

PipeNotes

American Guild of Organists – Milwaukee Chapter

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Volume 69 – April 2023



AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

MILWAUKEE CHAPTER

WWW.AGOMILWAUKEE.ORG

MEMBERS' RECITAL

ANNUAL MEETING PRECEDING
THE RECITAL

SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2023

2:00 PM ANNUAL MEETING

3:00 PM MEMBERS' RECITAL

First Immanuel Lutheran Church

W67N622 Evergreen Blvd

Cedarburg, WI



Performers:
Dr. J. Craig Sproat
Mike Keegan
Keri Kelly
Nick Renkosik

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AGO Milwaukee Chapter Upcoming Events

May 7, 2023

2:00 Annual Meeting

3:00 Members' Recital

First Immanuel Lutheran Church

W67N622 Evergreen Blvd

Cedarburg, WI

Performers include:

Keri Kelly, Dr. J. Craig Sproat,
Mike Keegan, and Nick Renkosik



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April 2023

12 (Wed) 12:15 Elena Cressy, Mezzo Soprano,
Chris Wojciechowicz, Tenor &
James Grzadzinski, Piano
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

16 (Sun) 3:30 Dr. Craig Sproat, Organ
Chapel of Christ Triumphant
Concordia University Wisconsin
12800 N. Lake Shore Dr
Mequon, WI

19 (Wed) 12:15 Kettle Moraine HS Choir
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

26 (Wed) 12:15 David Jonies, Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

28 (Fri) 8:00 Witnesses to the
Resurrection – Grand Music 2023
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

May 2023

3 (Wed) 12:15 Alan Hommerding, Organ
The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
812 N. Jackson St
Milwaukee, WI

7 (Sun) 2:00 Chapter Annual Meeting
3:00 Members' Recital
First Immanuel Lutheran Church
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Organ Crawl March 4, 2023

Larry Wheelock



On Saturday March 4, 30+ members and guests of the Milwaukee Chapter gathered for the annual organ-crawl. This year they visited organs on Milwaukee's West side and adjacent suburbs. The event was organized by Dr. David Bohn and David Porth. The organs visited were: Wisconsin Lutheran College, Schlicker 1989 2/24, and Schlicker (n.d.) 1/5-stops, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church (Wauwatosa) Schlicker ([et.al](#)) 2001 3/55, Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church, Casavant op. 2479R 3/37, and Abiding Word Evangelical Lutheran Church, Berghaus op. 26, 1978, 2/36.

April 2023

As I write this most of us are busy preparing for one of the busiest weeks of the year for organists and clergy, Palm Sunday, Maundy/Holy Thursday, Passover, Good Friday, Easter Vigil, and finally we get to Easter Sunday. Extra rehearsals and practicing for extra services take a toll on everyone including you and your choir members. I hope that everyone has a blessed week of making great music, and then can get a little rest and relaxation after it is all over.

For those who subscribe to the Diapason, the 20 under 30 list will be coming out in the May issue. Some of you may know Milwaukee based organ technician John Miller. John has made the list 2023 list of 20 under 30. Congratulations John for making the 2023 list! You can find out more about John and Miller Mechanical Organ and Clock Works at www.millerorganclock.com.

Our next program is our chapter annual meeting and members' recital on Sunday, May 7, 2023. This year we will be heading just a little north of Milwaukee to First Immanuel Lutheran Church in Cedarburg. The meeting will be held at 2:00 prior to the Members' Recital. First Immanuel Lutheran has a beautiful organ built by Robert Sipe, [2003 Robert Sipe Organ](#). Performers for this year include Keri Kelly, Craig Sproat, Mike Keegan, and Nick Renkosik. I hope to see many of you there!

John Schubring



American Guild of Organists
PIPE ORGAN ENCOUNTERS

June 18-23, 2023

Wheaton, Illinois

[Fox Valley Chapter](#)

Wheaton College

Director: David A. Lincoln

630-655-2124

[Email Fox Valley POE Director](#)

[Fox Valley POE website](#)

Registration Deadline: May 15, 2023

Click [HERE](#) to view additional information and view the brochure.

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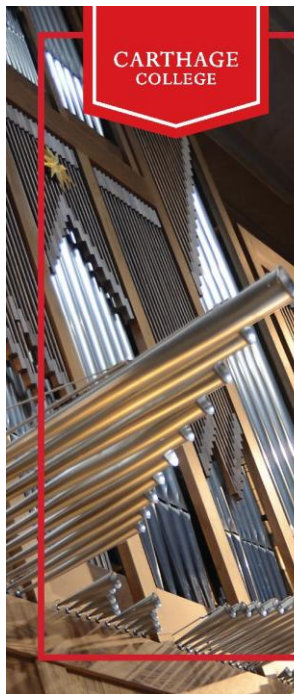
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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Liz Walloch, Historian/Archivist

This month's sharing is from April 14, 1996. The location is Ss. Peter and Paul Catholic Church, on the eastside of Milwaukee for Solemn Paschal Vespers during the AGO Centennial Week. This event was a trifecta of gathering two local musician organizations, our Milwaukee Chapter, and the Archdiocesan Liturgical Musician's Association along the newly initiated into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. The two presiders for Vespers were Father Joseph Perry, Pastor of All Saints Catholic Church and Fr. Tom Lijewski, our Chapter's Chaplain. Interesting to note, both presiders are organists! Leading the sung prayers of Vespers was "The Schola Cantorum of St. Peter's Church in the Loop Chicago" under the direction of Michael Thompson. Mr. Dewart Rahm, also of the Chicago Chapter AGO was guest organist. Fr. Tom's homily was reprinted in the July/August PipeNotes at the request of chapter members. His message is worth another printing for us in 2023.

A Homily from our Chaplain Fr. Tom Lijewski

Fellow members of the Archdiocesan Liturgical Musician's Association and Milwaukee Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

This afternoon we also include member of the Ss. Peter and Paul Parish who have joined the church in the Easter sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. Today we include in our prayers not only congratulations on a new beginning but also congratulations on a new beginning one hundred years ago.

Throughout the United States, the AGO is looking backward to what has been done and forward to what needs to be accomplished. Our founders had a vision concerning their position and the position of music in worship. We can reflect on our own experiences. For we all have many stories to tell. Some that are wonderful and some that are not so wonderful.

I may surprise some of you this evening when I say that musicians and clergy are not united in marriage. Our relationship is different. A worship service without clergy participating becomes a hymn-sing and an organ recital. A worship service without music limps on one leg. People will rightly remark. What is wrong with that church? Music has been part of the worship of God almost from the beginning. Clergy and Musicians must realize the connection. We forget because of bad experiences on both sides. Remember we are two sides of the same coin.

What keeps us doing what we do Sunday to Sunday? I hope it is not what we will do next week what we do this week because we did it last week. Sameness can be detrimental to our respective vocations. Change is the spice of life.

The church has learned this lesson over the past thirty-five years. Organizations exist to help the members. Churches and Synagogues function the same way. We are not alone. WE are not Lone Rangers. Triumphs are more rewarding, shared with others. Failures do not seem so life threatening when others can also feel our pain. This is a church in the contemporary world. This is what we work for.

The purpose of the guild has always been to advance sacred music in worship and the evaluation and certification of musicians in service to the church and synagogue. This is still a good vision for the next one hundred years. This can also be applied to the new church members gathered with us today. In non-musical terms it can be called personal growth in the faith continued personal growth in the faith.

We would not be so caught up with the logistics of our lives or music making that we ignore our heart or our soul. As I said a while ago what motivates us is the love we have for almighty God. The danger is always present that we do all the externals well but without any life-giving spirit. It becomes all external show. We are in a partnership for the Lord part of a larger picture that we call The People of God.

I will leave you with two points that should keep things going well in the future. Encourage each other. We are players on one team. We are not in opposing armed camps. Yes! There are Sundays when the sermon s**ks and the music takes off and sours. Be thankful when that happens. When it does not pick the pieces of wounded ego and try again. We all have another chance in seven days.

The other point is a sense of humor. John H. Snow in a *Diapason* article many years ago relates the story concerning Feliciano's *Sic Transit* done at Princeton University long ago. This is one of the first choral works to incorporate stage whispering, "he is not here. He is risen." At one point one of the trebles whispered to another, "That's funny, I saw him here a minute ago." Everyone laughed. This experience in any other piece would have spelled disaster. In this work it added to the occasion. A sense of humor and laughter can do a lot for mental health. In a pilgrim church and I might add in church musician organizations this sense of humor can mean survival. Especially when we encounter conflicting ideas of church and sacred music.

People who are scared do not laugh. People who hate do not laugh. People obsessed with control or success do not laugh. Pilgrims laugh.

Just read Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. Pilgrim music has laugh because they are walking in trustworthy company toward a trustworthy goal supported by a trustworthy Holy Spirit.

We must remind ourselves that the church does not belong to the clergy or musicians. We are but Christ's servants. Let us remember this in our first year of pilgrimage or our one hundredth. Amen.

2023 Regional Conventions Great Lakes and North Central Regions



[North Shore Chapter](#)

Evanston, Illinois

Hotel: Holiday Inn Chicago North-Evanston

June 25-28,

2023

<https://nsago2023.org/>

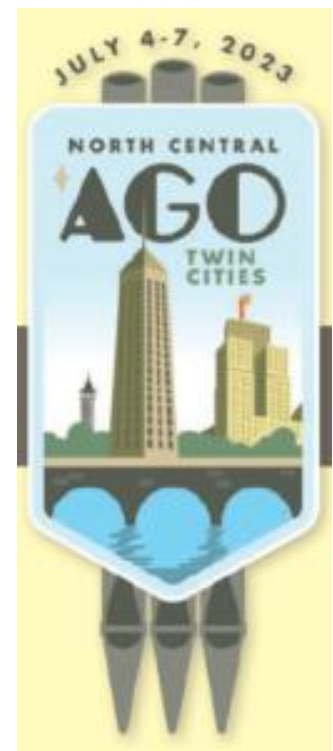
[Twin Cities Chapter](#)

Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minnesota

Hotel: Hilton Minneapolis

July 4-7, 2023

<https://www.northcentralago2023.org/>



Nominations for 2023

Treasurer – Steve Jensen*

Secretary – Mike Keegan*

**currently serving in that position*

Class of 2025

Mike Jacklin was born and raised in Chicago, IL. He started his ministry in music as a freshman in High School playing for mass at the Catholic church he attended school at. Mike's studies include time at the Chicago Conservatory of Music and private studies with Dr. Mark Russakoff organ professor at Roosevelt University. Mike has spent 40+ years as a church musician in the Lutheran church. He has over 100 musical compositions and arrangements to his credit and has conducted numerous benefit concerts.

Keri Kelly I started violin lessons at the age of 6, and then shortly after I started piano. I was always attending music camps and conferences during the summer (such as Suzuki camp) and in middle school I was apart of a junior orchestra which taught me a lot about chamber music and playing with others. I was blessed to have the opportunity to take singing lessons, sing in a polyphony choir at church, and learn Gregorian chant.

When I started high school, I was especially attracted to chamber music, especially early music and 'historically informed performance practice'.

I joined the Baroque Ensemble at the University of Whitewater-Wisconsin as a sophomore playing an authentic baroque violin! In the winter of 2020, I started getting interested in organ and I started teaching myself. At this time, I started playing for a few churches infrequently and accompanying choirs. I started formal organ lessons in the Spring of 2021 while working at a few churches as a substitute.

I purchased a harpsichord in August, and most recently in January, an early 1900's Estey Reed organ. I am hoping to acquire more "historical" instruments such as a clavichord and a fortepiano. I am very interested in instrument restoration, which is very important to know as a musician (especially as an organist!)

I am currently a music performance major at the University of Whitewater-Wisconsin, and I am hoping to study the viola de gamba as my undergraduate research project. I give piano lessons, and I am going to be taking Suzuki teacher training for piano and violin this summer. I am very passionate about introducing children to instruments such as organ and harpsichord, because it's so important for these instruments to be kept alive!

Other associations I am affiliated besides the American Guild of Organists include the following; The American Bach Society, The American Beethoven Society, The American Recorder Society, American String Teachers Association, National Association for Music Education, Royal College of Organists (affiliate member.)

Tom Koester For the past eight years, I been have been working as Choir Director and organist at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wauwatosa. Previous positions include Ss. Peter and Paul, Milwaukee, and St. Jerome's Oconomowoc as organist, director of music and liturgy and at St Mary Visitation, Elm Grove, as organist and youth choir director. I have performed as organ soloist with the Waukesha Symphony and served as organ accompanist with the Concord Chamber Orchestra and Milwaukee Symphony Orchestras. From 2009-2020, I served as adjunct organ faculty at Carroll University in Waukesha, WI. If elected, I would enjoy serving our organ guild and arts community once again.

J. Craig Sproat Originally from the Outer Banks of North Carolina, Craig Sproat holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance from the University of Oklahoma. He also studied at Concordia University Wisconsin (B.M.A.) and Indiana University (M.M.) where his teachers included James Freese, John Behnke, and John Schwandt. From 2011 to 2015 he was an Instructor in the American Organ Institute at the University of Oklahoma, teaching private lessons and courses in organ and church music. From 2015 to 2022 he was an Instructor in the School of Musical Theatre at the University of Oklahoma where he served as staff accompanist, did some vocal coaching, and music directed productions. Dr. Sproat currently serves as Assistant Professor of Music at Concordia University Wisconsin. Outside of music, he enjoys hiking, reading, watching sports, and a good martini.