

American Guild of Organists

Las Cruces Chapter

Members' Recital

February 5, 2023

Peace Lutheran Church

Las Cruces, New Mexico



The Las Cruces Chapter of the American Guild of Organists wishes to express its gratitude to the congregation and staff of Peace Lutheran Church for hosting this recital.

A free-will offering will be accepted at the end of the program to defray expenses. The Las Cruces Chapter of the American Guild of Organists is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization under IRS Section 170.

If you wish to be informed about upcoming events, but are not currently on the Chapter mailing list, please fill out one of the pink comment cards and leave it in an offering plate as you depart.

About the Guild

The American Guild of Organists is the national professional association serving the organ and choral music fields. Founded in 1896 as both an educational and service organization, the Guild seeks to set and maintain high musical standards and to promote understanding and appreciation of all aspects of organ and choral music.



About the Music

Dieterich Buxtehude (1637-1707), a Danish/German organist and composer of church music was one of the most esteemed and influential musicians in northern Europe at the turn of the eighteenth century. It is said that, in 1705, J.S. Bach walked over 200 miles to hear him play the organ in Lübeck. The **Variations on "Vater unser im Himmelreich"** (Our Father in Heaven, BuxWV 207) are a set of Chorale variations that Buxtehude composed based on the German hymn paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer composed by Martin Luther in 1538.

Mark Sedio (b. 1954) recently retired after 22 years as Deacon Cantor at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He has held positions at Augsburg University, Gustavus Adolphus College, and Luther Seminary, and he was appointed Augsburg University Organist in 2020. Sedio is an active recitalist, clinician, conductor, and composer, and he has published over 125 compositions for organ, for piano, and for choral and instrumental ensembles.

David German (b. 1954) is an organist and composer who has been a practicing church musician for over 40 years. He has served a number of churches throughout the United States, most recently at Stephens Valley Church in Nashville, Tennessee. He composed the **Festive Trumpet Tune** for his own wedding ceremony in 1990, while he was organist at Calvary Church in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Wayne L. Wold (b. 1954) retired in 2020 after a 30-year career in the music department of Hood College in Frederick, Maryland, where he continues to teach organ and serves as College Organist. He is also on the faculty at Shenandoah University and is a parish musician at First Lutheran Church in Ellicott City, Maryland. He holds the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Shenandoah University, has published over 400 compositions, and has written three books.

Robert W. Jones (1932-1997) was born in Oak Park, Illinois, and taught in the public schools in Connecticut and Michigan. He later became a member of the faculty of the University of Minnesota before retiring to the San Diego area. A largely self-taught American composer, he is arguably best known for three organ Sonatas for Worship and for a Toccata on "St. Denio".

Gaël Liardon (1973-2018) was a multifaceted Swiss musician, composer, organist, harpsichordist, singer, pedagogue, improviser, theoretician, and researcher. During his lifetime, he organized a number of concerts, festivals, and cultural events. He was titular organist at l'Eglise de Villamont in Lausanne and a member of the faculty of the Geneva Conservatory.

Florence Price (1887-1953) was the first female composer of African-American descent to have a symphonic work performed by a major national symphony orchestra. Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, she received a Bachelor's Degree in Music from the New England Conservatory around the age of 20. She moved to Chicago, Illinois in 1927 as part of the "great migration", where she made a living playing organ for silent films and doing orchestration work for radio station WGN in Chicago. She composed more than 300 works, including symphonies, organ works, piano concertos, works for violin, and arrangements of spirituals, art songs, and chamber works.



Jean Langlais (1907-1991) was a French organist and composer. Blinded by glaucoma at two, he began his organ studies at the National Institute for Blind Children, where he later spent 40 years as a professor. He studied at the Paris Conservatory, where he received prizes in composition and organ improvisation. He served as titular organist at the church of Sainte-Clotilde in Paris for 42 years, until his retirement at 80. **Philip Gehring** (1925-2020) studied at Oberlin Conservatory and Syracuse University, where he received his Ph.D. He studied organ in Paris shortly before being appointed professor of music and organist at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana, a post he held for 31 years; he was widely recognized for his expertise at improvisation. The **Improvisation on "Divinum Mysterium"** was originally improvised by Langlais when Gehring was visiting him in Paris in 1962. Gehring later transcribed this improvisation and analyzed it as part of the work for his doctoral dissertation.

David N. Johnson (1922-1987) was an American organist, composer, educator, choral clinician, and lecturer. Between 1942 and 1946 he served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps. Later in life, he was a member of the faculty of Arizona State University and organist at Trinity Cathedral in Phoenix, Arizona. Johnson's Trumpet Tune in D, also known as **Processional** (1962), is the opening and closing theme for the weekly radio program With Heart and Voice®. It was also the first of two processions used for the 1971 wedding of Richard Nixon's daughter, Tricia.

Franklin Ashdown (b. 1942) is a retired physician who has lived in Alamogordo for many years. He has published numerous organ and choral compositions and continues to actively compose. Dr. Ashdown plays organ for the Latter-Day Saints (LDS) congregation in Alamogordo, New Mexico. His **Toccata Concertato No. 1**, based on the Hymn Tune AZMON, is developed as an original, free-style toccata into which short hymn tune phrases are often inserted, followed by a triumphant statement of the complete hymn at the end of the composition.

About the Musicians

Jieun Kim Newland is an organist and harpsichordist currently living in El Paso, Texas. She received a Master's degree in Organ Performance from Yale University and is an active musician, both as a church organist and collaborating with early music and choral ensembles in Honolulu and Kona, Hawaii, Seattle, Washington, and Fort Collins, Colorado. Jieun currently serves as Music Minister and Organist at Peace Lutheran Church in Las Cruces and is a member of Sprezzatura, an early music ensemble in El Paso. She is also actively involved in the music programs at University of Texas at El Paso and New Mexico State University.

Benjamin J. Newland was walking out of the fifth-grade band instrument try-out evening all set to be a clarinet player when he persuaded his parents to let him try once more, and was thus saved from a life of woodwind mediocrity by picking up the trumpet. From that evening through community college, Ben studied trumpet in classical, marching, and jazz band settings. After a break of 25 years, he picked up a rental cornet in late 2021 and has since enjoyed rediscovering his love of brass instruments. A multi-instrumentalist at heart, Ben plays claw hammer banjo, knows a few chords on guitar, and has spent some time with a dobro on his lap. Recently enamored of the early



music world, he has been learning “natural”, or Renaissance, trumpet and has both a gittern and cornetto on order. When not busy as an amateur musician, Ben is an Episcopal priest serving as a U.S. Army Chaplain at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas.

Stephen Adams was born in 1939 and raised in San Francisco, California. He divides his time between Enterprise, Oregon, and Silver City, New Mexico, where he studies with Adele Giusto. He began his keyboard studies in Portland, Oregon with Walter Krueger, FAGO, and has also studied with Gavin Black of the Princeton, New Jersey, Early Keyboard Center. He is a member of the Portland, Central New Jersey, and Las Cruces AGO Chapters. His home organ is Casavant Frères Opus 3436 (1979, 14 ranks).

Howard Smolleck is a Professor Emeritus of Electrical and Computer Engineering at NMSU. He also taught at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, and was the founding sponsor of the Alpha Chi National College Honor Society chapters at both of these schools. He holds a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from the University of Texas at Arlington and is a licensed Professional Engineer (PE). Howard has held organist positions at University Presbyterian Church in Las Cruces, New Mexico, First Christian Church in Norfolk, Virginia, Inglewood Methodist Church in Grand Prairie, Texas, and St. John Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas. Since 1998, he has been organist at First Presbyterian Church in Las Cruces.

Adele Giusto is a retired elementary school music teacher from Silver City, New Mexico, where she has lived since 1976. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, and a Master's degree in Keyboard and Psychology from Western New Mexico University in Silver City. For the last five years, she has been the Music Director for the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd in Silver City. In this capacity, she serves as organist/pianist and directs the church choir and handbell choir.

Karen Billings, a Las Cruces resident since 2007, was an engineer and mathematician with AT&T Bell Laboratories for 20 years. She has degrees in Mathematics from Hendrix College (Conway, Arkansas) and Oklahoma State University. She studied organ while at Hendrix and continued her studies at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey. Karen is certified as a Colleague of the American Guild of Organists (CAGO).

Laurel Benson Brown received a Bachelor of Music at Colorado State University and a Master of Sacred Music at Wittenberg University, in Springfield, Ohio. She worked for 44 years as a Lutheran church musician in Colorado, Ohio, Florida, South Carolina, and in northern Virginia, where she also taught music at Northern Virginia Community College. She and her husband, an amateur astronomer, live north of Deming, New Mexico, where she stays busy accompanying and subbing in Silver City, traveling, and looking at the night sky.

Rick Garven, a third-generation native of El Paso, Texas, received a Bachelor of Arts at Pasadena College in Pasadena, California, and a Master of Music from the University of North Texas. Rick recently retired from the Church of St. Clement in El Paso after serving 40 years as Organist-Choirmaster. He is organist for the El Paso Symphony Orchestra and staff organist at the Plaza Theater, playing the restored Wurlitzer Theater Organ (1930). Rick is certified as a Colleague and as an Associate of the American Guild of Organists (CAGO and AAGO)