



# The Organizer

The Atlanta Chapter of the American Guild of Organists

[www.agoatlanta.org](http://www.agoatlanta.org)

## June/Summer 2020

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*The Organizer*, the official bulletin of the Atlanta Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, is published monthly, September through June. All material for publication must reach the Editor by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month preceding the date of issue (e.g., November 15 for the December issue). This should be typewritten and emailed. *The Organizer* reserves the right to make editorial changes and to shorten articles to fit space limitations. Articles in *The Organizer* reflect the views of the writers and not necessarily those of the Guild.

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- Full page: \$120

## Election Results

We are delighted to announce the results of the 2020 Atlanta Chapter AGO Election:

Bill Callaway and Mary Ruth Laverty Solem have been elected to serve as the Class of 2023 on the Executive Committee of the chapter board.

We are also grateful to David Barber, chapter registrar (and former Dean), for setting up and running the electronic portion of the election. We also thank Don Land, chair of the Nominating Committee, who received and tallied the election results. Chapter participation in this year's election was higher than normal. We think that the electronic election made it possible for more members to vote (a likely indication of future election methods, although we will continue to offer paper ballots to anyone who needs them).

Three other members will join the board by appointment: Cliff Frierson will serve as the next Sub-Dean, Pamela Radford will serve as Secretary, and Jeff Daniel has agreed to fill the remaining year of Alvin Blount's term.

All new board members will join the new Dean, Peter Waggoner, as officers beginning July 1, 2020.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the election. Your participation was vital to the success of this important process for our chapter.

We also thank all board members who are rotating off the board for their recent years of service: Alvin Blount, Joyce Johnson, Jens Korndörfer, Keith Williamson, and Jack Mitchener. We also thank all members of the chapter board for their willingness to serve. They represent everyone in the chapter and take their roles very seriously.

# From the Dean

---

Dear Friends,

It is with mixed emotions that I write my final letter to you as Dean. I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to serve you over the past two years, but I am delighted to pass the gavel over to Peter Waggoner, your new Dean as of July 1. I will miss my work as Dean including interaction with the board and all of you. It has been a privilege to be a part of the leadership team of this chapter and I am incredibly enthusiastic about the future of our guild. I feel confident our new officers will lead this organization extremely well.

Your new Dean, Peter Waggoner, will be outstanding in every way. He has a positive attitude and is ready to do all he can to promote and promulgate the great spirit and true importance of the AGO. Joining Peter will be a splendid board including members of the Executive Committee, Bill Callaway and Mary Ruth Lavery Solem (Class of 2023); Vicki Fey and Justin Maxey (Class of 2022); and Jeff Daniel and Tim Young (Class of 2021). In addition, I am very pleased to announce that our new Sub-Dean will be Cliff Frierson, and our slate of officers includes Charlene Ponder Wall (Treasurer), Nancy Dickson (Assistant Treasurer), David Barber (Registrar), Pamela Radford (Secretary), Timothy Gunter (Newsletter Editor), The Rev. Dr. John Byers (Chaplain), and Lamar Savage (Auditor).

I should like to express sincere appreciation to our members who are rotating off of the board. Joyce Johnson and Jens Korndörfer have served faithfully for three years as members of the Executive Committee (Class of 2020), and Alvin Blount has served two years (Class of 2021). Alvin is relocating to Knoxville, TN, and we all wish him well and Godspeed. Thank you to Joyce, Jens, and Alvin for your dedication to the AGO! Our secretary for the past several years, Keith Williamson, is also rotating off of the board. Thank you to Keith for all you have done for our chapter.

For the first time we held an electronic election to vote for our new board members. Please join me in offering sincere gratitude to David Barber, our chapter registrar (and former Dean), who set up everything with ElectionRunner. As Dean, I am not allowed to be involved in the election in any way, so I was particularly grateful to David who spent a great deal of time making sure the election was successful. I also want to thank Don Land, chair of the nominating committee, who received and tallied the election results. Don reports that participation in the election was higher than normal. The electronic election made it possible for more of you to vote, so I expect this to be our new normal. That said, we will continue to offer paper ballots to anyone who needs them. I want to extend my deepest and heartfelt gratitude to all members of the chapter board for their willingness to serve. They represent all of you and take their roles very seriously. Please join me in offering our appreciation to all of them.

Longtime members of this chapter will remember a long-time chapter member and former Dean Maxine Pettit Pilcher Harris. We received a letter from Maxine's daughter along with her mother's obituary. Maxine is remembered fondly as a dedicated and faithful member of this chapter. She will be greatly missed. Her full obituary is found in this issue of *The Organizer*.

We live in precarious times. The COVID-19 crisis has caused great anxiety and angst for all of us. We must continue to take it seriously and follow all guidelines in order to prevent and eventually eradicate this destructive disease. In addition, the protests of late should reawaken within us the ongoing reality of discrimination in our midst. People of color in our country have suffered too long under systemic racism and it's time for all of us to respond. The AGO has championed anti-discrimination policies for many years, but we must not rest on our laurels.

As we reflect on the state of affairs in our world, I urge you to ponder these words from the *Book of Common Prayer*:

*Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart [and especially the hearts of the people of this land], that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that, our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

So many of us have encountered countless challenges in recent months. We face the next year with uncertainty, but it is my hope that we will all see positive change in our own lives and the lives of others.

The AGO is our community and I encourage you to continue to support this vital effort to promote great organ and choral music.

I wish you all well and hope you have a restful and restorative summer.

Best wishes,  
Jack Mitchener  
Dean, AGO Atlanta

# From the Sub-Dean

Dear Friends:

As we approach the start of a new season for our chapter, our executive committee is working to creatively meet the needs of our members during the ongoing pandemic. In terms of programming, we are planning events that will be interesting and informative both in person, whenever possible, and virtually, if necessary. We are also developing a grant program to assist members who have been financially impacted by COVID-19. More details will follow soon.

I want to thank our outgoing dean, Jack, for his leadership over the past two years, and our executive committee members for all the great work they have done. I also want to welcome our new sub-dean, Cliff Frierson, and secretary, Pamela Radford, and board members Ruth Laverty Solem, Bill Callaway, and Jeff Daniel. We have an exciting year ahead of us with many new opportunities to connect as a chapter during these challenging times.

Peter Waggoner  
Sub-Dean



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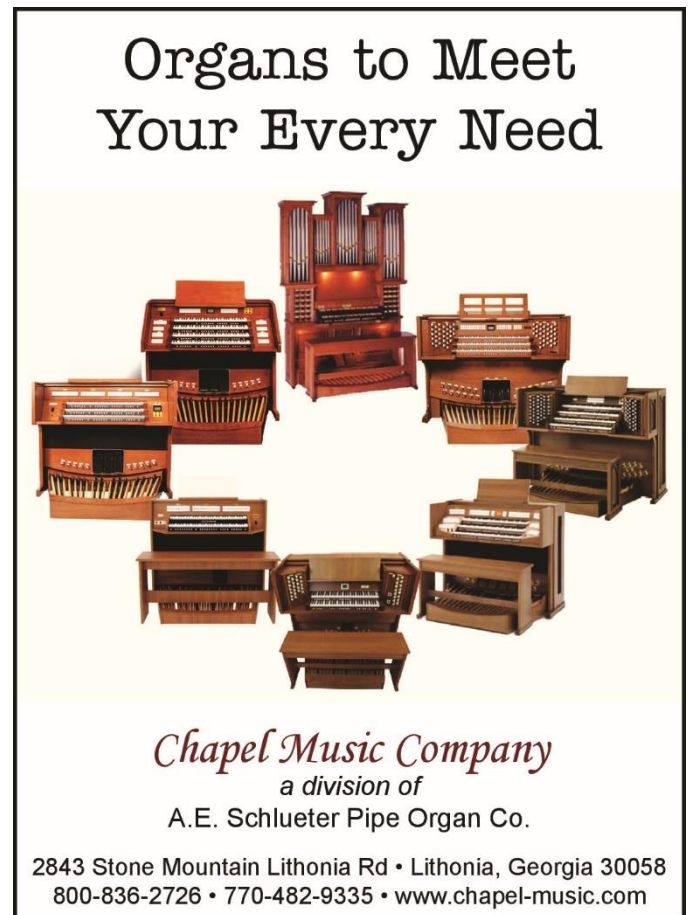
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# AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS 2020 NATIONAL CONVENTION

July 6–10, 2020 | ATLANTA, GA

[www.agoatlanta2020.com](http://www.agoatlanta2020.com)

The AGO National Council, the Committee for Conventions, and the Convention Steering Committee for the Atlanta Chapter of the American Guild of Organists regret to announce the cancellation of the AGO 2020 National Convention scheduled for July 6-10 this summer. The uncertainties surrounding the spread of the coronavirus required us to take this action. We felt that we could not adequately guarantee the health and well-being of our convention attendees, performers, presenters, exhibitors, worship leaders, and all others who would have been involved in the convention. We are deeply saddened at having to make this very difficult decision, but we feel it is in the best interest of all AGO members, their families, friends, and colleagues.

***We want to express our sincerest appreciation to the Steering Committee  
Chairs and their Committee members for all their work 2015–2020.***

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***We are extremely grateful for the following performers, composers, workshop presenters, worship leaders, and exhibitors who were to present during the convention:***

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David York

We believe this information to be correct as of May 12, 2020. We deeply apologize if your name is missing or misspelled. For questions, please email [infoago2020atl@gmail.com](mailto:infoago2020atl@gmail.com)

# Black Lives Matter

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Dear Friends,

The American Guild of Organists recognizes and affirms that Black Lives Matter. We call upon every chapter and all of our members to speak out against racial bias and take action to make the world a better, safer, and more secure place for the members of the Black community.

Now is the time for us to search our souls for ways to be more caring, to be better brothers and sisters to our Black colleagues, and to demonstrate our unwavering support for their professional advancement and success.

The tragic murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis on May 25, the equally senseless killing of Rayshard Brooks in Atlanta on June 12, and the death and injury of so many others are heartbreaking and inexcusable. We extend our condolences to their families and friends, and we stand in solidarity with the countless thousands of people around the world who have marched to protest systemic racism against the African-American community.

It is our turn to step up to the challenge. We must listen to diverse voices in crafting solutions to our problems. We must reach out to find new partners to help us chart the best path forward. We must engage.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Bedford, AAGO, ChM  
President  
American Guild of Organists

# In Memoriam

## Frances Maxine Pettit Harris, MM, AAGO



Frances Maxine Pettit Harris, 88, of Savannah, the wife of Richard J. (Dick) Harris, Sr., died May 24, 2020, at Memorial Medical University Hospital in Savannah, GA, from COVID-19 complicated by advanced Alzheimer's Disease.

Maxine lived an illustrious, creative and intellectual life filled with her passions for music and art, human rights, politics, motherhood, gardening and traveling. As a classical pianist, her fingers brought to life the likes of Beethoven, Chopin, and Mozart for audiences far and wide. Those same fingers felt equally at home crafting art and coaxing beauty and life out of the earth, in her love of camellias, trees, and all forms of flora.

Born on October 23, 1931, Maxine was the only child of the late Frank Bradley Pettit and Lorris Dean Rash Pettit of West Monroe, LA. Piano lessons began at eight years of age and during high school she was the pianist for the First Baptist Church of West Monroe until she left to attend Louisiana State University. At LSU she earned a Bachelor's and Master of Music degrees, and was a member of Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society and Sigma Alpha Iota (SAI) national music fraternity for women. With an early interest in governance, she represented her senior class in the LSU Student Senate.

Following graduation, Maxine moved to Atlanta with her first husband, the late James B. Pilcher, where they raised three children. She taught piano for 25 years and was recognized for utilizing braille music notation for her visually impaired students. She was the church organist for 30 years at Mt. Vernon Baptist Church and then at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Marietta. Maxine helped locate and install a 1929 Holtkamp pipe organ at Holy Trinity, which was removed from a church in Springfield, MO. Inspired by the beauty of this organ, she successfully completed the AAGO examinations of the American Guild of Organists (AGO). As a member of AGO's Atlanta chapter she organized and chaired its first professional concerns committee, encouraging churches to adequately compensate their musicians,

In 1990 she married Savannah attorney Dick Harris and retired to Savannah, joining his church, White Bluff United Methodist, where they enjoyed many years singing in the choir together. Maxine and Dick loved to travel in the US and abroad, including trips to China, Vietnam, Japan, India—and Paris, Maxine's favorite destination. Over the years she continued to serve as an interim church organist in Savannah, playing for many local churches including the Lutheran Church of the Ascension, and First Presbyterian.

Maxine surrounded her life with beauty, humor and a sense of style, and she also believed in the power of ideas. Her strong social and political beliefs were reflected in her tireless advocacy for civil rights, gender equality, equal pay and a woman's right to choose. She expressed these views in lobbying efforts, and writing legislative reports and numerous Letters to the Editor which appeared on the Opinion page of the *Savannah Morning News*. In 2007, she was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Democratic Party of Georgia, reflecting her longstanding commitment to local and state politics, including her work with Get Out the Vote campaigns, the League of Women Voters, and her service on the Chatham County Democratic Executive Committee.

Maxine is survived by Dick, her daughters Lydia Dean Pilcher (Mark Friedberg) and Martha Claire Pilcher (Shera Mohammed); her only son Jay Bradley Pilcher (Linda Blair); stepdaughter Susan Reyes (Vance), stepson Richard Harris, Jr. (Courtney); granddaughters Lucy Friedberg and Jasmine Mohammed; grandsons Oakley Friedberg, Taj Mohammed and Saif Mohammed; step grandsons Joseph Reyes and Michael Reyes; and step granddaughters Mattie Harris and Elisabeth Harris.

A private graveside service was held in the Greenwich Cemetery on Wednesday, May 27. The family looks forward to seeing extended family and friends for a Celebration of Life service at the church, at a time in the future to be determined when larger groups are able to gather safely.

Remembrances: Alzheimer's' Association Georgia Chapter, 41 Perimeter Center East, Suite 550, Atlanta, GA 30346; White Bluff United Methodist Church, 11911 White Bluff Road, Savannah GA 31419; and Telfair Museums, PO Box 10081, Savannah, GA 31412.



# Positions Available

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Complete details on these and other positions may be found at the chapter's website: [www.agoatlanta.org](http://www.agoatlanta.org) then click on "employment."

## Music Director/Keyboardist

**Central Congregational United Church of Christ**, Atlanta, seeks a part-time organist/pianist. Send resumes to [keyboardposition@central-ucc.org](mailto:keyboardposition@central-ucc.org).

**Cross of Life Lutheran Church**, Atlanta, seeks an interim organist. Contact [pastorterri@crossoflifelutheran.org](mailto:pastorterri@crossoflifelutheran.org) for information.

**Peachtree Road Lutheran Church**, Atlanta, seeks a Director of Music Ministries. Send resume to: [peachtreerd@earthlink.net](mailto:peachtreerd@earthlink.net).

**Grace-Calvary Episcopal Church**, Clarkesville, seeks a part-time organist. Send resumes to [gcalvary@windstream.net](mailto:gcalvary@windstream.net).

**First United Methodist Church**, Dalton, seeks an organist/pianist. Send resume to [daltonfumcmusic@gmail.com](mailto:daltonfumcmusic@gmail.com).

**Eastminster Presbyterian Church**, Marietta, seeks an organist/pianist. Send resume to [jamie.dick@epres.org](mailto:jamie.dick@epres.org).

**Mountain View United Methodist Church**, Marietta, seeks a part-time organist/pianist. Send resume to [khginc@bellsouth.net](mailto:khginc@bellsouth.net).

**Pilgrimage United Church of Christ**, Marietta, seeks a pianist. Send resume to [pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com](mailto:pilgrimageuccworship@gmail.com).

**Newnan Presbyterian Church** seeks a Director of Music. Email [lallagentry@gmail.com](mailto:lallagentry@gmail.com) for information.

**St. George Catholic Church**, Newnan, seeks a Director of Music/Organist. Send resume to [mcormier@stgeorgenewnan.org](mailto:mcormier@stgeorgenewnan.org).

**Christ Church Episcopal**, Norcross, seeks a part-time organist. Send resume to [office@ccnorcross.org](mailto:office@ccnorcross.org).

**Roswell Presbyterian Church** seeks a part-time organist. Email resume to [organistsearch@roswellpres.org](mailto:organistsearch@roswellpres.org).

**Rivercliff Lutheran Church**, Sandy Springs, seeks a part-time choir director. Mail resume to 8750 Roswell Road, Sandy Springs, GA 30350.

**Trinity Presbyterian Church**, Montgomery, AL, seeks a full-time Assistant Director of Music & Organist. Send resumes to [talexander@trinitypca.org](mailto:talexander@trinitypca.org).

**Saxe Gotha Presbyterian Church**, Lexington, SC, seeks a part-time Organist/Music Associate. For more information, contact Hal McIntosh at [hmcintosh@saxegotha.org](mailto:hmcintosh@saxegotha.org), 803-359-7770.

## Singers

**Covenant Presbyterian Church**, Atlanta, seeks an alto staff singer. To schedule an audition, contact Jeffrey McIntyre at 404-805-4816 or [jdmatl@aol.com](mailto:jdmatl@aol.com).

**First United Methodist Church**, Atlanta, seeks a tenor staff singer. For an audition, contact Christopher Bryant at [Christopher@atlantafirstumc.org](mailto:Christopher@atlantafirstumc.org).

**First Presbyterian Church**, Cartersville, seeks a bass or baritone staff singer. To arrange an audition, contact [pam@cartersvillepres.org](mailto:pam@cartersvillepres.org).



# The Organizer

Atlanta Chapter A.G.O.  
Timothy Gunter, *newsletter editor*  
2744 Peachtree Rd. NW  
Atlanta, GA 30305

## Chapter Officers 2019-2020

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Jack Mitchener, DMA, *Dean*  
Peter Waggoner, *Sub-Dean*  
Charlene Ponder Wall, *Treasurer*  
Nancy Dickson, *Assistant Treasurer*  
David Barber, EdD, *Registrar*  
Keith Williamson, *Secretary*  
Timothy Gunter, *Newsletter Editor*  
The Reverend Dr. John Beyers, *Chaplain*  
Lamar Savage, *Auditor*

*Class of '20*  
Joyce Johnson, DMus, AAGO  
Jens Korndörfer, DM

*Class of '21*  
Alvin Blount  
Tim Young

*Class of '22*  
Vicki Fey  
Justin Maxey

## Chapter Officers 2020-2021

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Peter Waggoner, *Dean*  
Cliff Frierson, *Sub-Dean*  
Charlene Ponder Wall, *Treasurer*  
Nancy Dickson, *Assistant Treasurer*  
David Barber, EdD, *Registrar*  
Pamela Radford, *Secretary*  
Timothy Gunter, *Newsletter Editor*  
The Reverend Dr. John Beyers, *Chaplain*  
Lamar Savage, *Auditor*

*Class of '21*  
Jeff Daniel  
Tim Young

*Class of '22*  
Vicki Fey  
Justin Maxey

*Class of '23*  
Bill Callaway  
Mary Ruth Lavery Solem