

Lehigh Valley Chapter

American Guild of Organists

February 2026

www.lvago.org



Chapter Officers 2025-2026

Dean: Susan Frickert
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Sub Dean: Janice Butz
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janicebutz@gmail.com

Secretary: Linda Maule
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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)

Notes from the Dean

February is such an interesting roller coaster month! We start the shortest month of the year by trusting a fat, scruffy rodent to provide a reliable weather prediction for the next six weeks; then we succumb to the insistence of the commercial world that we can prove our love with chocolates and flowers just one day a year; and finally we corporately mark our faces with ashes to remember that we're all going to die! Seriously though, let's circle back to the concept of love, not the romantic kind, but the kind the church calls "agape." When I consider Christ's command to "love one other," 1 Corinthians 13 somehow always pops into my brain, feeling like a cautionary tale deliberately aimed at church musicians: "Though I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am as a noisy gong or a tinkling cymbal..." That famous passage of scripture always seems to challenge me to more compassionately tend my little congregation within our larger congregation (a.k.a. my choir members and their families); to be more diligent in praying regularly for all my volunteer musicians, and to always place people above programs. It uncomfortably forces me to examine my motivations for music ministry in a way that has nothing to do with the actual business of preparing music for worship. Am I a source of care and understanding to my choirs and my congregation? Does my life faithfully mirror my Christian beliefs and Jesus' teachings? Am I slow to anger and quick to forgive? Do I walk the walk, or just talk the talk? We are the only ones who can truthfully answer those questions and make any necessary course corrections. I like to keep in mind the quote "You may be the only Bible some people will ever read. So the question is, 'Are you a good translation?'" attributed to Mark Batterson. May God continue to give us the tongues of angels, and the heart of Christ in everything we say and do.

God bless! Susan

Upcoming LVAGO Chapter Events!

THIS MONTH—FEBRUARY 21

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

St. John's Lutheran Church in Fullerton

CHORAL WORKSHOP FEATURING SPIRITUALS & GOSPEL MUSIC

Join us for a wonderful morning to enhance our choral skills, sing spirituals, celebrate Black History Month, and enjoy fellowship with Lehigh Valley organists and friends. Our guest clinician for the morning is Dr. Derrick Thompson, Assistant Professor of Music and Director of Choral Studies at Kutztown University. Bring along your choir members, friends, and anyone who enjoys singing. Together we will learn some new choral techniques and gain some insights into spirituals and gospel songs. Please see more details elsewhere in this newsletter.

MARCH 22

A celebration of women composers, featuring organ works and hymns composed by women, will help us observe Women's History Month. Gwyn Michel will be our host at College Hill Moravian Church in Bethlehem and a few of our own women LVAGO members will be the organists.

APRIL 25

Chapter members and friends will be on the road for an organ crawl, traveling to Philadelphia, the birthplace of our country's freedom. We'll travel by bus, enjoy a boxed lunch, and visit interesting venues and churches with fabulous organs, both new and old.

MAY 31

LVAGO member Luke DiGiacinto, currently pursuing studies at Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, will be our featured young artist recitalist at Christ Lutheran Church in Allentown. A banquet and annual meeting follows the recital.

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
Ellen Erb	Mon-Sat	570 350-0343
Charles Glandorf	Mon-Sat	610 416-1055
Eric Gombert	Mon-Sat	610 435-1641
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	Mon-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



Positions Available

Organist and Choir Director(1)

Church: First United Church of Christ of Easton,
27 North Third St., Easton, PA 18042

Website: <https://firstucceaston.org>

Contact: William Arnold, 610-730-3979,
billarnold48@gmail.com

Weekly services: 1

Ensembles: Adult Choir - 6 members, Handbell
Choir - 8 members

Instruments: Casavant Pipe Organ, 3 manuals

Weekly attendance: 25

Position fill date: ASAP

Total hours per week: 9.5 (1 playing services,
1 leading rehearsal, 1 meetings with pastor, other
music staff, choir member solo practice, commit-
tee meetings, .5 administrative custodial duties, 5
practicing service music)

Salary: \$12000-\$16,000

Weeks vacation: 4

Notes:

Occasionally organize and direct ad hoc music
al groups for participation in services and special
events. Also perform occasional Saturday or Sun-
day afternoon organ concerts.

Please send your resume to the attention of:
William Arnold, First United Church of Christ of
Easton, 229 Church St., Easton, PA 18042, e-mail
at: billarnold48@gmail.com

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

(February issue) Saturday, January 24, 2025



*Happy
Valentine's
Day!*





Teaching Choral Technique Through Spirituals and Gospel

presented by

Dr. Derrick Thompson
Director of Choral Studies,
Kutztown University

Saturday, February 21, 2026

9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

St. John's Lutheran Church

835 Third Street, Whitehall, PA

Dr. Derrick L. Thompson, a distinguished musician and educator from Madison Heights, Virginia, has left an indelible mark on the music scene. Currently Director of Choral Studies and Assistant Professor of Music at Kutztown University, his interests focus on the development of young singing voices, effective communication in choral rehearsals, and innovative teaching methodologies for choral and applied voice settings. Dr. Thompson is a revered conductor and clinician, sought after for numerous district, county, and all-state choral performances. Dr. Thompson can also be found on podcast and presenting at local, state, and regional conferences and workshops on his written works along with topics related to access and representation in choral music education, excellence in teaching, and cultural appropriation and appreciation in the field.

**This workshop is open and free of charge to anyone
with an interest in choral skills and a passion for singing!**



Sponsored by the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

Parking at St. John's: From Route 22, head north on Fullerton Avenue which turns into 3rd Street. St. John's will be on the right, but continue past the church to Quarry Street and turn right. The parking lot is on the right shortly after the turn. Walk up Cherry Alley and up the handicap ramp of the church to enter.