



American Guild of
ORGANISTS
Central Arkansas Chapter

THE CLARION

February 2024

www.cacago.org

Mission Statement

The mission of the American Guild of Organists is to enrich lives through organ and choral music. To achieve this, we encourage excellence in the performance of organ and choral music; inspire, educate, and offer certification for organists and choral conductors; provide networking, fellowship, and mutual support; nurture future generations of organists; promote the organ in its historic and evolving roles; and engage wider audiences with organ and choral music.

2023-2024 Officers

Jason Saugey, *dean*
Beau Baldwin, *sub-dean*
Jess Anthony, *treasurer*
James Stanley, *secretary*

Executive Committee

Colin MacKnight (2024)
John Alec Briggs (2025)
Patrick Jennings (2026)

From the Dean

Greetings, Friends!

Mid-January, the freezing temperatures and sub-zero wind chills hardly keep many of us from gathering post-holidays at the home of past Dean Bob Bidewell for a festive and convivial evening of engaging conversation, colorful storytelling, and general enjoyment of one another's company. It was terrific spending a few hours with friends and colleagues in a relaxed and joyful social setting. Even more terrific was to see and meet several guests and friends of the Chapter who will hopefully become new members in the months to come. Many, many thanks to Bob for his superior hospitality!

Our spring schedule is a busy one, and it kicks off on Friday February 9 at the Cathedral of St. Andrew in Little Rock with our social time, meal and meeting followed by a wonderful program of organ music offered by Benjamin LaPrairie. I hope you are all planning to attend, and as usual, I challenge each of you to invite and bring a friend, a clergy person, a choir singer, a fellow musician, or a supporter of the arts whom you know. Chapter growth and fostering an interest in sacred music, organ and choral, depends not on me, your board and executive committee, nor on our national administration. It depends on **YOU**. Members, you are the best marketing committee any organization could ever dream of. And spreading the word about what we do is as easy as paying a visit to your colleague down the street, reaching out and encouraging them to join you. If the organ guild is important to you, show up and bring a friend!

Growing up in rural Hot Spring County, summers usually started off with a rousing week of Vacation Bible School. Mrs. Bonnie Wilson, the organist at a local Missionary

Baptist Church, set out early Monday morning in her wood-paneled Town and Country, her impressive beehive teased up and cemented, ready for a week of singing, Scripture study, and divinely inspired crafts. She picked up every kid who lived on her road, then she stopped at each house along the highway. It didn't matter if you worshiped regularly at her church, just that you showed up that particular week and took part. She could build community, and her marketing plan was simple. I don't think most of us ever actually knew which was VBS week until her dusty station wagon pulled in, and Mrs. Bonnie got out and rang the house bell. One of her VBS warm-up tunes delivered at the start of our daily music time with jaunty full-Gospel treatment on the 88 under her command has stuck in my head all these years. It was super corny, but its message was clear. Based on the popular chewing gum jingle, the words were easily memorized: *Double your pleasure, double your fun by coming to Bible School and bringing someone*. And, like magic, there were always new faces each day as the week went on. By Friday morning, that Town and Country was stuffed full of kids packed in like sardines. All it took was word of mouth, starting with the kindness of one person willing to reach out and spread the news of something so important to her that she wanted to share it with everybody.

Pick up the phone this week, drive across town, send an email: invite at least one person to join you on February 9. I look forward to greeting you and your guests!

Christ's Peace,
Jason Saugey, CAGO

FEBRUARY MEETING

Benjamin LaPrairie, *organist*

🕒 **Friday, February 9, 2024**

6:00 P.M. – Punchbowl

6:30 P.M. – Dinner & Meeting

7:30 P.M. – Concert

📍 **Cathedral of Saint Andrew**

617 S. Louisiana St.

Little Rock, Arkansas

DINNER RESERVATIONS: The cost for dinner is \$20.00. For dinner reservations, contact James Stanley via e-mail (dinner@cacago.org), or voice/text (229) 561-1177, or complete the dinner reservation form on the chapter website. *Please provide the names of your guests so that nametags may be printed for them.*

**Dinner reservations are due by
noon, Wednesday, February 7!**

Upcoming Newsletter

The March 2024 *Clarion* will be published Monday, March 4. If you have any items to submit (news, events, announcements, job postings, personal ads, opinion pieces, prayer requests) please send them to adam@cacago.org. The deadline is Friday, March 1.

Upcoming CACAGO Programs

Friday, February 9, 7:30 P.M.

Benjamin LaPrairie, *organist*

Cathedral of Saint Andrew

617 S. Louisiana St.

Little Rock, Arkansas

Friday, April 12, 7:30 P.M.

The Twentieth Annual Concert

Celebrating the Life of

Robert Young Ellis

Adam Chlebek, *organist*

Christ Episcopal Church

509 Scott St.

Little Rock, Arkansas

Saturday, April 27

Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza

First United Methodist Church

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

Conway, Arkansas

Biography of Benjamin LaPrairie

Benjamin LaPrairie serves as Associate Director of Music at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., where he is regularly heard accompanying daily, Sunday, and many televised Masses throughout the year. Notable liturgies include the Canonization Mass of Saint Junípero Serra, celebrated by Pope Francis, and the Funeral Mass of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Previously, Benjamin served as Principal Organist at St. Dominic Catholic Church in Washington, D.C., and as Director of Music at St. Patrick Catholic Church in St. Charles, Illinois.

As a composer, Benjamin's works have been performed by the Choir, Brass, and Orchestra of the Basilica, and have been recorded and broadcast worldwide on EWTN, Salt & Light Media, and CatholicTV. His setting of *Christus Vincit* was premiered upon the entrance of Pope Francis into the Great Upper Church of the National Shrine in September of 2015. Recent works include a new setting of *Ye Sons and Daughters*

for the Choir and Orchestra of the Basilica, and a setting of *Joy to the World* for the choirs and orchestra of the Catholic University of America. As an organist, Benjamin has performed throughout the United States and abroad, and has been featured as a soloist with the Pine Mountain Music Festival and at the Kimball Organ of Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, NJ. Recent collaborations include a performance of Louis Vierne's *Messe Solennelle* at the Kennedy Center in the spring of 2017.

A native of Michigan, Benjamin is a graduate of the University of Michigan School of Music, Theater, and Dance, where he studied organ with Robert Glasgow, harpsichord with Edward Parmentier, and conducting with Jerry Blackstone and Steven Davis. He received a Master of Music degree from the Peabody Conservatory of Music, where he studied organ with John Walker, and was the recipient of the Bruce R. Eicher Prize in Organ. Additionally, Benjamin did postgraduate coursework in music composition and voice at The Catholic University of America.

February Program

Benjamin LaPrairie, *organist*

Concerto in C Major after Vivaldi, BWV 594

- I. (without indication)
- II. Recitativo - Adagio
- III. Allegro

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Triptych of Fugues

- I. Lively
- II. Slowly
- III. Broadly

Gerald Near (b. 1948)

Solemn Prelude on a Theme of Thomas Tallis

Gerald Near

Hymn: Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

arr. Benjamin LaPrairie (b. 1981)

24 Pièces de fantaisie, Op. 55, No. 4

Naïades

Louis Vierne (1870-1937)

Berceuse à la mémoire de Louis Vierne

Pierre Cochereau (1924-1984)

Toccata, Op. 104

Joseph Jongen (1873-1953)

Colin MacKnight Organ Recital

Friday, February 2 • 7:00 P.M.

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
310 W 17th St
Little Rock, AR 72206-1461

Colin MacKnight will perform an organ recital on Trinity’s Muller organ. The program will include Colin’s transcription of Bach’s Chaconne, arguably the pinnacle of the solo violin repertoire. After the recital, join us for a reception in Morrison Hall.

Choral Evensong

Sunday, March 3 • 4:30 P.M.

First United Methodist Church
1610 Prince St
Conway, AR 72034-3935

Choral Evensong sung by the joint choirs of First Methodist Church, Conway and St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, Conway.

Treasurer’s Report

INCOME		EXPENSES	
REVENUE		ADMINISTRATIVE	
Dues	\$2,385.00	Dues to National	
Ad Sales		Catering/Reception	\$1,338.56
Meals	\$985.00	Marketing/Public Relations	
Carry Over (FY23)	\$4,614.91	Remaining Expenses	\$176.00
Other/Mail			\$1,514.56
	<u>\$7,984.91</u>		
SUPPORT		ARTISTIC	
Individuals	\$2,650.00	Artist Fees/Housing	\$5,138.91
Corporate/Church	\$1,500.00	Remaining Expenses (ACH)	
Endowment	\$1,304.03	Tech/Production	
	<u>\$5,454.03</u>		<u>\$5,138.91</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$13,438.94	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$6,653.47
		BALANCE	\$6,785.47

Organ Substitutes Needed!

We all need subs regularly—at least those of us who need to be away on vacation from time to time or for whatever reason. There’re also those instances when others might contact us for leads on someone we know who might be available to play a wedding or a funeral. Often when those calls come, it’s difficult to brainstorm names on the spot. In the past, the Chapter has maintained a current listing of colleagues willing to serve as subs or play weddings and funerals at various other venues others than one’s own. We’re currently in the process of revitalizing this list. If you are available as a Sunday sub, a holy day sub, or just for weddings and funerals, please contact John Alec Briggs, who will be compiling the list. You may contact him by email: jbriggs@stmargaretschurch.org.

Arts Calendar

Friday, February 2 – 7:00 P.M.

Colin MacKnight Organ Recital
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
Little Rock, AR

Friday, February 9 – 7:30 P.M.

CACAGO: Benjamin LaPrairie, organist
Cathedral of Saint Andrew the Apostle
Little Rock, AR

Saturday, February 10 – 7:30 P.M.

ASO Pops: Bond & Beyond
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR

Sunday, February 11 – 3:00 P.M.

ASO Pops: Bond & Beyond
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR

Thursday, February 22 – 7:30 P.M.

LR Winds: Hobbits and Sax
Second Presbyterian Church
Little Rock, AR

Saturday, February 24 – 8:30 A.M.

Arkansas Handbell Festival
Highland Valley United Methodist Church
Little Rock, AR

Saturday, February 24 – 7:30 P.M.

ASO Masterworks: Beethoven
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR

Sunday, February 25 – 3:00 P.M.

ASO Masterworks: Beethoven
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR

Tuesday, February 27 – 7:00 P.M.

ASO Chamber: Schubert & Pejacevic
Clinton Presidential Center
Little Rock, AR

Sunday, March 3 – 4:30 P.M.

Choral Evensong
First United Methodist Church
Conway, AR

Saturday, March 9 – 7:30 P.M.

ASO Pops: Capathia Jenkins
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR

Sunday, March 10 – 3:00 P.M.

ASO Pops: Capathia Jenkins
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR

Thursday, March 14 – 7:30 P.M.

LR Winds: Music of the Winds
UA-Pulaski Tech CHARTS Theater
North Little Rock, AR

Saturday, April 6 – 7:30 P.M.

ASO Masterworks: The Planets
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR

Sunday, April 7 – 3:00 P.M.

ASO Masterworks: The Planets
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR

Friday, April 12 – 7:30 P.M.

CACAGO: Adam Chlebek, organist
Christ Episcopal Church
Little Rock, AR

Tuesday, April 16 – 7:00 P.M.

ASO Chamber: Larsen & Moszkowski
Clinton Presidential Center
Little Rock, AR

Thursday, April 25 – 7:30 P.M.

LR Winds: Gershwin, Porgy, and More
Second Presbyterian Church
Little Rock, AR

Thursday, April 25 – 7:30 P.M.

CMSLR: Ariana Kim, violin
St. Mark's Episcopal Church
Little Rock, AR

Friday, April 26 – 7:30 P.M.

Arkansas Chamber Singers
First Presbyterian Church
Little Rock, AR

Sunday, April 28 – 3:00 P.M.

Arkansas Chamber Singers
First Presbyterian Church
Little Rock, AR

Saturday, May 4 – 7:30 P.M.

ASO Masterworks: Brahms Symphony 4
Robinson Center Music Hall
Little Rock, AR