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American Guild of
ORGANISTS

LEXINGTON, KY CHAPTER

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Recent AGO Events

Upcoming AGO Events

More Local Events

Meet William Robinson

Miscellany

Member News

Job Openings

Our Sponsors

More Bench Stories

Principal Pipings

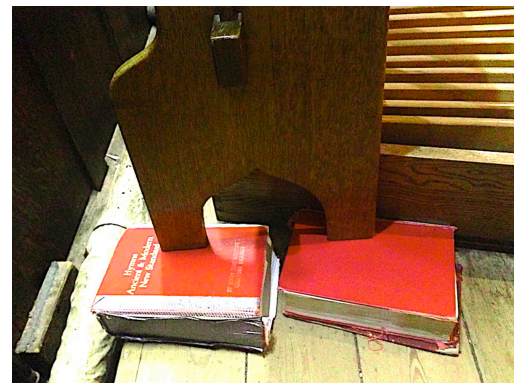
Is your organ bench the right height?

Nicholas Thistlethwaite,
President of the British
Institute of Organ
Studies, relates this story
about one that wasn't:

“One of the first
English organists to perform Bach's organ works with
pedals was Elizabeth Stirling. In 1838 Miss Stirling applied
for the post of organist at St Luke's Church in Chelsea and
gave the customary public audition. A contemporary report
described her (literal) downfall: ‘Miss Stirling had not
conceived it necessary to put a saw in her bag, as an
accompaniment to Sebastian Bach; but it so happened that
the stool was about four or five inches too high, and the
moment an attempt was made to pedal a passage, the
performer found herself falling from the seat... there was
then no alternative between a tumble off the bench or a
temporary loss of credit as a performer by seizing hold of
the manual keyboard.’ Not surprisingly (but hardly fairly),
Miss Stirling was unsuccessful in her application on this
occasion.”

According to Organbench.com, “a correct bench
position for the individual player is critically important to
accuracy in pedal playing, minimizing tension, and
developing endurance.” Read more [here!](#)

As part of their Adjustable Bench Campaign, the
Society of Women Organists is collecting “bench stories”
like the one above (and at the end of this newsletter). You
can learn more about the SWO campaign [here.](#)



Michael & Nancy

photo from theladyorganist.com

RECENT AGO EVENTS

POST-EASTER CELEBRATORY LUNCH at WINDY CORNER MARKET, Saturday, April 26, 2025



In keeping with an AGOLex tradition inaugurated by former Dean Dr. Larry Sharp, fabulous door prizes are awarded by random drawing at most AGO events. For this event the prizes were a practice notebook, a bowtie, and a metal puzzle (above). Dr. Schuyler Robinson (above right) attempts to solve the (aptly named) "Professor Puzzle."

UPCOMING AGO EVENTS

GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT AGO EVENTS!

FRIDAY, MAY 23,* 7:00 pm: Andrew Johnson Recital at The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, 533 East Main St., Lexington, KY 40508



Andrew Johnson is currently pursuing a DMA degree in organ performance and literature at the Eastman School of Music. Andrew previously earned an MM degree and a graduate performance diploma from the Peabody Conservatory. He was a finalist in this past summer's National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance (NYACOP). He has already earned his AAGO and ChM certifications, winning the award for the highest marks on the ChM exam. He

has recently been named one of *The Diapason's* **"20 under 30" Class of 2025!**

Take a listen: [Venite Adoramus](https://www.veniteadoramus.com). To find out more, visit andrewjohnsonorganist.com.

*This recital was originally scheduled for May 30. We have moved it up a week so that Andrew can participate in an organ tour of Germany organized by his alma mater.



MORE LOCAL EVENTS

Wednesday, April 30, 7:30pm - Cincinnati Museum Center, featuring the 1929 E.M. Skinner Organ in the rotunda: Bryan Anderson, with Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Principal Flute, Randolph Bowman
[Cincymuseum.org](https://cincymuseum.org)

Friday, May 16 - Christ Church Cathedral

7:30pm - Madrigal Singers Choral Concert, SCAPA, Ryan March, conductor

Sunday, May 18 - Christ Church Cathedral

3:30pm - Concert - Neal Campbell, organ, Trinity Episcopal Church, Vero Beach, Florida

4:00pm - Evensong with the Cathedral Choir

Sunday, May 18 - First Presbyterian Church

7:30pm - "Strengthened by the Spirit," Kentucky Bach Choir

Sunday, June 8 - Lexington Chamber Chorale

5:00pm, Ashland, the Henry Clay Estate, Lexington

"The Power of Singing: Celebrating Lexington"

<http://lexingtonchamberchorale.org/>

Friday, June 13, 7:00pm - William Robinson Recital

Cathedral of Christ the King, 299 Colony Blvd, Lexington

MEET OUR YOUNG ORGANISTS



Name - William Lee Robinson

Music Position - Assistant Director of Music / Principal Organist, Cathedral of Christ the King

Where did you grow up? - London Kentucky

What drew you to the organ and how did you get started? - I gained interest in the organ after I discovered the world of "high church" services. High church has always been interesting to me ever since I was a little boy.

How did you land in the Central Kentucky area? - I have lived in central Kentucky all of my life. Currently studying for a M.A. in sacred music, with an emphasis in organ performance and choral conducting.

(continued on next page)

If you could learn any skill instantly, what would it be? - How to play the cello!

Is there something about you that might surprise people? - I am a student pilot, currently taking private lessons in Richmond, Kentucky.

What are your favorite things? - I love to spend time with family, friends, and traveling!

Who do you like better: Jethro Tull or Pink Floyd? - Jethro Tull

Willam Robinson Organ Recital

Friday, June 13, 2025

Cathedral of Christ the King, 299 Colony Blvd, Lexington



MISCELLANY

AGO LINKS

Interested in membership? Click here → [Join AGO](#), or contact AGO Headquarters at 212-870-2310. To visit the AGO website click here → agohq.org/. For more information on AGO exams and certification → [click here](#).

IT'S NOT TOO LATE to register for one (or both) 2025 Regional AGO Conventions this summer. . .

The West Regional Convention is in Phoenix, AZ, June 16-19, and the Southwest Regional Convention is in Fort Worth, TX, June 30-July 3. For more information or to register:

[Regional Conventions](#)



ORGANISTS NEEDED

Hone your improvisational skills and watch movies for free!

The Bluegrass Chapter of the American Theatre Organ Society (BG ATOS) is looking for more organists willing to play the organ at the Kentucky Theatre on Friday nights and, next summer, for their Wednesday Classic Movie series. If you are interested please contact Bill Webber at 859.298.8962 or williamwebberiv@gmail.com

For more about the Kentucky: kentuckytheatre.org



FREE RESTORED REED ORGAN!

From Jim Fitzpatrick:

I have a nice Estey reed organ that I would like to re-home. This instrument has one manual (divided keyboard), 8 speaking stops, 16' & 4' couplers, and Tremulant. The left side of the keyboard also has a beautiful sounding Harp Aeoline stop that is exquisite and a loud Vox Jubilante stop (Diapason Celeste) on the right side. One expression pedal and one Crescendo pedal. No pumping is required as this instrument has an on board electric blower.

This instrument was rescued from an Episcopal church in Eastern Kentucky just before it was slated for delivery to the city dump. The organ was completely repaired, cleaned, case refinished, new wiring and new stop knobs installed. There is also a device inside to stabilize temperature and humidity levels.



This instrument would be great in someone's home or in a chapel or church. It has been in my home for the past 20 or so years. If interested, contact Jim Fitzpatrick 859-338-9136 phone or text or email: jrf51ky@gmail.com

AGOLex COMMITTEES HARD AT WORK

Our **Nominating Committee** has nominated Glenna Metcalfe for at-large membership on the Executive committee. If elected, she will replace Clif Cason, who is completing his third year on the Executive Committee. Clif has been an invaluable asset to our AGO chapter! Members of the nominating committee are: Larry Sharp, director; Mark deAlba, James Humlong, Angela Hurley, and Lynn Vera. Look for a ballot in your inbox soon.

Our **Program Committee** (Mattilda Middleton, chairperson, Lisa Hall, William Robinson, Barbara Rogers, Owen Sammons, Larry Sivis, and Patrick Valentino) is at work planning our 2025-2026 event calendar.

Thank you to all these members for helping to keep our chapter humming along!

MEMBER NEWS

Congratulations to Allen Fletcher, Maria LeRose, and Dr. Schuyler Robinson!

Of Dr. Schuyler Robinson's six UK organ students this semester, three of them had successful April ventures in their doctoral studies. Allen Fletcher, organist at Hunter Presbyterian, passed his defense for his Ph.D dissertation in History and will graduate this May. Maria LeRose completed her Lecture Recital on Langlais and defended her DMA thesis, after a decade's recovery from an auto accident. Dr Robinson will hood her at May graduation. And the third, a DMA piano major who has studied organ for six semesters, passed his orals. It is rather amazing that these all occurred within a three-day period! All best wishes.

Celebrating 50 years . . .

Former AGOLex Dean Jane Johnson and her husband Bill Johnson recently celebrated their upcoming (in June) 50th wedding anniversary by taking a cruise down the Rhine River!

If you have member news you would like to share in future editions of the newsletter, please contact Nancy Dunn at this email address or at 859.333.0526 by the 20th of each month.

JOB OPENINGS

Church of the Holy Trinity (Episcopal), Georgetown:

Holy Trinity in Georgetown, Kentucky, is looking for someone to play the organ at our 10:30am Sunday Services and any special services throughout the year. More details can be found in the full description. Compensation will be commensurate with experience and ability.

Please direct inquiries to office@holytrinitygt.org.

[full description](#)

[posted 5/1/25]

Holy Trinity Church (Catholic), Springfield:

Holy Trinity Church, a Catholic parish near Bardstown, Kentucky, is looking for someone who could play organ for weekend Masses at 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays and/or 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. Compensation is negotiable. Please contact:

Fr. Augustine Judd, O.P
Pastoral Administrator
Holy Trinity Catholic Church
306 Fredericktown Road
Springfield, KY 40069
859-284-5242

[posted 4/1/25]

First Presbyterian Church, Winchester: Choral Director/Organist/Pianist

We will consider hiring one person or dividing the position, depending on the applicant pool. We have a nice 1975 2-manual Schlicker organ; 9 ranks.

Please direct inquiries to:

Rev. Wanda Olive
859/744-3722

fpcwinchesterky@gmail.com

First Presbyterian Church
130 Windridge Dr.
Winchester, KY 40391

[posted 1/1/25]

(Job postings continued on next page)

First Presbyterian Church, Lancaster:

Our church is searching for a part time **organist/pianist** starting immediately. This position is for Sunday worship and special events. Pay is negotiable. Musicians will have the option of playing a 2 manual pipe organ or a baby grand piano.

Interested parties may contact Donna Powell dmpowell44@roadrunner.com or Kitty Barsotti barsotti@windstream.net

[posted 9/1/24]



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GREAT MUSIC

at Christ Church Cathedral
May 2025

Choral Concert



FRIDAY, MAY 16
7:30pm

SCAPA Madrigal Singers
Ryan Marsh, conductor

Concert & Evensong

SUNDAY, MAY 18

3:30pm ORGAN CONCERT

Neal Campbell

Trinity Episcopal Church, Vero Beach, Florida

4:00pm EVENSONG

with the Cathedral Choir



Please visit our website www.ccclex.org/music for more information on the Cathedral Choir, Great Music Series, and Friends of Cathedral Music.



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MORE BENCH STORIES

There's a church in the Midlands (UK) where the back legs of the bench are cut short to rest on a narrow, knee-height stone ledge behind the player, a death trap for a player who moves the bench forwards to reach the keys. - *Paul Hodgetts*

There is a church in Lewes where the bench is bolted to the floor! The organist must have had very long legs and arms when it was fixed. I emerged after the service like a lego figure and slowly cranked myself back to normal. . . . - *Susan Bain*

I once played at a church in Hertfordshire whose organ is in a lofty gallery and, unbeknownst to me, the bench was balanced on hymn books. I sat on the bench and it tipped backwards away from the console and towards the ledge of the loft with a 30-foot drop to the floor. Thank Goodness I managed to grab the bottom manual otherwise I might have fallen out. - *Dave Miller*

I was wearing a slippery, silk skirt that literally led to my downfall. During the silence of communion, I tried to stop a sneeze which caused me to suddenly start sliding across the bench towards the organ. Realizing that I was going to fall off the bench, I instinctively stuck out my feet to stop my fall and landed with both feet on the pedals. It did wake up some of the older folks asleep in the back and elicited a few giggles. The bench was solid and jammed against a wall which caused it to be at a slight angle towards the organ. - *Corinne Lehr*

(from societyofwomenorganists.com)

When I go to other churches I end up sitting on the bench and sliding off it faster than a ride at Disney world. - *Jes*

(from forum.musicasacra.com)

agohq.org/

The mission of the American Guild of Organists
is to foster a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge and inspire passion for the organ