



PITAGO PIPELINES

NEWSLETTER OF THE PITTSBURGH CHAPTER

JANUARY 2026

JOIN US IN JANUARY!

JANUARY 26, 2026 – A (Belated) BAVARIAN CHRISTMAS PARTY!

The Ratskeller of The Teutonia Männerchor

857 Phineas Street, Pittsburgh (North Side), PA 15212

Directions: Make your way to East Ohio Street on Pittsburgh's Northside. Turn left or right (depending on your direction!) onto Madison Avenue (which is the access road to I-279/Parkway North), then turn right onto Phineas St. The parking lot is on your right, just beyond the Comfort Inn & Suites. On-street parking is also available.



Club doors open at 6:00 PM; The Buffet will be set up at 6:30 PM

PLEASE NOTE: *There are stairs to tackle to get down into the Ratskeller. We will have some able-bodied (!) folks available to help those who need assistance dealing with the steps!*

Menu: A full German Buffet, including:

- Sliced Roasted Roast Pork in a Mushroom Gravy
- Bratwurst
- Kielbasa
- Spätzle (*German noodles*)
- Mashed Potatoes
- Potato Pancakes and Applesauce
- Sauerkraut
- Warm Red Cabbage
- Mixed Vegetables
- Spring Mix Green Salad with Ranch and Balsamic Vinaigrette dressings
- Sliced Bread and Butter
- Coffee, Iced Tea, Hot Tea, Water (*Soft Drinks and Alcoholic Beverages are available at the "cash bar"*)
- Dessert

There may even be some surprise entertainment!

(Details were not available at press time)

Invite your significant other or clergy or friends to join you in this beautiful and historic club for a great celebration as we kick off 2026!

Members: \$20/pp; Late: \$35/pp

Reservations are due by January 16, 2026.

Reserve to Regina Kettering online at reservations@pitago.org!



A New Year, a Renewed Invitation

January always feels like a deep breath.

After the beauty and intensity of Advent and Christmas, we arrive at a quieter moment. The calendar turns, the decorations come down, and we are given a bit of space to reflect on why we do this work. It is in that pause that the value of guild life becomes especially clear. We gather not only to grow as musicians, but to remind one another that this work is shared, sustained by community and friendship.

With that spirit in mind, I hope you will join us for two important gatherings in the weeks ahead.

First, please mark your calendar for our **AGO Pittsburgh Christmas Party on Monday, January 26**. It is a simple but meaningful opportunity to reconnect after a busy season, to enjoy one another's company, and to celebrate the relationships that make our chapter strong. I hope that you will join us!



Looking ahead to February, I would especially love to see a strong turnout for our **February 23 Night of Options meeting**, as part of which I will offer a workshop on *Beginning Service Playing*. This session will focus on the musical fundamentals that can quietly but powerfully transform hymn playing: clarity of texture, thoughtful registration, breathing and pacing between stanzas, and shaping hymns as expressive, living music rather than something merely functional. I will also share a number of accessible resources for last-verse harmonizations.

This workshop is intentionally designed to be welcoming and useful to those who are still growing into the role—students, neighboring church musicians, pianists curious about the organ, or anyone who loves the instrument and wants to serve more confidently. Because of that, I encourage each of you to think about who you might personally invite to attend. One thoughtful invitation can make all the difference, and many of us first found our way into the AGO because someone took the time to say, “you should come to this.”

As we begin this new year, I hope it will be one marked by peace, joy, and happy music making. I look forward to seeing you on January 26 and to welcoming new faces on February 23.

Warmly,

Chaz Bowers
Dean, Pittsburgh Chapter AGO



Greetings, PitAGO Chapter Members!

Welcome to 2026!

Apologies for this brief article, but at deadline time, I was with my husband Tom, who is in the ER suffering from a broken shoulder and humerus.

We hope to see all of you at our January 26th Bavarian-themed social gathering at Teutonic Männerchor on the North Side. Past Dean Jeff Gray, our host for the evening, has all the details on Page 1 of this issue of *PitAGO Pipelines*!

May the New Year bring you much happiness, prosperity and good health!

Pamela Shaw - SPC, MA, MLS
Sub-Dean



(Editor's Note: Tom's arm bone is broken where it enters the shoulder socket. No surgery, but immobilization in a sling for at least six weeks. Pam reports "he's NOT a happy camper!"

Remaining Meetings for the 2025-26 Chapter Year

DATE	LOCATION	TOPIC
February 23	Calvary Episcopal	<i>A Night of Options: Three Workshops to Chose From!</i>
March 23	<u>Bach Around the Block: Three Churches in Proximity to Each Other!</u> (Rides will be available for those who choose not to (or can't) walk to each church!)	
	Pittsburgh Oratory:	
	4:15 – 4:45 PM	<i>Music of the Influencers of J. S. Bach</i> (Nick Will and Alan Lewis, organists)
	Church of the Ascension:	
	5:45 PM	Dinner!
	7:00 – 7:30 PM	<i>Music of Bach's Contemporaries</i> (Gary Harger and Gail Henry, organists)
	Saint Paul Cathedral:	
	8:00 – 8:30 PM	<i>Music of the Master Himself!</i> (Ken Danchik and Ann Labounsky, organists)
April 14 *	St. Bernard Church	<i>In Concert: Frederic Blanc</i>
* Yes, we know it's a Tuesday, and it's earlier in the Month!		
May 18 *	Ingomar Methodist	<i>Workshop and Hymn Festival, led by Tom Trenney</i>
* Third Monday due to Memorial Day!		



Friday, February 13, 2026 – 6:00 PM Gala Dinner; 7:30 PM Program

Organ + Percussion

Organized Rhythm: Clive Driskill-Smith and Joseph Gramley

Calvary Episcopal Church – 315 Shady Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Join us for a fabulous evening as we celebrate with a Gala Dinner and Concert!

Dinner and Concert tickets are \$60.00.

*Make it a Valentine's Day Date with a catered meal and an evening of symphonic music
featuring Organized Rhythm's transcription of Holst's **The Planets**.*

Sunday, April 12, 2026 @ 3:00 PM

Nathaniel Gumbs

Organ + Voice

East Liberty Presbyterian Church – 116 South Highland Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

*Virtuoso performer Nathaniel Gumbs will be joined by a guest soprano Olanna Miller, née Goudeau,
to present a concert of classical and modern selections for organ and voice - including a few settings of spirituals.*

*Mrs. Miller is a much-sought-after soloist, having performed on stage nationally
and notably on Season 9 of NBC's America's Got Talent.*





A Note from the Editor

Happy New Year!

The Advent and Christmas and Hanukkah seasons drain many of us to the point of “*we ain’t doin’ nothin’ special in January!*” Add to that – who wants to plan a concert or program during the winter months, only to have to cancel them due to snow and ice and bitter cold!?! So that probably explains the lack of events reported for the *Musical Happenings* section of this month’s *PitAGO Pipelines*!

But please note: Lent starts in about six weeks from now...February 18th is Ash Wednesday in 2026, and that means Easter is April 5th! So if you have special musical events planned for Lent or Easter or Springtime in general, please submit them to editor@pitago.org by the deadline each month. And as a reminder, that deadline is always the 20th of the month preceding the issue date! (So for February, you need to submit your information by January 20th!)

Also, no new information was received about Positions Available or updates to the Substitute List, so the information for both of those pages is the same as last month!

I hope to see many of you at January’s Belated Bavarian Christmas Party at the Teutonia Männerchor on the 26th!

Jeff Gray



IN MEMORIUM



J. David Hart, FAGO

(The following is an edited obituary from his Facebook page)

After a lengthy illness, J. David Hart of Winter Haven Florida, formerly of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, died at his home on Tuesday, December 9, 2025 at age 67.

David concertized extensively throughout the United States, Europe, and Australia. For 19 years, he served the Shadyside Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. His final position was as organist and choir master of St. Paul's Episcopal Church of Winter Haven, Florida.

He is survived by his 94-year-old mother, Eleanore Hays Hart, his daughter Elizabeth Parker Davis of New Port Richey, and sister Lynne June Perich of Trinity, Florida. He also leaves several nieces and nephews, along with his Aunt June H. Lloyd of the North Hills in Pittsburgh.

A memorial service will be held sometime in January at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Winter Haven.



SUBSTITUTE LIST



*It is the policy of The Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Guild of Organists that **ONLY CURRENT CHAPTER MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING** may list their names on the Substitute List. Employers may contact organists directly or ask the coordinator for assistance.*

The AGO assumes no responsibility for the musicianship, reliability, or conduct of substitute organists, and background checks are the responsibility of the employer. Persons listed as available substitutes may be required by employers to present clearances, e.g. Child Abuse History Clearance, Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Checks for Employment, and/or Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Fingerprinting.

KEY: W: Weddings F: Funerals E: Evenings S: Saturday L: Liturgical Only N: Non-Liturgical Only

LAST	NAME FIRST	PHONE	EMAIL	AVAILABLE TO PLAY:						
				SUNDAYS	W	F	E	S	L	N
Anderson	Gerald	412.251.6718	org723@gmail.com	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cafaro	Ross	412.885.1625	rpcafarocomcast.net	X	X	X	X	X		
Clemens	Kevin M. (CAGO)	443.604.5072	kevinclemens@mac.com		X	X	X	X		
Cynar	Philip	412.926.6151				X			X	
Dobbins	Craig	412.400.5996	cdobbins620@gmail.com	X		X			X	X
Earnest	Dr. Wayne N	724.206.8854	musicmanwayne@outlook.com	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gross	Ellen	610.509.9028	ellenkgross@gmail.com			X		X	X	X
Hill	Thomas	512.421.1484	tom.hill.music.studio@gmail.com	X	X	X	X	X		
Janko	Ray	724.681.0874	rayjanko@gmail.com	X	X	X	X	X		
Kettering	Regina	412.477.5547	reginakettering@gmail.com	X	X	X	X	X		
LaRue	Elizabeth (SPC)	412.999.4812	aargon@hotmail.com	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lee	Dr. Alice Grier	724.554.2346	aglee@washjeff.edu	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lindsey, III	C. Dennis	918.409.6467	c.dennis.lindsey@gmail.com	X	X	X	X	X		
Lynch	Robert	724.787.7447	RLLynch2013@gmail.com	X	X	X	X	X		
Miller	Jane	412.526.6618	organistjane@yahoo.com		X	X				
Pinkerton	Rich (AAGO)	412.841.3937	rbpinkerton509@gmail.com		X	X	X	X		
Rollett	Tony	412.726.8569	anthonyrollett@icloud.com	X			X	X		
Rubright	Sandy S.	724.994.8872	wpmmaa@yahoo.com	X	X	X	X			
Salmon	Michael	904.718.7622	oriolefish@gmail.com	X	X	X	X		X	
Schall	Stephen	412.215.2971	stephenschall@msn.com		X	X	X			
Senay	Bob (MM)	724.255.0488	rsenay@comcast.net		X	X	X	X		
Shaw	Pamela (SPC, MA, MLS)	412.425.5962	pamelashaw2000@gmail.com	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shrewsbury	Christina	716.465.8704			X	X	X	X	X	X
Skroupa	Dane	724.265.4840	dgskskroupa@yahoo.com			X			X	X
Tyillian	Jon	724.456.5135	jtyillian@gmail.com		X	X	X	X		
Vanderlaan	Brett A. (SPC)	301.919.1835	brettvanderlaan@aol.com		X	X	X	X		
Will	Nicholas (AAGO)	412.566.9597	nicholas.jos.will@gmail.com		X	X	X	X		



Cantate Usquam Pilgrim Singers

Sing Anywhere!

Bring the Cantate Usquam Pilgrim Singers to Sing With You on a Sunday

The **mission** of the Cantate Usquam Pilgrim Singers is to bring music to churches that don't have choirs or the resources to sing at their regular services. Cantate Usquam, founded in December 2024, literally means "sing anywhere," **and we are a volunteer choir based in Pittsburgh that charges nothing.** We would love to come sing with you at your church! Since February we have visited the following churches: St. Peter's, Blairsville; St. Bartholomew's/Trinity, Scottdale (twice); St. Matthew's, Homestead; St. Barnabas, Brackenridge (twice); St. Peter's, Brentwood; Cross Creek Presbyterian, Burgettstown; Hoboken Presbyterian Church, Blawnox; and, One in Christ Church, Ambridge. **We already have a queue going for the Spring of 2026, so if your church would like us to come, please be in touch and join the queue, as we will begin to schedule specific dates in the next month.**

The Cantate Usquam Pilgrim Singers:

- want to sing WITH you and share the joy that music brings to worship
- are led by musicians who have experience leading congregations and choirs in singing and can provide keyboard accompaniment
- are non-denominational
- welcome singers from your church to join us for a rehearsal and sing with us the day we visit
- work with your church to sing hymns and music from your tradition
- will sing choir pieces for a prelude, offertory, and/or communion
- love to sing a capella but can also use available instruments
- Will soon be scheduling dates beginning for the spring of 2026, though NOT for Holy Week or Easter services
- wear no robes and sing from within your congregation, not up front

Contact: Michael Salmon (oriolefish@gmail.com / 904-718-7622)
or Penny Anderson (penny_anderson@fastmail.fm / 412-310-9167)
For more information and/or to schedule a date

Supported by Lutheran Campus Ministries and Calvary Episcopal Church

Are You Free on Sunday Evenings?

David Bridges, the director of the Pittsburgh Compline Choir is looking for volunteer organists to provide prelude music and accompany a hymn during the Spring Semester of their weekly service of Compline on Sunday evenings at 8:00 PM in Heinz Chapel.

For more information, please contact David at
724.217.6759 or director@pittsburghcomplinechoir.org





OFFICERS

DEAN	Chaz Bowers	dean@pitago.org
SUB-DEAN	Pam Shaw	subdean@pitago.org
SECRETARY	Alan Lewis	secretary@pitago.org
TREASURER	Aaron Sproul	treasurer@pitago.org
REGISTRAR	Nick Will	registrar@pitago.org

EXECUTIVE BOARD

CLASS OF 2027

Larry Allen	leallen2@aol.com
Christopher Cox	cmcox118@gmail.com
Craig Dobbins	cdobbins620@gmail.com
TBD (<i>A replacement for Pam Shaw, our new Sub-Dean, will be named by the Executive Committee</i>)	

CLASS OF 2029

Ben Cornelius-Bates	drericfritz2gmail.com
Ellen Gross	ellenkgross@gmail.com
Sr. Cynthia Pock	cantor@flcpittsburgh.org
Joe Tuttle	geigermann88@gmail.com

COMMITTEE HEADS

CHAPLAIN	The Rev. Ann Miller-Smith	chaplin@pitago.org
DINNER RESERVATIONS	Regina Kettering	reservations@pitago.org
EMAIL COORDINATOR	Chris Cox	email@pitago.org
EDUCATION	Ben Cornelius-Bates	education@pitago.org
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Jeff Gray	editor@pitago.org
ORGAN ARTISTS SERIES	Aaron Sproul Jon Tyillian	director@pitago.org director@pitago.org
PITTSBURGH ORGAN ACADEMY	Robert Kardasz	poa@pitago.org
SUBSTITUTES & PLACEMENT	Nick Will	substitutes@pitago.org
WEBMASTER	Ryan Croyle	webmaster@pitago.org