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American Guild of
ORGANISTS

LEXINGTON, KY CHAPTER

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An “improvisation journey”



This past summer we were fortunate to attend a presentation by Grammy-nominated organist, Jan Kraybill. Jan’s talk was entitled *Off the Top of My Head: Easy Improvisation Tips for Service-Playing*. Jan believes we can “help congregational hymn-singing be more vibrant and worship more meaningful” by using printed music as a springboard for creativity.

Jan began by trying to comfort her audience, saying “you are already an improviser” if you play hymns, which are actually choral music, on the organ. To continue your “improvisation journey,” you should spend 10% of your practice time on improvisation, because brilliant moments in hymn playing are rarely “off the top of one’s head. . . it helps to have a plan.” Here are some of her suggestions:

- Use hymn texts as inspiration--illustrate the drama in the poetry
- Be aware of each hymn/song’s origin--what soundscape comes to mind?
- Spark interest with creative registrations, unusual rhythms, etc.
- Listen and imitate fellow musicians and recordings
- Study and borrow ideas from published hymn arrangements
- Investigate the growing repertoire of organ music in non-traditional styles

Our own Lexington AGO chapter provides a ton of possibilities for Jan’s suggestion to “listen and imitate fellow musicians.”

Fortunately, we have a lot of options to listen to our chapter members electronically, if not in person. Take a bit of time to explore the live-streams or websites of your organ colleagues and you can learn a lot!

Happy improvising! - Michael & Nancy

A song will outlive all sermons in the memory.

- Henry Giles (English-born American clergyman, 1809-1882)



Jan Kraybill is the Organ Conservator at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in Kansas City, Organist-in-Residence at Community of Christ denominational headquarters, and organist at Village on Antioch Presbyterian Church in Overland Park, Kansas. She has performed and led hymn festivals in North America, Europe, Australia, Russia, South Korea, and Tahiti.

RECENT AGO EVENTS

LEXINGTON SACRED MUSIC FESTIVAL

September 21-28, 2025

Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of Lexington



With 25 sacred music events in 8 days, Lexington was alive with the sound of music! Many of our members were either a part of the performances or were able to attend some of the events. Christ Church Cathedral, First Presbyterian, Good Shepherd Episcopal, Maxwell Street Presbyterian, Grace Baptist, Central

Christian, Temple Adath Israel, Second Presbyterian, St. Andrew's Episcopal, Calvary Baptist, Shiloh Baptist, and the Cathedral of Christ the King all hosted events. It was a wonderful ecumenical moment for Lexington.



*Dieter Hennings-Yeomans at
First Presbyterian Church*



*Grant Holcomb at Central
Christian Church*

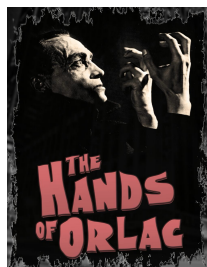


*Kathy Bullock at St. Andrew's
Episcopal Church*



UPCOMING AGO EVENTS

Friday, October 17, 7:30 p.m. - “The Hands of Orlac” - 1924 Silent Film with organ accompaniment by Tim Baker from Louisville
The Kentucky Theatre, 214 East Main St., Lexington 40507
kentuckytheatre.org



Concert pianist Paul Orlac loses his hands in a horrible railway accident. A surgeon, trying to save Orlac's career, transplants the hands of a recently executed murderer and . . .

[The Hands of Orlac trailer](#)

This is a joint program with the Bluegrass Chapter, American Theatre Organ Society (BGATOS)

Saturday, November 22, 4:00 p.m. - Members' Recital: “Music for the Holidays: Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, New Year's, and Epiphany,”
First Presbyterian Church, 174 N. Mill St., Lexington, KY 40507

Sign up to play some “music for the holidays” before all the slots are filled! (Music for the Reign of Christ would also be appropriate, as it falls on November 23 this year.) Please plan for your piece(s) plus any commentary to take **8 minutes or less**. Contact Nancy Dunn (agolexdeans@icloud.com) by **Monday, November 10** if you would like to play. Information about practice times, parking, etc. will be provided when you sign up.

Saturday, February 14, 2026, 12:00 noon - Lunch and Masterclass with Huw Lewis, Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington

Sunday, February 15, 2026, 4:00 p.m. - Huw Lewis concert, Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington



Sample reviews of Lewis's playing:

“A stunning recital that can only be described as breathtaking!...the kind of transcendent performance one always hopes for, but only gets to experience once or twice in a lifetime—if that!” (Alfred Fedak, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Albany, NY)

“Dr. Lewis played with great authority, but also with an elegance and sensitivity to style, room, and instrument, and received the first standing ovation of the [AGO] convention.” (The American Organist)

Saturday, March 28, 2026 - The Bach Marathon is back! St. Raphael
Episcopal Church, Lexington

Saturday, May 2, 2026 - Organ/Choir Festival, Episcopal Church of the Good
Shepherd, Lexington

GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT AGO EVENTS . . .
BRING A FRIEND!

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

Sunday, October 5, 2:30 p.m. - Southern Hills United Methodist Church,
Lexington, James Humlong, Organ Concert

Amadeus Lex: "*Suite Hébraïque*"

Saturday, October 4, 7:00 p.m. - Carrick Theater, Transylvania University

Sunday, October 5, 3:00 p.m. - First United Methodist Church, Frankfort

Monday, October 6, 7:00 p.m. - Union Church, Berea

Sunday, October 12, 5:00 p.m. - Second Presbyterian Church, Lexington
Lexington Chamber Chorale: "How Can I Keep from Singing: Let's
Celebrate Our 35 Years"

<http://lexingtonchamberchorale.org/>

Sunday, October 19 - Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington

3:30 p.m. - Concert: Scott Wright, clarinet

4:00 p.m. - Evensong with the Cathedral Choir

Wednesday, October 29, 7:30 p.m. - Cincinnati Museum Center, featuring the
1929 E.M. Skinner Organ in the rotunda:

Vincent Dubois, Organist, with the University of Cincinnati College
Conservatory of Music Professor of Percussion, Russell Barge

Cincymuseum.org

Sunday, November 2 (All Saints' Sunday) - Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington
3:30 p.m. - Concert - Rachel Renee Miller, harp
4:00 p.m. - All Souls Evensong with the Cathedral Choir

Sunday, November 30, 5:00 p.m. - Second Presbyterian Church, Lexington
Lexington Chamber Chorale: "How Can I Keep from Singing:
Sounds of the Season"
<http://lexingtonchamberchorale.org/>

Friday, December 5 - Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington
7:30 p.m. - G.F. Handel's Messiah with Emily Albrink, *soprano*, Joseph Kingbury, *countertenor*, Samuel Powless, *tenor*, Craig Price, *bass*
For ticket reservations, visit ccclex.org/messiah

Sunday, December 7 - Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington
4:00 p.m. - Blue Christmas with Pleasant Company

Sunday Evening, December 7, 7:00 p.m. - First Presbyterian Church, Lexington
Kentucky Bach Choir Winter Concert: "Mary Bears a Promise"
kentuckybachchoir

Sunday, December 14 - Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington
6:30 p.m. - Organ Prelude
7:00 p.m. - A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols with the Cathedral Choir

Sunday, December 21 - Christ Church Cathedral, Lexington
4:00 p.m. - Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*
with the Cathedral Girls Choir, Rachel Renee Miller, harp

Amadeus Lex: "*Souvenir de Florence*"

Friday, January 9, 7:00 p.m. - St. Raphael Episcopal Church, Lexington

Saturday, January 10, 7:00 p.m. - St. Mark Catholic Church, Richmond

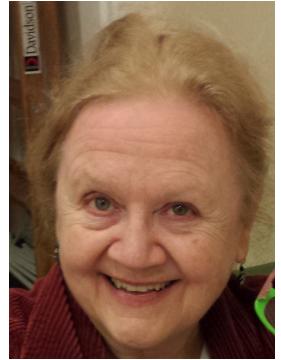
Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 7:00 p.m. - Cincinnati Museum Center,
featuring the 1929 E.M. Skinner Organ in the rotunda:
Johannes Skoog, Organist, with combined Choirs of Christ Church Cathedral
and St. Thomas Episcopal Church
Cincymuseum.org

MEMBER NEWS

LEXINGTON AGO CHAPTER MOURNS THE LOSS OF MEMBER CONNIE GOLDEN

Connie Dare Golden, 79, died unexpectedly on Labor Day, September 1, 2025 on her way to the airport to enjoy a long-anticipated vacation with her husband. She was born in Richmond, Kentucky to Betty and Arbie Hensley and she studied piano and organ at Eastern Kentucky University (BM, BME, MM), the University of Oklahoma (MM) and the University of Kentucky (DMA).

Connie was awarded a George C. Marshall Fellowship to study the organ works of Dietrich Buxtehude in Copenhagen for a year and a half where she concertized extensively throughout Scandinavia and Northern Europe. Her principal teachers included Nancy Davis Lancaster and John Turnbull at Eastern Kentucky University, Mildred Andrews Boggess at the University of Oklahoma, Jørgen Hansen at Holmens Kirke in Copenhagen, and Schuyler Robinson at the University of Kentucky. She had additional study with Anton Heiller, Marie-Claire Alain, and Harald Vogel.



She served as organist or organist/choirmaster for more than sixty years in Disciples of Christ, Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and United Methodist churches in Kentucky, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Idaho. This included her time as organist/choirmaster at First Presbyterian in Richmond, organist and then organist/choirmaster at Second Presbyterian in Lexington, and Assistant Organist at Christ Church Cathedral in Lexington under Jeffrey Smith.

More than anything, she loved teaching and in addition to private lessons, she served on university music faculties in Idaho and Kentucky. Most recently, she taught piano and organ at Immanuel School of Music in Lakeside Park, Kentucky. She will be remembered for her passion, her dedication to her calling, and her insistence on giving her all to every endeavor she took up. She embodied her middle name.

AGOLex member David Cooper shared these memories: “Connie was around the School of Music at UK when I started the DMA in piano. What an incredible character! She was hilarious. When she got ‘perturbed’ about something, she became an unleashed hurricane. Connie could change registrations - never using pistons - at lightning speed. It was a marvel to watch. She knew how to really listen to her playing and let the harmonic structure guide her rhythmic motion . . . she knew how to ‘play the room.’ I was so glad to see that she was relaxed and happy at our last members recital [October 2024 at Good Shepherd]. Connie was a ‘one of a kind’ person and organist. I’m so happy I knew her.”

She is survived by Dale Golden, her husband of forty-five years; four siblings; multiple nieces and nephews; and some lovely in-laws. A memorial service is scheduled for Bullittsville Christian Church, 3094 Petersburg Road, Burlington, KY on Saturday, October 11, 2025 at 11am, with visitation at the church from 9 to 11am, with a lunch to follow the service.

Lux aeterna luceat ei, Domine

If you have member news you would like to share in future editions of the newsletter, please contact Nancy Dunn at agolexdeans@icloud.com or text to 859.333.0526 by the 20th of each month

MISCELLANY



THE AGO NATIONAL CONVENTION . . .

. . . will be in St Louis next summer! Only 4 hours, 59 minutes away from Lexington! More information coming soon . . .

ADD THOSE COVETED AGO LETTERS AFTER YOUR NAME!

FALL ZOOM STUDY GROUPS AVAILABLE FOR SPC, CAGO

Free monthly online study groups are being offered for candidates taking the [Service Playing Certificate \(SPC\)](#) and [Colleague \(CAGO\)](#) exams. Sessions take place at 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT on Zoom.

Click the links below to register:



Service Playing Certificate

[Monday, Oct. 20](#)

[Monday, Nov. 17](#)

Colleague

[Tuesday, Oct. 14](#) - Repertoire &
Keyboard Skills

*Additional resources can be found in the
[Document Center](#).*

Your chapter also has study aids available free of charge! Just contact Jane Johnson (jhjohn@email.uky.edu or 859-338-5364) for more information. You can join the ranks of the certified, and we are here to help!

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR AGO DUES?

If you haven't yet paid your dues, or can't remember if you've paid them, or want to find out when they are due, go here: [AGO sign in](#). Or if you prefer, call (212) 870-2310 during business hours, or email info@agohq.org.

If you prefer to be a Chapter Friend rather than a member, please send a check for \$40 made out to **Lexington Chapter AGO** to: Brian Hunt (Treasurer), 1008 Claiborne Way, Lexington, KY 40517. Chapter Friends receive our monthly newsletter but are not eligible for AGO discounts and do not receive *The American Organist* magazine.



HONE YOUR IMPROVISATIONAL SKILLS!

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 williamawebberiv@gmail.com

A NOTE ABOUT EMAIL SCAMS . . .

Please be aware that since the general public has access to some of our AGO members' email addresses, you could be contacted by someone impersonating a member. Always check carefully before responding to an email that is questionable or that requests monetary assistance in any way. If you are in doubt, most members' phone numbers are listed in your directory.

JOB LISTINGS

Bread of Life Lutheran Church, Georgetown:

Part time **organist/pianist**:

[Full description](#)

[posted 10/1/25]

Holy Trinity Church (Catholic), Springfield:

Holy Trinity Church, a Catholic parish near Bardstown, Kentucky, is looking for someone who could play organ for any or all of our weekend Masses at 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays, 8:30 a.m. Sundays, and/or 11:00 a.m. Sundays. The expectation would be for hymns appropriate for the church season (one for the procession in, one at the offertory, one for communion, and one for the recessional). Additionally there would be some simple Mass parts sung by the congregation or cantors. Compensation is negotiable. For more information, please contact:

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

[posted 4/1/25]

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]

agohq.org/

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is to foster a thriving community of musicians who share their knowledge and inspire passion for the organ.



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GREAT MUSIC

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October 2025

Concert & Evensong

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

3:30pm CONCERT

Scott Wright, *clarinet*
University of Kentucky

4:00pm EVENSONG

with the Cathedral Choir



Concert & Evensong

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2

3:30pm CONCERT

Rachel Renee Miller, *harp*
Vanderbilt University

4:00pm ALL SOULS EVENSONG

with the Cathedral Choir

Visit cccllex.org/music for more information on
the Cathedral Choir, Great Music Series, and
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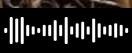


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ANNOUNCING OUR 2025-2026 SEASON

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Dr. Vicki Bell and Dr. Stephen Bolster*

Mary Bears a Promise

December 7, 2025 • 7:00 p.m.

Magnificats and other works by J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach, Palestrina, Mendelssohn, Britten, and others

From Suffering to Salvation

April 12, 2026 • 7:00 p.m.

Works by J.S. Bach (with selections from the St. Matthew Passion), Brahms, Vaughan Williams, Howells, and Finzi

Concerts will be held at First Presbyterian Church
174 North Mill Street, Lexington, KY 40507



Choral
Evensong
at Good Shepherd

Weekly on Wednesdays at 7 PM

Visit gslex.org/music for more details

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church
533 East Main Street
Lexington KY 40508



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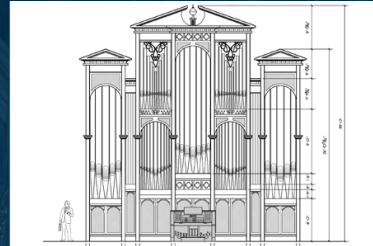
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NEW ORGANS
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GREAT MUSIC

at Christ Church Cathedral

2025-2026

Concerts & Evensongs

3:30pm Concert

4:00pm Evensong with the Cathedral Choir

**September 21, October 19, November 2,
February 1, March 1, May 17**



Friday, December 5

7:30pm George Frideric Handel's *Messiah*
with the Cathedral Choir

For tickets, visit cccllex.org/messiah

Sunday, December 14

7:00pm A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
with the Cathedral Choir



Sunday, December 21

4:00pm Benjamin Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*
The Cathedral Girls Choir
Rachel Renee Miller, *harp*

Sunday, February 15

4:00pm Organ Concert
Huw Lewis, *Hope College, Michigan*



Palm Sunday, March 29

4:00pm Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem*
with the Cathedral Choir

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



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