

Lehigh Valley Chapter

American Guild of Organists

June & July 2025

www.lvago.org



Chapter Officers 2024-2025

Dean: Susan Frickert
484-788-9476

sfrickert2001@yahoo.com

Sub Dean: Janice Butz
610-730-0328
janicebutz@gmail.com

Secretary: Linda Maule
610-258-5006
maule@ptd.net

Treasurer: Stephen Bueker
610-657-4188
sfbueker@rcn.com

Executive Committee

Marisa Deshler (2026)

Jeffrey Raub (2026)

Charles Glandorf (2027)

Gary Raish (2027)

Robert Riday (2028)

Michael Fister (2028)

Dean's Article

Dear Colleagues,

Greetings, colleagues!

First, I'd like to offer my heartfelt thanks to our officers and executive board members. This has been an excellent year for your Lehigh Valley Chapter AGO. We programmed some outstanding events this past year, featuring expert nationally known organists and choral clinicians; all programs free to our members, and several even free to the public. If you missed them, you will definitely want to keep an eye out for our exciting chapter events for 2025-2026. Your officers and board had such a productive and fun time working together this past year, that they all agreed to serve another term this coming year! Remember, your ideas and input are always welcome. Email me or any of your officers or execs - we will be starting our planning for 2025-2026 in July. If you would be interested in hosting one of our events at your church this year, please let us know.

Secondly, I want to remind you that for church musicians, summer needs to include rest and revitalization. You wouldn't think being a church musician is a stressful job, but it certainly can be. Most people have one or two bosses, but do you realize we actually each have dozens? One of my favorite quotes is "The church organist is the only musician who plays too loud, too soft, too fast, and too slow all at the same time!" What are ways we can both refresh and pursue some activities that will help us grow? Get outdoors to walk in God's glorious creation - it's tremendously healing, and it's free!. Commit to reading a book of the Bible with which you are not so familiar. Take advantage of one of the workshops, conferences or webinars offered this time of year; browse through the many catalogs of new music; read one of the interesting books on choral or organ technique. It's a perfect time to get your files back in order; to invest in learning some new organ/piano music; to acquire some choir devotions and some new choral warm-ups for your autumn bag of tricks. I pray that we all return to our fall rehearsal schedules renewed physically, mentally, and spiritually, ready to engage and inspire our choirs and congregation with fresh insights, new goals, and renewed enthusiasm! God bless your summer!

A Summer Idea

Are you looking for a fun summer project to engage the children of your congregation?

Soon after I arrived at St. John's Lutheran Church in Nazareth, I proposed the idea of having a Music, Art, and Drama Camp during the summer. It's usually held the first or second week of August when many summer camps are winding down. We meet each morning for a week, and our focus is on preparing a musical that will be presented later in the fall. Our time together consists of becoming familiar with the Biblical story on which the musical is based, doing drama exercises, learning songs, making props, painting the backdrop, reading the script, and of course, enjoying snack time. The excitement builds to the last day when these young actors and actresses hold their breath as the characters they will become in the musical are officially announced. In late September the kids return weekly to begin rehearsals on stage. Opening night takes place the first Saturday in November and then is repeated during the Sunday School hour the next day.

After our first MAD Camp performance, the kids loved it so much that it has continued each summer since 2001. The children have shared numerous musicals based on the stories of the great flood, the creation, Jonah and the whale, Daniel in the lion's den, Queen Esther, Moses and the Exodus, and so many others. This summer will mark our 25th year of performances; even during the pandemic in 2020 we shared an abbreviated week together, simply miming the story and adding motions to recorded songs. No sooner have we finished one musical, when the kids start asking "What's the next MAD Camp show gonna be?"

A Music, Art, and Drama Camp is a great way to provide a creative and engaging environment where kids can explore different forms of artistic expression. It's an opportunity to learn a Biblical story, sing songs, create props and scenery, and learn how to express oneself through acting and drama. Give it a try—your kids will love it!

Janice Butz

LVAGO Organist Substitute List

If you would like to be included in the Organist Substitute List please forward your Name, Contact Information (phone/email) and Availability (Sundays, weekdays, etc) to Stephen Bueker, 2520 Clark Place, Easton, PA 18040; sfbueker@rcn.com.

Dale Bonenberger	Mon-Fri	917 328-9041
Ruthann Brandt	Mon-Sat	610 262-3304
Janice Butz	Mon -Fri	610 882-9388
Alan Birney	Sun-Sat	610 653-8097
Ellen Erb	Mon-Sat	570 350-0343
Charles Glandorf	Mon-Sat	610 416-1055
Eric Gombert	Mon-Sat	610 435-1641
Gail Hanzl	Mon-Sat	610 264-5859
Susan Hartney	Mon-Sat	610 360-6934
Joe Kaczmarek	Mon-Sat	484 433-4336
Jacqueline Kuba	Sun-Sat	570 386-4480
Michael Kuhnert	Mon-Sat	215 536-4345
Cristina Dinella Makowicz	Sun-Sat	585-732-8017
James Matz	Sun-Sat	610 367-8094
Linda Maule	Mon-Sat	610 258-5006
Richard McIntyre	Mon-Sat	908 283-4691
Jeffrey Raub	Saturday	484 541-8322
Michael Seroka	Mon-Sat	570 516-7207
Barbara Thomson	Sun-Sat	908 591-4499
Bruce Tonkin	Sun-Sat	610 220-5457
Dennis Varley	Sun-Sat	610 739-3567
Matthew Wary	Mon-Sat	610 743-0921
Stephen Ziminsky	Mon-Fri	610 417-2669
Freda Zimmerman	Mon-Fri	610 381-3089



Banquet was "Better Together"

Sunday, May 18 marked our chapter's annual banquet. The board decided it would "change it up" a little this year and have a guest speaker. Board members Bob Riday and Gary Raish, mentioned that their longtime acquaintance, Rev. Dr. Karyn Wiseman would be an excellent choice to speak at the banquet. The board decided that asking a guest speaker to discuss the important relationship between a church musician and clergy would be an interesting and important topic, and to invite the clergy with whom we work. Bob and Gary had heard Rev. Wiseman lead worship many times at summer worship services at Paradise Lutheran Association Community in the Poconos. They had always been impressed with her ability to preach an engaging sermon that actually stayed with you during the week. She also would lead a mid-week bible study that was always engaging, thought provoking, and just plain fun! So...Karyn accepted our invitation and prepared a wonderful presentation entitled Better Together about worship planning together, the future of worship, and church in general, and the importance, actually the necessity, of working together to plan worship.

Karyn's years of serving as a Lutheran Pastor, as well as her years as Professor of Homiletics at United Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia gave her an excellent background to speak at our banquet. There were about forty in attendance at The Carriage House at Heintzelman's, Hellertown. The Carriage House is a wonderful venue for all kinds of banquets and social events. The catered buffet, by Brooklyn Catering, was excellent.

Thanks to all who helped plan and facilitate our annual banquet, and especially to the almost twenty clergy who attended on a Sunday after planning and presenting their Sunday worship services.



Rev. Dr. Karyn Wiseman,
Guest Speaker



Installation of Officers



Newsletter Editor

Marta Oberlin, martasgig@gmail.com

Placement Service

Please visit the Placement page on www.lvago.org for information and the Placement Service Information Sheet.

Newsletter Deadline

(August issue) Thursday, July 17, 2025



40th Anniversary Spring Concert
Saturday June 7 at 2 pm.
St. Joseph Catholic Church
526 North St., Jim Thorpe.

This concert features works of Bach and Handel with accompaniment by The Festival Orchestra with Maestro Perry Conducting.

Tickets are \$25.00 (\$20 for Seniors and Students).
Tickets will be available at the door.