



Delaware AGO Chapter Officers

Mike Bareham, *dean*

Jane Van Valkenburg, *sub-dean*

Barb Bayers, *secretary*

Ryan Pryslak, *treasurer/registrar*

Members-at-large

Robert Furr

Joe Loudon

Steven Patchel, *newsletter*

Keith St. John

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The Windchest

Newsletter of the Delaware Chapter,
American Guild of Organists

SUMMER 2024

www.delawareago.org

Letter from our Dean

I can't believe the 2023-2024 program year has flown by so quickly. It has been great to see so many of you at our events and to meet so many colleagues from all over the state.

We have one more end-of-year event in June, but first I want to introduce you to the candidates for this year's Board of Directors for the Delaware Chapter: incumbents Ryan Pryslak (Treasurer/Registrar) and Barbara Bayers (Secretary), as well as T. J. Thomas who has agreed to be a member-at-large. Below are their biographies so that you can learn a little more about each of them. An online ballot will be sent to current members the last week of May and I encourage you to participate in the election by casting your votes no later than Thursday, May 31.

I know it is a trek for many of you but our final event of the season is a picnic and pool party (rain or shine) at the home of Julie Allport in Nottingham, Pennsylvania. Bring your bathing suit and enjoy the heated pool. Dinner will be provided from the Old South Smokehouse and everyone is asked to bring a dessert to share. Soft drinks and wine will be provided but feel free to bring other beverages. Also bring lawn chairs for your party, and please let Jane Van Valkenburg (javan211@gmail.com) know how many are coming no later than Wednesday, May 29.

I am excited about the proposed programming for next season. 2024-2025 is shaping up to be a great year thanks to the hard work of the programming committee. Once everything is finalized and approved by your board of directors, a calendar of events will be shared with you all. With summer just around the corner, I trust that as your choir season is coming to an end you have planned time for rest and relaxation, renewal and rejuvenation for the fall will be upon us before you know it. Please let me know if you plan to attend the AGO national convention or any denominational or musical conference. I would love to hear about your experience and have you share it with the chapter in an upcoming newsletter.

Best to all,

Mike Bareham, Dean

Board Officer Elections - Biographies



Barbara Bayers, BS/MS Music Ed, Master of Arts in Learning, has been an organist/choir director for 60+ years and is a very active substitute organist. She is an active member and serves on the Executive Board of the Delaware Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Barb was twice Past-Dean of the Bridgeport Chapter AGO in her home state of CT, where she has been a member for 60+ years. She retired from teaching middle school choral/general music in CT after 34 years in several Fairfield County school districts. In her free time, Barb enjoys traveling, camping in their 5 th wheel camper, bicycling, reading, and being in the company of good friends. Barb and her husband Mark Douyard are active members of The Presbyterian Church in Dover.



Ryan Pryslak is currently the Organist and Director of Music at Immanuel Episcopal Church, Highlands where he oversees all aspects of the music program and directs the Immanuel Choir. Previously, Ryan served as the Organist and Director of Music Ministries at Church of the Covenant from June 2017 to this past January. He is a graduate of the University of Delaware with a Bachelor of Arts in Music, majoring in voice and choral conducting with a minor in church music. During his tenure at Covenant, Ryan has supervised major restoration to the 1977 Schantz Organ as well as spearhead new Video and Sound projects during COVID which brought worship to the church during quarantine. In 2017, Ryan began the ever popular "Arts at Covenant" Concert Series which is now planning for its Sixth Season and provides accessible performing arts events to the North Wilmington Area, champions music of Women and BIPOC composers, and offer educational opportunities for youth and adults alike in the Bellefonte and Edgemoor Communities. Ryan was the founder and director of The Opus One Vocal Arts, a community-based Chamber Choir that performed throughout the area from 2005-2015. He was also the founder and music director for The Mid Atlantic Chamber Singers. His teachers include Patrick Evans, Nicole Aldrich (voice); Sharon Parker (piano); David Herman, David Christopher, Matthew Glandorf (organ); Paul Head (choral conducting). Ryan is a full time financial advisor for Citizens Bank and has a strong background in finance and investments from his over 17+ years career in the banking industry. Ryan and his lovely wife, Jessica are parents to two children (Greyson & Addison) and sheepadoodle named Preston, and reside in North Wilmington.



T.J. Thomas serves as Minister of Music at Saint Peter's Episcopal Church, Lewes, DE. He oversees a vibrant music program including several choirs, a concert series, and the annual residency of a prominent Anglican Church musician. Prior to St. Peter's, T.J. was Interim Director of Music at the Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit in Emmaus, Pennsylvania. During his undergraduate career, he served on the music staff at St. Stephen's Episcopal Pro-Cathedral (Wilkes-Barre, PA) under the direction of his organ teacher and mentor, Canon Mark Laubach. An active member of the Royal School of Church Music in America, T.J. functions as Liturgist and Co-Music Manager for the King's College Course every summer. He is active in the American Guild of Organists and Association of Anglican Musicians. T.J. received his Bachelor's degree in Music from Marywood University (Scranton, PA). He was received into the Episcopal Church in 2006.

It's Been a Very Good Year!

As our 2023/24 Program Year draws to a close, I'm drawn to reflect on what we've done and express my thanks to those who made it all happen. Program Committee members **Julie Allport**, **Mike Bareham**, **Jack Burnam**, and **Michael Davidson**, with assistance from outgoing Dean **David Schelat**, not only met for several months in early 2023, but they conceived a balanced and informative array of events, then arranged for all the details. We all owe them our thanks!

Thanks to Michael Davidson, we began the year in September with a visit to St. Peter's RC Church in New Castle to see their restored Hook & Hastings instrument, followed by lunch at historic Jessup's Tavern. Our officers were installed during an impressive Evensong in the chapel at Christ Church, Christiana Hundred in October, thanks in large part to the efforts of Bruce Barber. Jack Burnam organized a panel of composers in our chapter to share some of their compositions and encourage others at our November meeting.

Mike Bareham organized our Epiphany party in January, then we partnered with David Christopher and Delaware Choral Arts to celebrate Black History Month in concert, reflection, and a challenge to expand our repertoires. All of our Board Members led the massed choir and congregation in an April Hymn Festival, designed by Mike Bareham and T.J. Thomas, and we will conclude our program year with a picnic at the home of Julie Allport.

The main duty of sub-Dean is to plan programs for the chapter, and this sub-Dean is most grateful to these creative and committed members for providing a year of stellar programs. Thank you!

You and your guest are invited to enjoy a picnic with your AGO colleagues on Sunday, June 2, from 4:00 to 6:30 at the home of Julie Allport, 360 Fremont Rd., Nottingham, PA. There will be games, swimming (the pool is heated), great conversation and BBQ to get you in a summer frame of mind.

Soft drinks and wine will also be provided. You are invited to bring any other beverage of your choice.

Please bring a dessert to share and lawn chairs for your party. The BBQ will be coming from the Old South Smokehouse in Port Deposit and will include ribs, pork and chicken as well as coleslaw, potato salad, green beans and baked beans. We'll even have some veggie burgers.

So that we have enough food, please let Jane Van Valkenburg (JAVan211@gmail.com) know by Wednesday, May 29, that you are coming. See you there!

Jane Van Valkenburg, Sub-dean



NOTABLE EVENTS

Key Locations

- Christ Church, Christiana Hundred 505 Buck Rd, Wilmington
- First & Central Presbyterian, 1101 N Market St, Wilmington
- Immanuel Highlands Episcopal, 2400 W. 17th Wilmington
- Presbyterian Church of Covenant, 503 Duncan Rd. Wilmington
- St. Paul's Lutheran Church 701 S. College Ave, Newark
- Westminster Presbyterian 1502 W 13th St. Wilmington

JUNE

Sunday 2 June 4:00—6:30 pm

AGO Picnic/Social

BBQ, games, swimming

Home of Julie Allport

360 Fremont Rd, Nottingham PA

Sunday 2 June 3:30/4:00 pm

Bruce Barber, Organ Prelude

Choral Evensong

Christ Church Christiana Hundred

Friday 28 June 7:00 pm

Saturday 29 June 4:00 pm

Concerts for a Summer Holiday

“Then and Now – through the years”

With Community Choir and Orchestra

Mike Bareham, conductor

St. Paul's Lutheran, Newark

JULY

JUNE 30—JULY 4

AGO NATIONAL CONVENTION

San Francisco CA

<https://www.sfago2024.org>

25 concert venues, international performers,

9 new music premieres

JULY 20—26

OHS CONVENTION, Baltimore MD

organhistoricalsociety.org/2024/

Cameron Kuzepski will perform

Tuesday July 23 at Light Street

Presbyterian Church, Adam Stein organ (1902)

David Schelat will perform

Weds July 24 at Corpus Christi Catholic Parish

J.H. & C.S. Odell, Opus 277 (1889)

Daily registration and attendance possible.



www.sfago2024.org



organhistoricalsociety.org/2024

Position Available

Assistant Organist/Choirmaster, Christ Church Christiana Hundred

Christ Church is seeking a proficient musician, passionate about the Anglican choral and musical tradition, who is willing to engage in music making in liturgy and in concert. This is a part time position suitable for a musician who is also otherwise employed or does not need full time employment, *or* suitable for a graduate / post-graduate student as more of an Organ Scholar.

For further information please go to <https://bit.ly/ccch-assistant-organist-choirmaster> for a complete position description including remuneration and benefits. Interested persons should submit a letter of inquiry, resume, and references to Bruce J. Barber II, Director of Music at bbarber@christchurchde.org. Additional information about the music program may also be found at www.christchurchde.org/music.

Member Spotlight

David Herman, *in memoriam*

by Ryan Pryslak



H. David Herman, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Music and former University Organist at the University of Delaware for 25 years, He was born Oct. 24, 1944 in Williamsport, PA and died on April 8, 2024 in Newark, DE.

And everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this? ~ John 11:26

The Delaware AGO and greater music community lost a giant of our field last month. Dr. David Herman passed away peacefully on April 8th after a courageous battle with cancer. As a former student of David's, I wanted to offer my personal tribute to him and the amazing life he lived. I would not be the person and musician I am today if I did not have him in my life.

Dr. Herman was an enormous source of knowledge and wisdom in the field of Church Music and Organ Performance. Of all the memories I have of my time at the University of Delaware, some of the best were those that involved him and his wife Lauri. I took all of his Church Music courses at UD as well as private lessons and each class was full of tidbit of knowledge (both useful and interesting) as well as life lessons to help his students become better church musicians. For example, when learning about the Liturgical seasons of Church

Calendar, he made sure to teach us that Ascension Day in German is Christi Himmelfahrt. I enjoy teaching that word to my children today! I will always remember my lessons in Bayard Sharp Hall and how proud he was about the Dobson Tracker Organ he helped design and see built during his tenure. He was always a patient and encouraging teacher. He also took pride in musical lineage. His teacher at Wittenberg University was Jan Bender, whose teacher back in Germany during the 1930's was Hugo Distler. How amazing to be linked to all three of these storied musicians and considered them "musical family!"

One of my first "church gigs" was with David and Lauri during their time as Organist and Choirmaster at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. I was offered opportunities to grow as a musician and learn so much about the ins and outs of a career as a church musician. Of course, the Hermans knew how to throw a party as well and I remember being invited over to their home for a Christmas Party with the St. Paul's Choir. The food was amazing and the centerpiece was a Wassail Bowl with some of the best mulled wine I have ever tasted.

My most formative experience with David and Lauri was when I spent the month of January 2003 in London as part of UD Study Abroad. This was my first time travelling out of the country for an extended period of time. This trip has been one of the Top 10 most important experiences in my life and it really solidified my call to be a church musician. While we learned so much about the music, church architecture, and history of liturgy in England during this trip, the real learning happened outside of the classroom...in the pub! One evening we had all gone to Waxy O'Connors near Piccadilly Circus for Sunday Roast and a pint. As a young adult and Catholic at the time, I was struggling with doctrine and being called to be a church

musician in different denominations. I spoke about this with Dr. Herman and how I was always taught that I needed be at my home Catholic church every Sunday or else this would be considered a sin. How could I reconcile this in my heart when I felt called to do the work of the Church? Dr. Herman had deep faith and to this day I will never forget what he told me. His response to was not a direct answer, but one that made me think outside the box. He said that his belief is that being called to the work of the Church is the greatest calling of all. God doesn't care if you are Catholic, Methodist, Lutheran, or Episcopalian. He didn't give me an answer I wanted, but one I needed to hear.

I could go on with many other anecdotes and memories (like when I was part of *Carols for the University* he started at UD, playing a jingle bell with Julie Nishimura on piano!) Dr. Herman was an important mentor and friend to me as he was to all of his students and colleagues. How can we honor his legacy? Be a mentor to a young student and challenge that student to be the best they can be. Instill a love for our field in the next generation. And program his organ works or anthems to honor his memory: <https://paracletesheetmusic.com/composer/david-herman/> OR [https://giamusic.com/search?elProductType\[\]=tp&search-artist=David+Herman](https://giamusic.com/search?elProductType[]=tp&search-artist=David+Herman) are two sites that sell his published music. *Requiescat in Pace*, Dr. Herman.

Substitute List

KEY: (S) Sunday, (C) choir, (HB) Handbells, (SS) Special Services, (W) Weddings, (F) Funerals



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Enjoy your Summer!