



The CYPHER

Newsletter of the Southern Arizona Chapter
American Guild of Organists

Chapter Website: www.saago.org

Volume 45, Number 3
November 2025

2025-26 calendar at a glance

Candlelight Concert for All Saints Day

Saturday, Nov. 1, 6:30 p.m.
Chapel, Trinity Presbyterian
Church

SAAGO—Annual Showcase Recital

Friday, Nov. 7, 7 p.m.
Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal
Church

Faythe, Freese, Organ Catalina Organ Festival

Friday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist
Church

SAAGO—Epiphany Party

Saturday, Jan. 3, 1 p.m.
The Highlands Clubhouse
332 W. Matterhorn, Oro Valley

SAAGO—Pedals, Pipes and Pizza

Saturday, Jan. 17, 10 a.m.
St. Michael and All Angels
Episcopal Church

SAAGO—Phoenix Organ Crawl

Saturday, Feb. 7, 8 a.m.
Various instruments and the
MIM

Nathaniel Gumbs, Organ Catalina Organ Festival

Friday, Feb. 20, 7 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist
Church

Kimberly Marshall, Organ Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series

Sunday, Feb. 22, 3 p.m.
Holsclaw Hall, UA School of
Music

Annual Showcase Recital

SAAGO Annual Showcase Concert

Friday, November 7, 7 p.m. (Note it is Friday, not Sunday)

Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church
4440 N Campbell Ave
Reception Following, Donation

Our Annual Showcase displays the talents of SAAGO members and this year features Jeffrey Campbell, Ji Sun Lee and Jeffrey Hall. This is always a special program which displays their artistry as well as some of the organ repertoire's most beautiful music. This year's concert takes place at St. Philip's in the Hills with the performers playing the 1986 Holtkamp organ (III/47), which has revisions and enlargement by Hupalo & Repasky Pipe Organs and a new console by Quimby Pipe Organs, Inc. The instrument is dedicated to Andrew Buchhauser (1910-1999), Organist at St. Philip's from 1947 to 1986, and long-time director of the U of A School of Music as well as past dean of SAAGO.



Jeffrey Campbell, DMus, ARCCO, has distinguished himself as an organ recitalist, choral conductor, and clinician. A graduate of the University of British Columbia and Northwestern University, Dr. Campbell has specialized in the interpretation of Bach's organ and choral music, as well as English and French Romantic repertoire. Since August 2001, he has been Associate Music Director and Principal Organist at the Episcopal Church of Saint Philip's in the Hills. He has been a featured recitalist at several AGO Regional Conventions and played in concert series here and abroad. He has accompanied the Saint Philip's Choirs on four UK Residencies to English Cathedrals, providing the daily round of music, as has been sung in these great spaces for centuries.

Jeffrey Hall and his wife Schenley moved to Tucson in November 2024 after 32 years in Flagstaff, where Jeff worked at Lowell Observatory, serving from 2010 to 2024 as its Executive Director. Jeff holds a B.A. in Physics from

Johns Hopkins and a Ph.D. in Astronomy and Astrophysics

**Note: concert is on
Friday evening at
7 p.m.**

Biographies continued
on page 4



Jeffrey Campbell



Jeffrey Hall



Ji Sun Lee

**AMERICAN GUILD
OF ORGANISTS**

**SOUTHERN ARIZONA
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public document.



The CYPHER

Stardust (Dusty) Johnson, *Editor* (skj5@cox.net)

**Submission Deadlines for the 2025-2026 season
are the 15th of each month.**

NOTE: Chapter members are invited to submit program
information for inclusion in THE CYPHER. We want to include your
programs!

Please send program descriptions, along with pertinent
information—title, date, location, time, brief description, cost, and
photos—to Dusty Johnson, *CYPHER* editor. The information will
appear in the print edition as well as in the online edition. Material
may be edited as needed.

Please email information to

Dusty Johnson, editor, at skj5@cox.net by the 15th of the month.
You may also send it via U.S. mail.

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A

*as in an organ from one blast of wind
To many a row of pipes the soundboard breathes.*

Milton—*Paradise Lost*. Bk. I. L. 708.

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Message from the dean...

Dear Colleagues,

An absolutely delightful season of organ events has begun. For many of these events we need to congratulate our Programs Committee... Bravo! The service that was our opening general meeting of the year was full of marvelous music (I for one immediately ordered the collection from which Ji-Sun's piece came, and plan to use it as my Postlude soon, as well as other pieces from the collection even as soon as this coming Sunday). As I write this, I am still looking forward to the SAAGO Showcase recital, but the two events this weekend, David Gay's presentation and Guy Whatley's recital at St. Alban's, were really inspiring, each in their own way, and I don't use the word 'inspiring' lightly.

First, David's presentation about Organs in the Gadsden Purchase was encouraging in perhaps unexpected ways. Learning about the long history of pipe organs here in Southern Arizona made me feel proud to be part of a community of musicians who are part of a legacy that stretches back into the nineteenth century, and beyond. The pictures and stories from the past few years also encouraged me to think that the legacy continues, and not only will a variety of excellent instruments remain, and slowly proliferate, in the region, but that there will continue to be musicians both native and transplanted that will carry this musical legacy forward. The number of world renowned organists how have performed in Tucson also reminds me that we are not in some sort of remote backwater, but rather fully a part of the world's cultural life for well over a century.

Guy Whatley's recital at St. Alban's on October 12th was a case in point. Both the instrument and his

choice of repertoire highlighted how much we can celebrate being part of a living legacy with deep roots. Perhaps I am not alone if I confess that during some performances either my mind starts to wander, or worse, especially after a long day, the performance may become soporific (how often can one use that word?!). But Dr. Whatley's performance and programming had the opposite effect! In his performance, the rhythmic flow and subtle rhythmic inflections, going well beyond mere articulations, are so compelling that the it is almost impossible to drift off... instead the listener is carried along at every moment. I also appreciate the way his commentary between pieces is insightful without ever seeming pedantic; his comments about Bach's 'Fantasy and Fugue in G minor' from 1720 profoundly deepened my appreciation of the work. His performance and commentary also reminded me that J. S. Bach's music is almost always not just musically challenging, but profoundly communicative both emotionally and spiritually.

The two events I've been writing about were both on the same weekend, and yet there are many future performances on the calendar as well. I'm trying to adopt a new strategy of attending at least one performance a week whether it's an organ recital, or some other professional level event such as the Tucson Symphony Orchestra, or a performance at the University of Arizona, or at Pima Community College. So hopefully we will be running into one another frequently this season. See you soon, at the SAAGO Showcase...

Raymond T. Ryder, Dean



Chapter and Member Programs

Showcase Bios *continued*

Jeff Hall *continued*: from Penn State. He studied organ in high school and in graduate school as a welcome change of pace from all the astronomy, and he served as assistant organist at The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany throughout his time in Flagstaff. He has also enjoyed using his home studio over the years to create synthesizer realizations of his original ragtime as well as of works ranging from Bach's *Art of Fugue* to Terry Riley's *In C*. He presently serves as a tenor in the Choir of Saint Philip's in the Hills.

Ji Sun Lee, a South Korean born pianist/ organist, and church musician, has performed in South Korea, United States, Brazil, Germany, and Italy. She has won top prizes in several competitions, including first prizes in the U A President's Concerto Competition and the Contemporary Music Society Competition at ASU. She has performed as guest artist at the New American Piano Series, ASU, and also in Brazil including Villa Lobos Institute-Uni Rio, performing and giving master classes. Lee holds degrees from Presbyterian College, S. Korea, ASU, and the U of A. She studied organ with Pamela Decker, Robert Clark, and So-In Park, and piano at the UA with Nicholas Zumbro. Dr. Lee has taught at Cochise College, the U of A, Biola University, and Azusa Pacific University, and served as a church musician in S. Korea and the US. She serves as Director of Music at St. Alban's Episcopal Church.

A Candlelight Concert for All Saints Day: Music of Remembrance and Hope

Saturday, Nov. 1, 6:30 p.m.
Chapel, Trinity Presbyterian Church
400 E. University Blvd. Tucson
Free

This free program of meditative and peaceful music will be presented by Lynn Moser (piano and organ), Christine Harper (flute), soloists from the Trinity Choir, and handbell players from the Trinity Ringers. Join us in person or online at trinitytucson.org/watch-live & facebook.com/tpctucson. You can also watch on the BoxCast app, on Roku TV, Apple TV & Fire TV.



Faythe, Freese, Organ Catalina Organ Festival

Friday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.
Catalina United Methodist Church
\$10 Student, \$25 Seniors, \$30 under 60

Dr. Faythe Freese, Professor Emeritus of Organ at the University of Alabama School of Music, is in demand as a recitalist. She has been a featured performer and lecturer at National and Regional American Guild of Organists Conventions and the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians Biennial Convention. Dr. Freese's performances have been hailed as "powerful ...masterful... impressive ... brilliant." Dr. Freese has held faculty positions at Indiana University, Concordia University in Austin, University of North Dakota-Williston, and Andrew College and she was a Fulbright scholar as well.



SAAGO—Epiphany Party

Saturday, Jan. 3, 1 p.m.
The Highlands Community Clubhouse
332 W. Matterhorn, Oro Valley

Join us once again for this favorite holiday event which will be held after Christmas, celebrating close to Epiphany. The Kuhlmanns have once again very kindly invited us to celebrate at The Highland Community Clubhouse in Oro Valley. More details next month.

Harris Organ, Chapel, Trinity Presbyterian Church



Chapter and Member Programs *continued*

SAAGO—Pedals, Pipes and Pizza

Saturday, January 17, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
St. Michael All Angels Episcopal Church
602 N Wilmot Rd.
Free. Registration Required

SAAGO will once again host its popular *Pedals, Pipes and Pizza* for youth and children. All participants get to play the organ and also explore the inner workings of the instrument. They also receive individual instruction on one of Tucson's finest instruments, a pizza lunch and perform in a closing program. Part of the program includes a performance of "Rex, the King of Instruments." Additional information and a registration form will be available in a future edition of THE CYPHER and on the website (www.saago.org).


SAAGO—Phoenix Organ Crawl

Saturday, Feb. 7, meet at 8 a.m. to carpool
Various instruments

Mark your calendars now for this for this super opportunity to join your colleagues in visiting significant Phoenix instruments, the Music Instrument Museum (MIM) and Organ Stop Pizza for a bite to eat while enjoying one of the amazing organists perform on the Mighty Wurlitzer. More details to follow.

A little fun SAAGO history from the January 1956 edition of the *Diapason*. Dave McDowell (local organ builder), Andy Buchhauser (UA School of Music director), Dorothy Callahan (organist & choir director, Northminster), Mrs. Grimes (Onnalee and husband Paul, directors of music at Broadway Christian Church for 33 years). The Hammond organ shop??? Who knows???

TUCSON CHAPTER—Our November meeting was held at the Hammond organ shop. After a short business meeting conducted by David McDowell, in the absence of Dean Andrew Buchhauser, our program chairman, Mrs. Dorothy Callahan, introduced a very interesting evening of organ music and vocal solos. Mrs. Paul Grimes sang three unusual numbers to be used at Christmas and Lenten services; Henry Dahms' vocal solos were especially suitable for weddings; Mrs. Henry Dahms accompanied both of the soloists. Modern anthems suitable for a variety of services were shown to us by Mrs. Dorothy Callahan. A lovely suite of Christmas organ music was played by Mrs. Helen Summers. After our program refreshments were served from a very attractive tea table by Andrew Baker of the Maestro Music Shop.—Mrs. WALTER FLEMING, Publicity Chairman.



Catalina Organ Festival

2025-2026 Season



Faythe Freese

Friday, November 14, 2025 - 7:00 PM

Hailed as "powerful, masterful, and brilliant," internationally acclaimed organist Dr. Faythe Freese is the only American woman to record on the legendary Paris organ of Olivier Messiaen. Her performances have thrilled audiences around the world, and her artistry promises an unforgettable evening, one you won't want to miss!

Catalina United Methodist Church
2700 E Speedway Blvd, Tucson AZ

\$10 Student
\$25 Seniors
\$30 under 60



VISIT WWW.CATALINAMETHODIST.ORG/ORGAN-FESTIVAL/ FOR INFO AND TICKETS!

Chaplain's Reflection



As the weather grows cooler and the darkness of the night increases, the fear and anxiety of life seem to be reflected in the season - we become more aware of the shortness and uncertainty of human life. One response to this is the observance of All Saints' Day, and in some traditions All Souls' Day or the

Día de los Muertos - in which we remember those we have loved and lost, and are reminded of our own mortality. Another response is the tradition of Thanksgiving Day - whether we are giving thanks for the completion of the fall harvest, or in more recent times, for whatever abundance our life affords us. Remembrance and gratitude are both central elements of the life of faith. Each of these fall times has a great tradition of music around it - hymns such as "For All the Saints," or for a "deeper cut," a favorite of mine, "Let saints on earth in concert sing" by Charles Wesley. And at Thanksgiving, favorites like "Come, ye thankful people, come." Whether these are familiar in your churches or not, please know of my prayers for your ministry of music in this season of increasing outward darkness, as we move toward the return of light starting at Christmas.

The Rev. Cn. David Benedict Hedges, BSG
Rector, St. Michael and All Angels Church

Roy Johnson Memorial Scholarship

Students may apply for a scholarship!

Established by the Southern Arizona Chapter of the AGO in memory of Professor Roy Andrew Johnson, the scholarship is available to assist in funding organ study as follows:



- ♦ lessons at any level through collegiate;
- ♦ introductory organ lessons for pianists;
- ♦ Registration fees for an educational event, including a Pipe Organ Encounter (POE);
- ♦ for collegiate level students, registration fees for regional and national conventions of the AGO.
- ♦ for collegiate level students, full membership in the American Guild of Organists, Southern Arizona Chapter.

Scholarship awards for organ study will range from \$350 to \$1500. For educational events, the scholarship will cover the cost of registration. Application forms are online at www.saago.org.



Recap—Organs of the Gadsden Purchase



David Gay

On Saturday, October 11, David Gay and Stan Kartchner presented an excellent program at Northminster Presbyterian Church. Originally featured at the Chapter's 2013 Opening Program when David discussed "Organs of Southern Arizona," the newly revised program included additional information on the history of pipe organs in the Gadsden Purchase. It was accompanied with historic pictures, musical examples, and detailed descriptions of the more than eighty pipe organs installed or rebuilt in Tucson, Bisbee, Casa Grande, Douglas, Green Valley, Morenci, Sierra Vista, Somerton, and Yuma from 1889 to 2019.



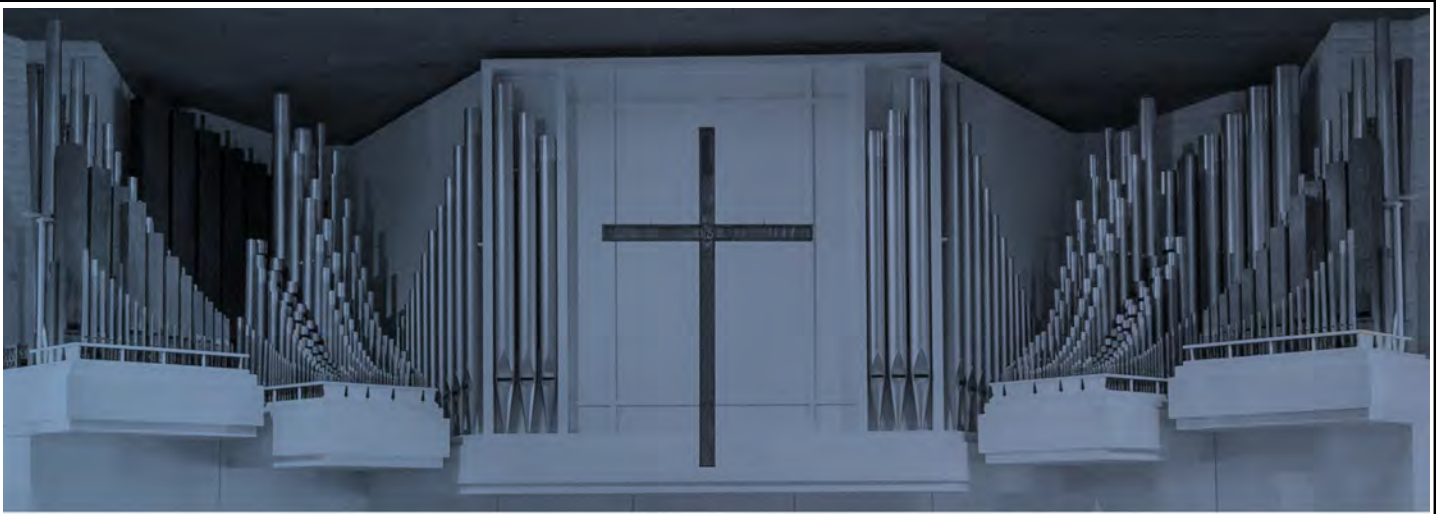
Stan Kartchner

The first pipe organ, a 2-manual 9-rank Pilcher made in Louisville, KY, was transported to Tucson in 1889 by the recently opened Southern Pacific Railroad and installed at Grace Episcopal Church, then located on Jackson St. and Stone. The oldest pipe organ in Southern Arizona still in use is the 1903 Murray-Harris 2-manual 15-rank pipe organ in Covenant Presbyterian Church in Bisbee. David also noted the twenty-nine instruments located in Tucson, Bisbee, Casa Grande, and Sierra Vista which were either installed or rebuilt by local pipe organ builder David McDowell between 1947 and 1991.

The program ended with enthusiastic applause. Members then enjoyed social time and a delicious luncheon prepared by Dee Schultz.

Many thanks to David, Stan & Dee!!

—David Horr



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2025-26 SAAGO & Member Programs

SAAGO—Opening Service, Catered Dinner, Business Meeting
 Sunday, Sept. 14, 3 p.m.
 Christ Church United Methodist

Pamela Decker, Organ
Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series
 Sunday, Sept. 28, 3 p.m.
 Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music

St. Philip's Rising Stars Duo Recital
 Saturday, Oct. 4, 3 p.m.
 Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

SAAGO—Organs of the Gadsden Purchase
 Saturday, Oct. 11, 10 a.m.
 Northminster Presbyterian Church

Community Hymn Sing
 Sunday, Oct. 12, 2 p.m.
 St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church
 Sierra Vista, AZ

Guy Whatley, Organ
 Sunday, Oct. 12, 3 p.m.
 St. Alban's Episcopal Church

Candlelight Concert for All Saints Day
 Saturday, Nov. 1, 6:30 p.m.
 Chapel, Trinity Presbyterian Church

All Saints Sunday Performance of
St. Philip's *Missa Brevis*, Ēriks Ešenvalds
 Sunday, Nov. 2, 10 a.m.
 Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

SAAGO—Annual Showcase Recital
 Friday, Nov. 7, 7 p.m.
 Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

Faythe, Freese, Organ
Catalina Organ Festival
 Friday, Nov. 14, 7 p.m.
 Catalina United Methodist Church

Service of Lessons & Carols
 Sunday, Dec. 21, 4:30 p.m.
 St. Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

SAAGO—Epiphany Party
 Saturday, Jan. 3, 1 p.m.
 The Highlands Clubhouse
 332 W. Matterhorn, Oro Valley

SAAGO—Pedals, Pipes and Pizza
 Saturday, Jan. 17, 10 a.m.
 St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church

SAAGO—Phoenix Organ Crawl & visit to the MIM
 Saturday, Feb. 7, 8 a.m. carpool
 Various instruments

Nathaniel Gumbs, Organ
Catalina Organ Festival
 Friday, Feb. 20, 7 p.m.
 Catalina United Methodist Church

St. Philip's Sings:
Mass in B Minor, J. S. Bach
 Saturday, Feb. 21, 4 p.m.
 Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

Kimberly Marshall, Organ
Roy Johnson Memorial Organ Series
 Sunday, Feb. 22, 3 p.m.
 Holsclaw Hall, UA School of Music

Steinway Series: Bernadette Harvey, Piano
 Saturday, Mar. 21, 4 p.m.
 Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

SAAGO—Bachathon SAAGO Members' Recital
 Sunday, Mar. 22, 3 p.m.
 St. Alban's Episcopal Church

SAAGO—How the West Was Won, Valerie Harris
 Saturday, Apr. 18, 10 a.m.
 St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

Dong-ill Shin, Organ
Catalina Organ Festival
 Monday, Apr. 27, 7 p.m.

SAAGO—Look, Ma, No Hands?, Using ForScore
Valerie Harris
 Saturday, May 9, 10 a.m.
 Catalina United Methodist Church

Youth of St. Philip's Fundraising Concert
 Saturday, May 9, 7 p.m.
 Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church

SAAGO—Summer Social, Potluck & Business Meeting
 Sunday, June 7, 4 p.m.
 Colonia Verde Clubhouse





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November 21-23, 2025

Give Me Your Tired

SHAW *To the Hands*
LAURIDSEN *Lux Aeterna*
Stephen Paulus Emerging
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December 11-14, 2025

Lessons & Carols by Candlelight An American Christmas

December 17, 2025 Holiday Special

January 16-18, 2026

Music of the Pioneers

COPLAND *Old American Songs*
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February 27-March 1, 2026

I Dream a World

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BOYER *Dreaming a World*

April 17-19, 2026

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Johnson Cano

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Scheidt, von Weber



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Dec. 4

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