



Central Arkansas Chapter *American Guild of Organists*

The
Clarion
April 2020

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.

2019-2020 Officers

Beau Baldwin, *dean*
Thomas Alexander, *sub-dean*
Jess Anthony, *treasurer*
Robert Lindley, *secretary*

Executive Committee

Charles Russell (2020)
Betty Cohen (2022)

Committee Chairs

PROGRAM

Beau Baldwin
Thomas Alexander

EDITOR

Adam Savacool

REPORTER

Betty Cohen

PUBLICITY

Betty Cohen

TELEPHONE

Thomas Alexander
James Cathey

DINNER RESERVATIONS

Robert Lindley

From the Dean

Greetings!

I hope everyone is well! It can be difficult to remain positive right now. As you all know, we have already entered one of the darkest times in our national history; unfortunately, I think things will be getting much worse before they get better. However, I think it is best to have hope and look for the light at the end of the tunnel. I also think that during this time of isolation, we should think fondly on our relationships with friends and colleagues, remember the positive times of group interaction, and look forward to a time (hopefully sooner than later) when we can gather in our social groups as usual.

My thoughts are with you all, particularly as we enter Holy Week, the Triduum, and Easter. I know that for me, this upcoming week is the busiest time of my annual musical life. I really stress over the busyness of Holy Week, but it is also one of the most beautiful and fulfilling times of my life. This upcoming week will be sad for me this year as I will not be doing much. I hope many of you are finding ways to be creative in your musical ministries. I know many of our members' churches are streaming services and I pray that goes well for everyone. As church musicians, I know the economic hardship of COVID-19 can be challenging; in this newsletter, there is a FAQ section from the National AGO about employment related issues.

Our CACAGO programs for April and May have been postponed. I have been in contact with Victoria Harden and David Hurst about rescheduling his recital, hopefully for a date in 2021. I think we should also cancel the May party. My plan is to try to have Alden Wright play the annual recital in Celebration of the Life of Robert Elis in late summer. This could be a wonderful time, assuming it is safe, to gather and catch up with each other. I will communicate more about this program as time progresses. Also, I hope to have a virtual meeting with my fellow board members about what should be done about the annual election of officers. I

apologize that I do not have more information about that now, but hopefully soon.

In closing, I want to wish everyone the absolute best during this challenging time. I pray that we can get back to a sense of normalcy in a few months. I try to look on the bright side and look forward to times ahead when all will be much better. A friend of mine recently shared a passage with me by Etty Hillesum, a Dutch author who died in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in 1943:

"Life is difficult, it is true, a struggle from minute to minute, but the struggle itself is thrilling. In the past I would live chaotically in the future, because I refused to live in the here and now...Sometimes I had the certain if rather undefined feeling that I would 'make it' one day, that I had the capacity to do something 'extraordinary', and at other times the wild fear that I would 'go to the dogs' after all. I now realize why. I simply refused to do what needed to be done, what lay right under my nose. I refused to climb into the future one step at a time. And now, now that every minute is so full, so chock-full of life and experience and struggle and victory and defeat, and more struggle and sometimes peace, now I no longer think of the future, that is, I no longer care whether or not I shall 'make it', because I now have the inner certainty that everything will be taken care of. Before, I always lived in anticipation, I had the feeling that nothing I did was the 'real' thing, that it was all preparation for something else, something 'greater', more 'genuine'. But that feeling has dropped away from me completely. I live here and now, this minute, this day, to the full, and life is worth living."

I hope you all stay well and please stay in touch!

God Bless!
Beau Baldwin

COVID-19 and Organists: Q & A

This page has been created by the Committee on Career Development and Support and the staff of AGO Headquarters. We are especially grateful to committee member Doris Dabrowski, an employment law attorney licensed in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Q&A Regarding Assistance for Out-of-Work Musicians

Can a part-time or full-time church musician employee qualify for unemployment benefits?

Each state has different eligibility requirements and procedures for signing up to collect unemployment benefits. Members should visit <https://fileunemployment.org/unemployment-guide/unemployment-eligibility> and click on the drop-down menu heading, “Benefits by State” to find your state and its eligibility requirements. If you don’t see your state in the main list, click “view all states.” We suggest that members apply for unemployment benefits, even if in doubt about eligibility. The state agency processing claims must render a decision about eligibility. If the employee disagrees with the decision, the employee can appeal and consult legal counsel in the state. We encourage members to contact their local and state representatives to explain the adverse situation for organists and church musicians.

How does the current stimulus bill affect me?

The Relief for Workers Affected by Coronavirus Act as passed by the Senate, Sec. 2102 (jj), allows for benefits for persons otherwise ineligible for unemployment compensation but whose place of employment is closed as a direct result of COVID-19. This will likely be a source of benefits for church employees and gig musicians overall. The fact sheet prepared by the National Employment Law Project has more information about the CARES Act and the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) that is part of it. Most gig workers and church employees probably will depend on PUA rather than regular unemployment compensation. The state unemployment agencies are responsible to process claims for PUA benefits.

My church is closed, however the clergy has asked me to record music for services that will be streamed over the internet. I have been informed that I will not receive compensation for these recordings and will receive payment for playing live services once the church reopens. Should I be receiving compensation?

Yes, whether you are performing live or through online streaming, you should be compensated. Please review the fact sheet regarding the Unemployment Insurance Provisions in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of nominees for 2020-2021.

Dean: Beau Baldwin	Executive Committee:
Sub-Dean: Wayne Simpson	Bob Bidewell (2021)
Secretary: Jane Gamble	Jason Saugey (2021)
Treasurer: Jess Anthony	Barbara Lusk (2023)
	Karen Horton (2023)

Treasurer's Report

INCOME		EXPENSES	
REVENUE		ADMINISTRATIVE	
Dues	\$2,062.00	Dues to National	\$121.00
Ad Sales		Catering/Reception	\$2,326.00
Meals	\$2,032.00	Marketing/Public Relations	
Carry Over (FY19)	\$3,433.43	Remaining Expenses	\$92.00
Other/Mail			\$2,539.00
	<u>\$7,527.43</u>		
SUPPORT		ARTISTIC	
Individuals	\$8,630.78	Artist Fees/Housing	\$13,453.78
Foundation Accounts	\$1,179.00	Remaining Expenses (ACH)	
Endowment		Tech/Production	
	<u>\$9,809.78</u>		<u>\$13,453.78</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$17,337.21	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$15,992.78
		BALANCE	\$1,344.43