
THE COUPLER

The Dean's Message



Hard as it is to believe, two hundred years ago, Christmas was hardly celebrated in England. Charles Dickens and his short story, *A Christmas Carol*, really did make a big difference in bringing about its revival. For us church musicians, the collaboration between a clergyman and an organist in 1867 may have had even more influence.

It was in that year that Henry Ramsden Bramley, Fellow of Magdalen College Oxford, and John Stainer, at that time organist of the college, together published their collection of *Christmas Carols Old and New*. This collection introduced the wider public to "The first nowell", "God rest you merry, gentlemen" and "Good King Wenceslas". Their second volume in 1871 popularized "The holly and the ivy" and "See amid the winter's snow". Their third volume, in 1878, is even more important to us here in the United States because it included "We three kings of Orient are", the

first American carol to receive widespread popularity. With its lilting 3/8 meter and dramatic words, it would be easy to mistake "We three kings" as a survivor from a medieval mystery play, but in fact both the words and the music were written in 1857 by John Henry Hopkins, Jr., the first music teacher General Theological Seminary and later rector of Trinity Church, Plattsburg, NY and Christ Church, Williamsport, PA. Written for a Christmas pageant at the seminary, Hopkins published it in 1862 in *Carols, Hymns and Songs* and from there, perhaps, it came to the attention of Bramley and Stainer in England. Alongside "O little town of Bethlehem", written eleven years later, it may well rank as the most popular of all American sacred Christmas carols.

Many of our Epiphany celebrations this weekend will include "We three kings", leading us to wonder what gift, like the kings themselves, we can bring to the infant Jesus. We are all incredibly blessed in having an obvious gift to offer: our music. I expect that many of you, like me, have been told by parishioners how much they value our music, especially at this time of year. What a privilege it is to be able to share something so meaningful with those we serve.

Have a blessed Epiphany and a very Happy 2018. I look forward to seeing you at our Twelfth Night celebration.

Chris Betts
DCAGO, Co-Dean

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 Twelfth Night Service and Catered Dinner

6:30 Rehearsal
7:15 Service
7:45 Dinner

With members of the Potomac and NOVA Chapters

All Saints Episcopal Church
Chevy Chase, Maryland
See Page 6 for more information

Monday, February 19, 2017
Presidents' Day Organ Festival

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

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The Coupler

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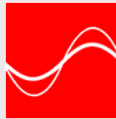
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Members' Events

Wednesday, January 3, 7 pm

Evolution of Keyboard Instruments with
Russell Weismann, National Symphony
Orchestra in Your Neighborhood
First Congregational UCC, DC

Sunday, January 14, 4 pm

Organist Jung Yeon Kim
Music @ the Monastery
Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land,
Washington DC

Wednesday, January 17, 12 Noon

Organist Mark Frazier, Music in McLean
St. Luke Catholic Church, McLean VA

Sunday, January 28, 4 pm

The Apollo Orchestra with guest Julie
Vidrick Evans
Chevy Chase Presbyterian, Washington
DC

Friday, February 2, 12:15 pm

Organist Craig Williams
Music at Midday @ National City
Christian 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*

12th Night January 8, 2018

6:30 Rehearsal 7:15 Service 7:45 Dinner

All Saints Episcopal Church
3 Chevy Chase Circle
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Please make your reservation by using the emailed link or by sending your reservation to Gerald Piercey (see below). Emailed reservations must be made by January 1. Post-mail reservations must be post-marked by December 26. Contact John Widmann at (301) 788-2806 or jwidmann@yahoo.com

Cost: AGO members: \$25.00 Chapter covers additional \$18.00 for you. One guest may come at this price. More than one guest pays full \$43.00 cost.

Payment is not made on the link. Please bring payment with you to the event, and have the payment pre-written, or if possible with cash, exact change. It will make the line much shorter for your entry to the event and good fellowship with your colleagues! The cost for participants is \$25.00, and the meal is subsidized by your dues. Additional cost is being underwritten by your individual AGO chapter. The link will ask which chapter you belong to, and any dietary restrictions that you may have.

The payment is for dinner. If you wish to attend the service only, there is no payment due, and there is no RSVP needed.

If you need to pay by mail, or RSVP by mail, please make payment to "Potomac Chapter, AGO", and send that out in the mail before Christmas to: Mr. Gerald L. Piercey, 4008 Decatur Ave., Kensington MD 20895

MENU

Bubbly Hot Shrimp Dip
Artisinal Cheese Platter with Nuts and Dried Fruit
Beef Tenderloin with Horseradish
Garlic Mashed Potatoes
Oven oasted Salmon
Wild Rice Pilaf with Dried Cranberries
Mixed Greens Salad with Assorted Dressings
Butternut Squash with Yogurt Sauce
Rustic Bread and Butter
Chocolate Mousse Cake
Old English Trifle

Organ Dedication

January 26, 2018 – 7:30pm



Organist Paul Skevington
St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church
37730 St. Francis Court
Purcellville, VA 20132



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Music @ the Monastery

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)*

THE COUPLER

District of Columbia Chapter
The American Guild of Organists

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Make checks payable to DC Chapter, American Guild of Organists.