



American Guild of
ORGANISTS
Central Arkansas Chapter

THE CLARION

March 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!

Lent is the season of possibilities.

My husband's family were in the antique business for many decades, and Alan grew up around antiques of all sorts, both watching and participating in everything antique dealers do: the acquiring, the restoring, the appraising, the selling. As a student of history, I always admired such things, bits and pieces of the past, their styles and their stories. One thing both of us have in common when it come to such things old and interesting is a fondness to browse flea markets and dusty shops in search of latent treasures, the overlooked the unknown, the maltreated, the browbeaten.

Now and then we happen upon a truly unique piece of furniture, which, in its day, had likely held pride of place in a foyer, a dining room, or some place else. Unwanted by heirs for its outdated look or obsolescence in their zippy, overbooked lifestyle, this Something had landed in a sale or got parked on the curb for free pickup either by someone with a good eye, or by the trash man. There's no telling what sort of journeys some pieces endure.

There's a local retail joint not far from where we live that hawks junky wall signs made from bits of discarded house siding or blocks of wood inscribed with platitudes or single, contextless words. Trendy repurposed stuff that helps the overextended to achieve the rustic hotel lobby look to transform artless, white walls and bare laminate floors into cozy designer havens: decor with deep roots, radiating a feeling of permanence, for sure. We visited when it first opened. Mainly out of curiosity. And only once.

As we circulated among the booths, we spotted a fabulous Eastlake dresser supporting a tablescape of fake ivy, rickety bird cages, balls of wound raffia stacked like a pyramid, and wooden tiles propped up on tiny easels each individually reminding us to Love, Live, and Eat. It had been stained gray. In matte folk art paint so thick its hallmark carved tracery was only faintly visible. A sheet of poster board taped to the booth's entrance attempted to attract customers, promising Updated Antiques. And this was one of them. Gray, flat, and sad.

Alan and I agreed, that the first thing to do to reverse this damage was to strip off all the awful paint. Surely there was handsome wood hidden below it. What we could still see of the Eastlake details hinted that something special was there, just shrouded in gloom. This piece had possibility.

We church musicians, by the nature of what we do, week after week, season after season, year after year,

can often grow cynical and snide when it comes to our duties and sometimes even regarding the ones we serve.

We can become fatigued from it all. Our love for it or even our own diligence can sabotage our work and decrease the efficacy of our efforts. We can burn out.

Lent is a time to reassess and review. A season to look spiritually into the mirror. Among all that we must do to offer the faithful all they need in *their* observance of Lent, what are you doing to help you along in *your own*? Every year we skip that important consideration for our well-being as church musicians, we add another coat of bitterness and cynicism to our ability to minister to others, to Church, and to Liturgy. Selfless ministry doesn't mean self-neglect. Lent is the perfect season to work on stripping away the shell that's built up over time, to jettison what can spoil our attitude to rediscover what it was that called us to this vocation in the first place. That might (and typically does) require setting up clear boundaries and leaving room for you-time, quiet time to rest and re-energize. Even if that means making a clergy person wait a bit for an answer, setting the phone on silent, or letting an email fester in the inbox for a while. Make time for a guided retreat or even just spend time outdoors in nature alone. That's what Jesus did in preparation for ministry, too.

As we approach Laetare, the fourth Sunday in Lent, it's still not too late to begin looking more deeply inward if you haven't already been. Take time to take spiritual inventory. That's what the season is for, even for us organists and choir directors. It's a season of possibilities, rediscovery, and renewal: and not just for the congregants we serve. Living Lent in this way, we can come to serve our congregations better, and, along with them, we might learn to appreciate more fully the blessings of the Empty Tomb.

Who knew that an *incognito* Eastlake dresser might harbor such an important Lenten lesson?

This month, with Easter coming so soon—the last Sunday of March!—and with all the preparatory activity of Lent, we will have no official Chapter gathering or program until April 12, when we recognize and celebrate the legacy of Robert Young Ellis and on April 27 when introduce a crowd of young people to the organ via our Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza event in Conway.

I wish you a successful ongoing Lenten journey and many blessings for a joyous Easter.

Christ's Peace,
Jason Saugey, CAGO

Upcoming Newsletter

The April 2024 *Clarion* will be published Monday, April 1. 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 29.

Upcoming CACAGO Programs

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

**The Twentieth Annual Concert
Celebrating the Life of
Robert Young Ellis**

Adam Chlebek, organist
Cathedral of Saint Andrew
617 S. Louisiana St.
Little Rock, Arkansas

Saturday, April 27

Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza
First United Methodist Church
St. Peter's Episcopal Church
Conway, Arkansas

Organ Concert: Jess Anthony, organist

Friday, May 17 • 7:00 P.M.

First Presbyterian Church
800 Scott St
Little Rock, AR 72201-4614

Celebrating the 20th anniversary of the installation of the
Nichols & Simpson, Inc. organ.

Treasurer's Report

| INCOME | EXPENSES |
|---|--|
| <p>REVENUE</p> <p>Dues \$2,695.00</p> <p>Ad Sales</p> <p>Meals \$1,345.00</p> <p>Carry Over (FY23) \$4,614.91</p> <p>Other/Mail</p> <p style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">\$7,984.91</p> <p>SUPPORT</p> <p>Individuals \$2,650.00</p> <p>Corporate/Church \$3,905.20</p> <p>Endowment</p> <p style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">\$1,304.03</p> <p style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 3px double black;">\$7,859.23</p> <p>TOTAL INCOME \$16,514.14</p> | <p>ADMINISTRATIVE</p> <p>Dues to National</p> <p>Catering/Reception \$1,838.56</p> <p>Marketing/Public Relations</p> <p>Remaining Expenses \$176.00</p> <p style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black;">\$2,014.56</p> <p>ARTISTIC</p> <p>Artist Fees/Housing \$7,544.11</p> <p>Remaining Expenses (ACH)</p> <p>Tech/Production \$1,102.10</p> <p style="text-align: right; border-top: 1px solid black; border-bottom: 3px double black;">\$8,646.21</p> <p>TOTAL EXPENSES \$10,660.77</p> <p>BALANCE \$5,853.37</p> |

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 brain storm 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.