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# THE COUPLER

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## The Dean's Message



I am sad to say that this will be my last Dean's message in The Coupler. On February 19, my wife and I will be driving down towards Houston, where a couple of days later I will begin a new position as director of music at St. Paul's United Methodist Church. It is a big honor to have been invited to work at St. Paul's. It's large church with a truly excellent musical tradition. Its music is firmly rooted in the Anglican tradition. There are regular evensongs and the St. Paul's Choir has sung in English cathedrals many times. There are more than seventy children in the choirs, a high school ensemble in which every singer receives a scholarship, and the church is a center for Royal School of Church Music America activities and courses. Some of you will know that before coming to work at the National Cathedral I spent eleven years working at another large United Methodist church in Texas so, for me, this is the coming together of two traditions in which I

have worked. With five other music staff to collaborate with, I'm going to be very busy!

Although excited, of course, to be taking up this new position, there are two things that I'm particularly going to miss when I move: the incredibly natural beauty of this Mid-Atlantic region; and my musical colleagues. The quality of musicianship here is superb. Every day in our city there are world class performances, some attended by thousands of people and some by just a few. The passion to share the very best music in the very best way is infectious and you, the members of the District of Columbia Chapter, are very much a part of it. The tens of thousands of choral singers, congregants, audience members and fellow organists here have their lives enriched by what we do. For me, the best thing about the American Guild of Organists is that we support one another as we work hard to create this music, and I have greatly appreciated your friendship and support while I have been here.

I look forward to hearing about everything our Chapter achieves in the coming years. Our most exciting projects currently in progress are the development of an annual President's Day Festival (coming up this year very soon on February 19) and our composition competition. Applications are currently open to write an original piece for organ, for which we are offering a generous cash prize and a performance by a renowned organist at the PipeSpectacular

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## 2017-2018 DC AGO Chapter Schedule of Events

*Monday, September 18 at 7:30 PM  
Celebration of the Reformation &  
Installation of Officers  
Lutheran Church of the Reformation  
Host Paul Leavitt  
with the Potomac Chapter*

*Sunday, October 15 7 pm  
Tri-Chapter Pipes Spectacular  
Eric Plutz, Princeton University Organist  
The Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land  
Washington, DC*

*Monday, November 6 7 pm  
Morales at the Monastery  
The Choir of The Church of the Epiphany, DC  
The Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land  
Washington, DC*

*January 8, 2017  
CANCELLED due to inclement weather  
Twelfth Night Service and Catered Dinner  
With members of the Potomac and NOVA Chapters  
All Saints Episcopal Church  
Chevy Chase, Maryland*

**Monday, February 19, 2017 9:30-4:00**  
**Presidents' Day Organ Festival**  
St. Paul's Lutheran Church, DC  
*See pages 6-8 for more information*

**Saturday, April 7, 2017**  
**Road Trip to Longwood Gardens**  
Kennett Square, Pennsylvania

### DC AGO Board of Directors

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Christopher Betts

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David K. Houston

### *The Coupler*

A monthly newsletter  
published by the District  
of Columbia Chapter,  
American Guild of  
Organists

David K. Houston,  
Editor

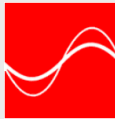
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## Members' Events

**Friday, February 2, 12:15 pm**

Organist Craig Williams  
Music at Midday @ National City  
Christian Church

**Friday, February 9, 12:15 pm**

Organist Alexander Frey  
Music at Midday @ National City  
Christian Church

**Sunday, February 11, 4 pm**

Organist Samantha Scheff  
Music @ the Monastery

**Friday, February 16, 12:15 pm**

Pianist Christopher Schmitt  
Music at Midday @ National City  
Christian Church

**Friday, February 23, 12:15 pm**

Organist James D. Hicks  
Music at Midday @ National City  
Christian Church

**Friday, March 2, 12:15 pm**

Organist Wayne L. Wold  
Music at Midday @ National City  
Christian Church

**Sunday, March 4, 4 pm**

Choral Evensong  
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, College  
Park MD

**Sunday, March 4, 4 pm**

Percussionist Joseph Gramley  
Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church

*Members are encouraged to submit recitals  
and concerts for public listing on the DC  
AGO website. Submit your event for web or  
newsletter listing to  
[dcagochapter@gmail.com](mailto:dcagochapter@gmail.com)*

*Welcome to our new  
members!*

**Mariana Lennon  
Marc Lilley**

Not new to the AGO, but newly affiliated  
with our chapter:

**Dr. Walter F. Jones, PhD**

New Dual member  
**Mr. Lawrence V. McCrobie, BMus, MA**

*Continued from page 1*

concert in 2019. You will certainly want to be there to hear it. I also hope that you will want to come and be a part of this year's President's Day Festival, which includes a lecture by Jeff Dexter of the Schantz Organ Company, a liturgical and hymn-playing workshop led by Rev. Benjamin Straley of the National Cathedral, and a recital performance by up-and-coming star musician Janet Yieh.

Irv Peterson and I have been serving on the Board as Co-Deans. Irv will continue as Dean for the remainder of this season, ably assisted by the other members of the Board. This is probably a good time to let you know that if you would like to serve in a leadership capacity in our Chapter you are very welcome to let the members of the Board know. We meet about once a month for an enjoyable couple of hours of fellowship, brainstorming and administration. Elections for new Board members will take place in the Spring and the Board would love to hear from potential new members.

So, I leave you with very best wishes. Keep up the excellent work, and I look forward to keeping in touch with you.

Chris Betts  
DCAGO, Co-Dean



St. Paul's Lutheran Church in DC  
Site of our Presidents' Day Festival



PLEASE JOIN US AT OUR  
**PRESIDENTS' DAY FESTIVAL**

for a wonderful day of programming including opportunities to learn, listen, play, and socialize.

Monday, **February 19** from 9:30 am - 4 pm

at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 4900 Connecticut Ave. NW, DC

RSVP to [dcagochapter@gmail.com](mailto:dcagochapter@gmail.com) by Friday, February 16

Please put RSVP in the subject line, and be sure to include your lunch selection (listed below)

Cost: \$25, payable at the door

**Schedule**

- 9:30am Registration and Coffee
- 10:15am **The Organ Reform Movement in the United States** - **Jeffrey Dexter**, Vice-president and Tonal Director of the Schantz Organ Company
- 12pm LUNCH
- 1:00pm **Hymn & Service playing Workshop** (Come prepared to play a hymn or piece of service music) - **Benjamin Straley**, Organist and Associate Director of Music at Washington National Cathedral
- 2:30pm BREAK (Snacks)
- 3:00pm **Celebrity Organ Recital** - **Janet Yieh**, first prize winner of the 2015 DC AGO Young Organist Competition

**Venue**

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church**, 4900 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20008

Street parking is available on the streets surrounding the church, including Ellicott, Everett, and 36th streets. Handicapped parking is available in the small parking lot on the church property off of Ellicott Street.

The closest **Metro** station is Van Ness-UDC on the Red Line. The L1 and L2 buses run regularly during the week as well as on weekends along Connecticut Avenue from the Van Ness station to Ellicott Street.

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**Lunch Selections** *Please include your lunch selection in your RSVP*

**PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE** Sliced turkey breast and avocado served with sliced veggies and dip, fresh fruit salad and a gourmet brownie

**LINCOLN MEMORIAL** Thinly sliced rare roast beef, swiss cheese and sliced mushrooms served with sliced brie, fresh strawberries and cheesecake

**UNION STATION** Grilled chicken breast with caramelized onions and pesto mayo on focaccia, pasta salad, fresh fruit salad and dessert bar

**LITTLE ITALY** Fresh mozzarella, tomato and basil on focaccia served with white bean salad, fresh fruit salad and cannoli

**METRO** A classic club with ham, turkey, swiss and bacon served with fresh pineapple chunks, white bean salad and a gourmet brownie

**FRESH VEGETABLE PLATTER BOX** A colorful array of sliced carrots, celery, green pepper, tomato, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumber, hard boiled egg and cheese on a bed of leaf lettuce with ranch dressing

**GARDEN SALAD BOX** Fresh seasonal greens and vegetables with parmesan cheese and assorted dressings

*Option: with Grilled Chicken Breast or Grilled Salmon*

### **Presenter bios**

**Jeffrey D. Dexter** is Vice-president and Tonal Director of the Schantz Organ Company in Orrville, Ohio. A native of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, he oversees the work of the tonal department - in addition to sales and marketing efforts - for the Schantz Organ Company, where he has served since 1993. Having studied organ and sacred music at Illinois Wesleyan University, and later with Paul Manz, he continues as an active church musician – serving with his spouse Daphne as Co-Parish Musician at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wooster, Ohio. He is a member of the American Institute of Organbuilders and the American Guild of Organists and has served as a lecturer for both of those organizations. Recently, he completed a term on the Board of Directors of the Organ Historical Society as Secretary. He is also a contributing author for The American Organist magazine, and serves on the Editorial Resource Committee of the AGO. The Dexter's are parents of two daughters – both elementary school teachers – and reside in Wooster, Ohio with their Cocker Spaniel, Snickers. Outside of organ and church music, Mr. Dexter has a marked interest in American fire apparatus.



The **Rev. Benjamin Straley** is Organist and Associate Director of Music at Washington National Cathedral. Prior to this appointment, he was Organ Scholar at Trinity Church (Episcopal), New Haven as well as Director of Music for the Episcopal Church at Yale.



Upon the completion of his undergraduate studies with Marilyn Keiser at Indiana University, he entered the Yale Institute of Sacred Music in 2008, where he studied with Martin Jean and Jeffrey Brillhart. In 2010, he became one of the few Americans in the history of the Haarlem Organ Festival to compete in its world-renowned improvisation contest. He was featured in the May 2015 issue of *The Diapason* as one of the “Top 20 under 30” young organists in the country. He holds both Masters in Music and Divinity from Yale, as well as a Certificate in Anglican Studies from Berkeley Divinity School, and is a transitional Deacon in the Episcopal Church.

**Janet Yieh**, a native of Alexandria, Virginia, is pursuing her Master of Musical Arts degree with Professor Thomas Murray at Yale's Institute of Sacred Music and School of Music. She also currently serves as Organ Scholar at Christ Church, New Haven and organist for Berkeley Divinity School. Janet is a graduate of Yale (MM '17) and the Juilliard School (BM '15). Her previous posts include Organ Scholar at Trinity Church on the Green in New Haven and Assistant Organist at Trinity Church, Wall Street in New York City.



Named one of *The Diapason* magazine's 20 under 30 in 2017, Janet won the 2015 Franciscan Monastery & DC AGO Young Organist Competition and 2015 Northern Virginia & Potomac Quimby Competition. She performs around the US and Asia, with highlights including Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, Washington National Cathedral, St. John's Cathedral in Taipei and Momoyama St. Andrew's University Chapel in Japan. As a collaborator, she has accompanied the Washington Chorus at the Kennedy Center and NOVUS NY orchestra at Carnegie Hall, and premiered new music for the organ. Janet's playing has been broadcast on Pipedreams, New York's WQXR and WWFM and featured on two CD recordings. This 2017-2018 season, Janet has performed at Woolsey Hall at Yale University, Trinity Copley Square in Boston, MA, St. Thomas's Cathedral in Malaysia, and Holy Trinity Cathedral in Hong Kong. A pianist from age 4 and violinist from 7, Janet began organ lessons at 11 with a scholarship from the Potomac Organ Institute. She is a member of the Association of Anglican Musicians and colleague of the American Guild of Organists. Her former teachers include Paul Jacobs, John Walker, Wayne Earnest and Victoria Shields. [www.janetyieh.com](http://www.janetyieh.com)



## DC AGO Presidents' Day Concert Program

**JANET YIEH**

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 3:00 pm

Sonata No. 1 in D Minor, III. Final

Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911)

Harmonies Du Soir, from Trois Impressions Op. 72

Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)

Prelude in E-Flat Major, BWV 522a

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Vater unser im Himmelreich, BWV 682

Fugue in E-Flat Major, BWV 522b

Roulade, Op. 3, No. 9

Seth Bingham (1882-1972)

Chorale Fantasia on 'Halleluja! Gott zu loben' Op. 52

Max Reger (1873-1916)



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Located on 42 acres, the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land is a beautiful architectural gem hidden in the northeast corner of Washington, D.C. Dedicated in 1898, the church is in the shape of a Jerusalem Cross in neo-Byzantine architectural style. The church and extensive contemplative gardens include full-size replicas of shrines from the Holy Land (the Franciscans have ministered there for 800 years), plus catacombs and a Lourdes Grotto. The monastery also has two hermitages for personal retreats. The Monastery's Lively-Fulcher pipe organ was built in 1998 and contains forty ranks of pipes over three manuals and pedal.

Together with the Franciscan Monastery, the DC AGO is proud to support a series of community outreach musical events titled, "Music @ the Monastery". These events are free of charge and take place on the second Sunday of each month at 4pm, followed by a reception. All are welcome!

## 2017 - 2018 Recitalists

- September 10 *Dudley Oakes (Shenandoah University)*  
October 8 *Jeffrey Pannebaker (Saint Luke Lutheran Church, Silver Spring)*  
November 12 *Chris Betts (Church of the Redeemer, Bethesda)*  
December 10 *Russell Weismann (Saint Jane Frances de Chantal, Bethesda)*  
January 14 *Jung Yeon Kim (Peabody Conservatory)*  
February 11 *Samantha Scheff (University of Maryland)*  
March 11 *Brass of Peace Ensemble (Sylvia Alimena, Director) with Lisa Galoci, organist*  
March 18 *Commonwealth Brass and National Brass with Randall Sheets, organist*  
April 8 *Carolyn Lamb Booth (Saint Ignatius of Loyola, Oxen Hill)*  
May 13 *Carol Feather Martin (Trinity Presbyterian Church, Arlington)*

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## THE COUPLER

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District of Columbia Chapter  
The American Guild of Organists

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