



inspiring excellence in organ and sacred music since 1949



## From the Dean

W. Leigh Fleury, DMA

As we head into September, the 1<sup>st</sup> marks Johann Pachelbel's (1683–1706) birthday. Pachelbel was a master of the keyboard variation set, as seen in his magnum opus, *Hexachordum Apollinis* (1699). His skill is evident in his treatment of the theme in a wide variety of configurations and styles, including dance movements such as the Allemande and Gigue. For church services, Pachelbel's Seven Chorale Partitas are as delightful as they are practical. They are wonderful for demonstrating the "colors" of the organ, and the variety of styles and short length of each variation make them interesting for congregations to listen to.

Variations can be cut or excerpted as needed to fit prelude or offertory time constraints. My favorite partitas in the set are *Christus, der ist mein Leben* and *Was Gott tut, das ist wohlgetan*. If you are unfamiliar with these partitas or haven't played them in a while, consider including one of them in a service this month. Our first meeting of the 2025–2026 season will be held on Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at St. Thaddeus in Aiken. The program, titled "Organ Plus", will explore music written for the organ and other instruments. Additional details are listed in the newsletter. I hope to see you there!

Sincerely,  
W. Leigh Fleury, DMA - Dean



### Pachelbel: Hexachordum Apollinis

Want to add something to a future newsletter?  
Email Sawyer Branham at [sawyerbranham@yahoo.com](mailto:sawyerbranham@yahoo.com)

## Upcoming Events

**Monday, Sept 8**

**Dinner: 6:00pm**

**Meeting: 7:00pm**

Chapter Meeting  
St Thaddeus, Aiken

**Saturday, Sept 13**

**4:00pm**

LTO Chamber Choir  
Reid Memorial

**Sunday, Sept 21**

**3:00pm**

Five Pianists  
St John UMC

**Tuesday, Sept 23**

**12:00pm**

Junwen Liang  
Saint Paul's

**Monday, Oct 6**

**Meeting: 6:00pm**

**Recital: 7:00pm**

Chapter Meeting and  
Member Recital  
St John UMC

**Sunday, Oct 19**

**6:00pm**

Kyle Ritter, organist  
St Thaddeus, Aiken

September 2025



**Saturday, September 13th**

**4PM**

### **Reid Memorial Presbyterian**

We welcome back Dr. Alicia Walker of the University of South Carolina and LTO Chamber Choir for a FREE concert of choral gems. The program will feature the chorale fantasia of J.S. Bach's Cantata 140, Herbert Howells's glorious "Collegium Regale" canticles, and John Corigliano's nostalgic Fern Hill. Please encourage your choral colleagues to attend this unique offering and welcome LTO to our area! Christopher Leysath and Mark Dickens, organists.



## **TUESDAY'S MUSIC LIVE**

Tuesday's Music Live opens its 37th Anniversary Season with a concert by the young, celebrated Chinese American pianist, **Junwen Liang**, on Tuesday, September 23rd at 12:00 noon. The 30-minute concerts are free and open to the public. For complete information on the 2025-26 season, visit [www.tuesdaysmusiclive.com](http://www.tuesdaysmusiclive.com).

# **Concerts and Events**



Rosalyn Floyd



Martin David Jones



Clara Park



Christopher Leysath



Larry Millen

Concerts with a Cause presents

# Five Pianists

Five beloved local pianists help us introduce our new piano to the community.

September 21, 2025  
3pm

Free, open to the public  
An offering will be taken for Murphy Harpst/Evolve

**St John United Methodist Church**  
[stjohnaugusta.org](http://stjohnaugusta.org)  
 706.724.9641

## **Members Recital**

Mark your calendars and dust off your favorite pieces for the Augusta AGO's 2025 Members' Recital, taking place at St. John UMC - Augusta, on Oct. 6! The recital will begin at 7 p.m., and will be preceded by a chapter meeting at 6 p.m. This recital is open to the public so please encourage your friends, choristers, students, and fellow musicians to attend. Those interested in performing on the recital program are asked to complete the questionnaire linked [here](#) or contact Chris Leysath at [Leysathago@gmail.com](mailto:Leysathago@gmail.com).

# ORGAN RECITAL

## NICHOLAS WILL

FORMER PROFESSOR OF SACRED MUSIC AND ORGAN AT FRANCISCAN UNIVERSITY OF STEUBENVILLE & RENOWNED RECITALIST AND CHORAL DIRECTOR



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2025 AT 7PM  
**ST. MARY ON THE HILL CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
 1420 MONTE SANO AVE, AUGUSTA, GA

WITH WORKS BY AMERICAN, FRENCH, AND IRISH COMPOSERS

## Meet the member:



**David Salter** has been a steadfast presence at Warrenville United Methodist Church for more than six decades, serving as organist supported by his wife, Dottie. His journey began in 1962 when his pastor approached him with a request that would shape his life: would 12-year-old David consider learning to play the organ? "The church had a pianist who wasn't interested in playing the organ and was ready to retire," David recalls. "I had been playing the piano for Sunday School assemblies, so the minister asked me if I'd be interested. He told me the church would pay for lessons if I would agree to play. I said yes—the organ fascinated me." The church hired a retired organist with a music degree to give him weekly lessons. "I played the piano on hymns while she played the organ each Sunday so I could get familiar with it. After about eight months, on the first Sunday of August in 1963—one week before my 13th birthday—I played the organ while she played the piano. The next week, I was on my own."

This past August marked 62 years since that first service. "Every first Sunday of August, I remember my organ teacher and the minister who asked me to play. I give thanks for them seeing something in me that I didn't see at the time."

David credits many mentors throughout his musical journey. "I only had one formal organ teacher, but I've had many mentors over the years, especially through the Augusta Chapter of the AGO. Everett Summerall invited me to my first AGO meeting and taught me so much. He never looked down on me, always encouraged me, and believed good hymn playing was the most important skill a church organist needs. He showed me how to use registrations to accompany the text of hymns." David also treasures memories of learning from Fred Swann. "When Fred came twice to do concerts at St. John's in Aiken, he took the time to work with me one-on-one. He even gave me copies of some of his hymn arrangements. That was unforgettable."

Asked about his favorite music, David admits it's hard to choose. "I like the typical classical organ music, but I also love good arrangements of hymn tunes," he says. He has a fondness for dramatic stops: "I love any large trumpet or tuba. And I love a combination of lush strings with celeste, along with a nice harmonic flute solo." Outside the organ repertoire, his listening tastes include Broadway and easy listening.

David has plenty of memorable stories from the organ bench, including one involving an unexpected visitor during a prayer. "At St. John in Graniteville, a choir member kept pointing during the pastoral prayer. I finally looked over, and there was a bat perched on the floor monitor right beside me. When I looked at it, it spread its wings and opened its mouth! Another choir member grabbed it and took it outside—all while the minister kept right on praying."

Another highlight came during a trip to Philadelphia, where he attended an organ concert at the Wannamaker store. "I was told I could go up near the console to observe, but I couldn't see where to sit. The organist turned to me and invited me to sit in his reserved seat, right next to the bench. What a thrill!"

Among his many musical encounters, David counts hearing Virgil Fox live as a special gift. "The first time was here in Augusta, when he dedicated the organ at Paine College. The second was at Township Auditorium in Columbia during my college days. He was on tour with his big touring organ. I even got to shake his hand and talk with him for about 10 minutes—until security finally told him they needed to close up."

If he hadn't become an organist and a teacher, David thinks he might have gone in a very different direction: "I was a high school biology teacher for 39 years, teaching honors, AP, and IB Biology. Growing up I wanted to be either a science teacher or a funeral director."

When asked what advice he would give to young musicians, David's words are encouraging: "You are needed, and even though a congregation does not always say it, the congregation appreciates you. There will always be those who complain the organ is too loud or that you're not playing their favorite pieces, but overall, congregations are very appreciative."

David has been a member of the Augusta Chapter of the AGO since the early 1980s, serving in nearly every leadership role and contributing to two regional conventions. "I've enjoyed my relationship with the AGO, and I thank each of you for considering me not only a friend, but a colleague—even though my degrees are in biology and education, not music."

## September 8th Meeting

Please plan to join your Augusta AGO Chapter for our first meeting of the program year, taking place at St. Thaddeus Episcopal Church in Aiken on Sept. 8. This will be a very important meeting wherein we will survey the proposed offerings for the year. We will also get to enjoy music for organ and solo winds performed by guests, Fabio Mann (trumpet) and Hal Seymour (saxophone). This will be a large-group planning meeting so please bring your personal as well as church calendars, willing hands, and your ideas! Dinner will be served, complements of St. Thaddeus, at 6 p.m.

Please email Elizabeth Gatter at [music@cogsaugusta.org](mailto:music@cogsaugusta.org) by Sept 3 to RSVP.

## Substitute Organists Available

### **Andrew Barnick (Midweek only)**

805-268-1505

[andrew.barnick@stmaryonthehill.org](mailto:andrew.barnick@stmaryonthehill.org)

### **Aaron Dixon**

706-726-2846

[aarondixon09@icloud.com](mailto:aarondixon09@icloud.com)

### **Ken Courtney**

803-443-8885

[kencourtney56@gmail.com](mailto:kencourtney56@gmail.com)

### **Dan Hardin**

954-593-0085

[hardin4438@yahoo.com](mailto:hardin4438@yahoo.com)

### **Brad Cunningham**

706-414-7007

[bradfordco@mindspring.com](mailto:bradfordco@mindspring.com)

### **Kathy Clark**

770-355-3078

[kclarktchr@bellsouth.net](mailto:kclarktchr@bellsouth.net)



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