



Chiff Chat

February 2023

Dean:

Todd Beckham

Directors:

Lori Bourret

Kell Julliard

Dianne Rechel

Martha Sienkiewicz

Treasurer:

James Barnes

Secretary:

Karen Banta

Chaplain:

Rev. William H. Wallis

Dean's Message: In the bleak mid-winter snow had fallen snow on snow!

Greetings everyone,

Isn't it interesting that this Christmas/ Epiphany carol is more appropriate for March this year than December. Rossetti's text is such a powerful message especially for Epiphany. As Lent opens we are once again on our journey toward the Great Days of Holy week and Easter. I pray that your musical journeys to Easter are rewarding and inspiring for you and your congregations.

In March we have several great offerings which you can refer to in the calendar. One that I would like to highlight as an AGO supported event is an evensong service at Christ Church Cathedral Springfield 35 Chestnut St. with a guest choir from All Saints Episcopal Church in Worcester, MA. I will be playing a pre-service All Bach birthday organ recital starting at 3:30 followed by the evensong service conducted by Kevin Neel (New All Saints Director of Music) accompanied by Wesley Hall (Organist of First Baptist Worcester). These two young organist/directors are rising stars in church music and it will be a great opportunity to support the younger generation of our profession while collaborating with a sister chapter. I hope to see you there.

Our board had a very productive meeting on February 28 and you can read minutes prepared by our secretary Karen Banta. I want to thank all the board members for the tremendous amount of work that goes into planning events, managing financial issues and running the workings of the guild to make the chapter a thriving one in the organization. I also want to thank Lad Pfeifer, our talented newsletter editor. Thanks all for making my job easier.

During that meeting I announced that I will be stepping down as dean and leaving Christ Church Cathedral after Easter to join my wife Jennifer in

Washington DC as she starts a new position as assistant to the Assistant Deputy Secretary of State. My work at Christ Church Cathedral has been challenging to rebuild a choir through and after the pandemic and establish a choral scholars program as well as rebuild the Bishop's choir school. I thank all of those who have supported me in this effort but I feel confident that the cathedral music program will continue to grow and strengthen after my departure owing much to my work of rebuilding.

The board will be forming a nominating committee to search for a new dean and I encourage any members who might be interested to contact a member of the board to express your interest.

Again I invite all to attend our evensong and Bach recital on March 19 at 3:30

Happy pipings,

Todd



Review of John Anderson Concert

Martha Sienkiewicz

Christ the King-Epiphany, a small church in Wilbraham, recently hosted a dedicatory organ concert featuring John Anderson, former member of Springfield AGO who currently is serving a church in Manchester, CT. John spent many years in the Pioneer Valley not only as an organist but as bassoonist for 16 years with the Mt. Holyoke College Symphony Orchestra.

Like many of us in these times, Christ the King Lutheran has merged with Epiphany Episcopal, using the Lutheran Sanctuary but brought the Episcopal Organ...thus the dedicatory concert. It was a fun concert as John is an engaging performer, speaking with stories and humor before each of the diverse pieces he had chosen: Two contrasting Preludes and Fugues by Bach and Buxtehude, a modern elegy by James Biery, a sonata from Spain by José Lidon, a cute flute solo by Thomas Arne, an intermezzo on "Danny Boy" by Charles Stanford and a marvelous sonata by Charles Ore. Mr. Anderson lives in Longmeadow and maintains a YouTube channel at

<http://youtube.com/@johnanderson-organist/videos>

If you visit his channel you won't be disappointed. Congratulations, John!

Pictured below are Ron Shepard (Guild member), Mark Jacobsen (host), and John Anderson

Pictured at the console is John Anderson.



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The late Hedley E. Yost of our chapter will be remembered in an upcoming issue of The American Organist. His full obituary was printed earlier in the January Chiff Chat. An abridged version of his obituary is given below.

Hedley Yost, 87, died after a brief period of declining health, shortly after the death of his beloved partner Gordon Dean. He earned both Bachelor's and Master's of Music degrees from Westminster Choir College where he studied with renowned organist Alexander McCurdy. He held positions at Stanford University, Morristown, NJ, and New York City. Hedley's longest position was at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in New Canaan, CT, where he was organist and choir director for 25 years.

Hedley and Gordon moved to Buckland, MA in the late 90s. Although he maintained that he was retired, Hedley joined St. John's Episcopal Church in Ashfield, MA as Director of Music.

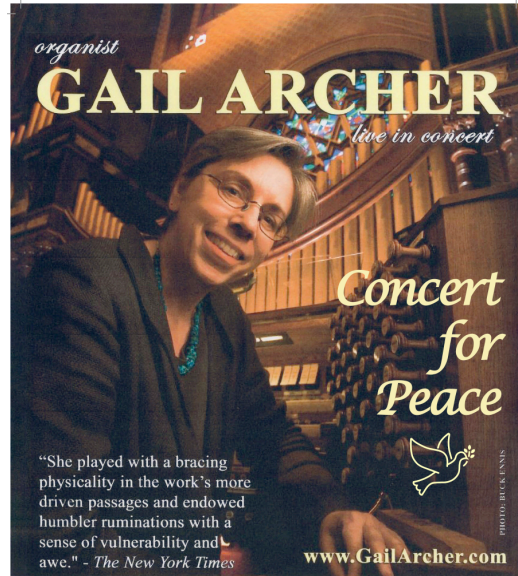
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Upcoming Chapter Events

Sun 3/19/2023 ALL SAINTS WORCESTER CHOIR EVENSONG: Pre-service organ recital by Todd Beckham All Bach at Christ Church Cathedral.

Sun 3/26/2023 NATHANIEL GUMBS CONCERT: at 3 pm, Brick Church, Deerfield. We are co-sponsoring. See Attached Poster and Brick Church Below

Other Events



A Concert for Peace is being given by Gail Archer presenting music by Ukrainian & Russian composers on Sunday, March 5th, at 2:00 PM in St. Michael's Cathedral, 260 State Street, Springfield.

The following is from current THE HAMPSHIRE MUSIC CLUB newsletter Friday, February 24 - Sunday, March 5, 2023 courtesy of Peter Jones, The Classical Music Evangelist

Gail Archer to Perform in Springfield

Dear Friends,

Organist, conductor, and teacher [Gail Archer](#) has performed all over the world. Next Sunday, March 5th, 2023, she will be here in the Valley.

Prof. Archer will present a concert on the gallery organ at the Cathedral of St. Michael the Archangel in Springfield at 2:00 p.m. that day. The concert will be free and the public are invited.

The building at 254 State Street is the oldest Roman Catholic church building in Springfield. Built by immigrant families as a parish church in 1861, it has been the seat of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield since 1870. It has three organs. Prof. Archer will perform on the gallery organ in the main sanctuary. This organ, built in 1929 by Casavant Frères, Ltée, was rebuilt in 1987. Details appear on the [Organ Historical Society Database](#).

I spoke with Gail Archer two weeks ago. She was excited that her latest recording, "Cantius," had just received a favourable review in *The American Organist*, the magazine of The American Guild of Organists. "Cantius" CDs will be available at the concert in Springfield. The recording is named for the church in which it was made, St. John Cantius Church in Chicago. Northampton residents are familiar with the name: the former St. John Cantius Church here was also built by Polish immigrants.

As a child, Gail sang in her father's church choir and was constantly exposed to organs and organ music. She began taking piano lessons at 8, but had to wait to start organ lessons until her legs were long enough to reach the pedals. Since then, she has earned a bachelor's degree in music education from Montclair State University, a masters degree in choral conducting from the Mannes College of Music and a doctorate in organ performance from the Manhattan School of Music. She holds an artist diploma in organ performance from Boston Conservatory.

For many years, Gail has toured in eastern Europe and has been performing the music of eastern European composers seldom heard in the United States. Next Sunday's "Concert for Peace" will include music by both Russian and Ukrainian composers. Here is the [program](#). There will not be any Bach that afternoon, but you can hear her play some on [YouTube](#).

Gail performed "Concert for Peace" last January at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, where it was well received. Here is the review published by [Lucid Culture](#).

Gail is Professor of Organ Performance at Barnard College of Columbia University, where she also directs the Barnard-Columbia Chorus and Chamber Choir. At Barnard, Pof. Archer teaches a year-long survey course in Western music. She is also an adjunct professor of organ at Vassar College, where she is the college organist.

In addition to her other activities, Gail is the founder and editor of [Musforum](#), the on-line network for woman organists.

A large audience is expected for this concert, and it is sure to be successful musically. The organ at St. Michael's is in the rear gallery, so you might want to bring a mirror.

Upcoming Brick Church Concerts @ 3:00 pm

71 Old Main St, Deerfield Suggested donation \$10 to \$20

Nathaniel Gumbs, organ March 26th



Frisson Wind Trio & Piano April 16th

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Please print out the attached concert posters for posting in a strategic locations. Your efforts are appreciated!



MUSIC AT THE RED DOOR

St. John's Episcopal Church, 679 Farmington Avenue, West Hartford, CT 860-523-5201 ext. 324

The March & April Events at St. John's are given below.

MARCH 5 @ 3:00 PM [CHORAL MUSIC FOR THE SOUL: FAURÉ & SAINT-SAËNS](#)

The St. John's Choir School & Adult Choir presents Choral Music for the Soul, featuring the Farmington Valley Symphony Orchestra. Join us on Sunday, March 5 at 3:00pm, in the marvelous acoustics of St. John's Church, for the sublime Requiem by Gabriel Fauré and Symphony No. 3 ("Organ") by Camille Saint-Saëns. Jonathan Edward Brennand, conductor; Scott [...]

MARCH 19 @ 2:00 PM. [NEW WORLD TRIO: ENSEMBLE-IN-RESIDENCE](#)

Join us on Sunday, March 19, at 2:00pm, for New World Trio, Ensemble-in-Residence at Music at the Red Door. These concerts are free admission, suggested donation \$20. Checks payable to New World Trio. Details at www.newworldtrio.org About New World Trio For more than three decades, the New World Trio has brought the excitement and intimacy [...]

MARCH 26 @ 5:00 PM. [CHORAL EVENSONG – TREBLES FROM FIVE CHURCHES](#)

Note that this is an offsite event. Join us at Trinity College Chapel! This event will be in-person only. It will not be available by livestream.

APRIL 2 @ 12:30 PM [PIPES ALIVE! – SCOTT LAMLEIN, ORGANIST](#)

The Pipes Alive! series continues with Scott Lamlein playing the St. John's organ. The concert is free admission – donations welcomed.

APRIL 21 @ 7:30 PM [SPRING CHAMBER MUSIC: CATALYST STRING QUARTET](#)

Grammy-award-winning Catalyst String Quartet. The New York Times writes: "...the Catalyst Quartet is beautiful to watch, like a family in live conversation at the dinner table." The concert is free admission, suggested donation \$20

APRIL 23 @ 5:00 PM [CHORAL EVENSONG – ST. JOHN'S SCHOLA](#)

Sung by the St. John's Schola; Scott Lamlein, organist/choirmaster. This event is free admission, donations welcomed.

Please visit the following link for more details: <https://www.reddoormusic.org>

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Position Available:

The pastor, Fr. Stanley Aksamit, at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Turners Falls is looking for an organist first and foremost. He is open to consider a pianist who would be willing to play a Rodgers organ with two beautiful piano stops. It would be nice if he or she could sing and might be willing to jump start a choir.

The church has 3 weekend masses; a 4pm on Saturday and an 8 am and 10 am on Sunday. If someone would like to do all 3 services or just one or two it's worth considering. Salary is negotiable.

You can reach Fr. Stan at frstan@ourladyofpeacetf.com. His phone number is 413-863-2585 opt 1.