, who joined through the AGO's Year of the Young Organist initiative, and Dr. Stephen F. Ackert, DMA.

LIFE MEMBERS

Blanche Curfman

Nancy Dodge

Robert Grogan

Eileen Guenther

Irv Lawless

Kenneth Lowenberg

Albert Russell

Donald Sutherland

David Hearn (deceased)

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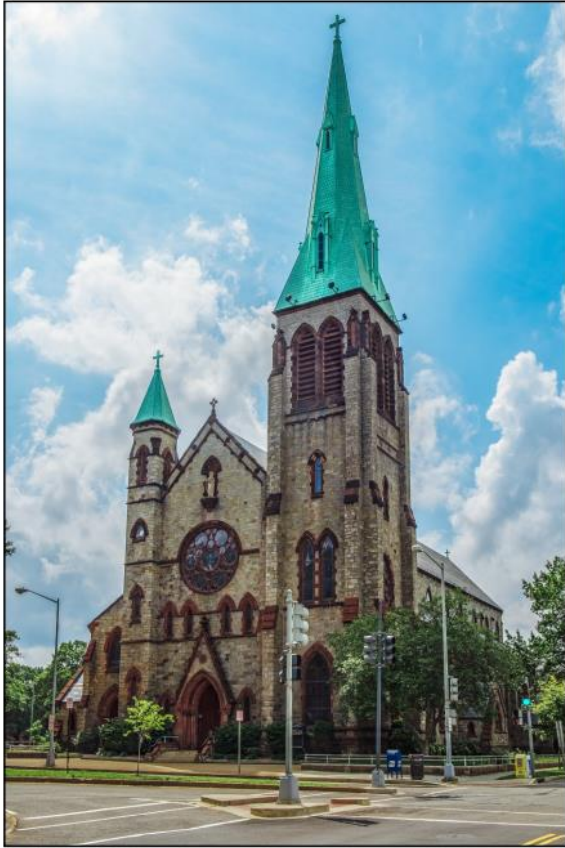


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SAINT DOMINIC CATHOLIC CHURCH WASHINGTON, DC

“The Island”, as it was often called in the nineteenth century, consisted of the area now known as Southwest Washington. Members of the Order of Preachers – the Dominicans – have stood witness in this historic part of the District of Columbia for over 160 years. The present structure, designed by noted New York City-based architect Patrick Keely, was completed in 1875. Just a decade later, in 1885, a fire destroyed the church’s interior, which was quickly restored. At the same time, the church was adorned with a grand new organ.



We at Di Gennaro-Hart are pleased to announce that we have been commissioned by the Archdiocese of Washington to undertake a major restoration of the Hilborne L. Roosevelt instrument. Cousins to Teddy, Hilborne and his brother, Frank Roosevelt, were among the very finest nineteenth century American organ builders.

The project will include the replacement of the 1929 English-style console with an “American terraced” console built according to current AGO standards. The console will offer a strong nod to the Roosevelts, particularly through the use of the engraving font that was commissioned by their firm. The present solid state control systems will be replaced with a 100 channel capture system and a new switching system with performance recorder. The reeds will be restored, numerous repairs will be completed, and the entire instrument will be thoroughly cleaned. A powerful Tuba stop, constructed by a shop that traces its roots to the Roosevelt firm, will be added.

Father Jordan Turano, OP, *Pastor*
JC Cantrell, *Music Director and Worship Coordinator*

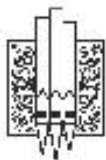


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