

AAM 2022 SLATE OF CANDIDATES

For Vice President

The Vice President will serve a 1-year term, followed by a 2-year term as President, and then a 1-year term as immediate Past President.



Sharon Downey will be retiring as Canon Musician at the Cathedral of St Paul in Erie, Pennsylvania, in June after serving 31 years in that position. She has overseen a vibrant music program, including the development of a strong chorister program. Her Cathedral Choir has served residencies at Canterbury Cathedral, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, and Coventry Cathedral, and has sung at the American Cathedral in Paris,

Chichester Cathedral, and Washington National Cathedral. She is currently directing the new Youth Chorale of the Erie Philharmonic and will help develop a comprehensive Vocal Academy for young singers in the region. She serves as Treasurer on the Board of the Harry T. Burleigh Legacy Alliance in Erie and is dedicated to performing the music of Burleigh, having recorded a CD of Burleigh spirituals, *Hold On! Keep Your Hand on the Plow*, in 2017. She has been a member of AAM since 1992 and has served on the Board as Director-at-Large and Secretary and is currently serving on the Lay Professional Advocacy Committee.

“As I began to contemplate what I might do once I was no longer working as a full-time church musician, I received the invitation to consider standing for election for Vice President of AAM. I can think of no better way to begin retirement than to work closely with colleagues who have been a tremendous source of knowledge, inspiration and support to me throughout my career. I am humbled to be considered as we continue to explore the ‘what if’ questions that Sonya has brought to us to set the future course for our Association. I would be honored to be a part of the conversations as we ‘ponder anew’ the role of AAM and the vocation to which we have been called.”



Kyle Ritter has served as Canon for Music at The Cathedral of All Souls in Asheville, North Carolina, since 2002. Prior to his appointment at All Souls, Mr. Ritter was Minister of Music at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in Arlington, Virginia, a position he held from 1993–2002. He earned both Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Organ and Church Music from Indiana University, where he was a student of Robert Rayfield and Marilyn Keiser.

Mr. Ritter is a past Regional Officer and Placement Advisor for the Association of Anglican Musicians (AAM), and served for several years on the Editorial Board for the AAM Journal. He taught in the Episcopal Dioceses of Washington and Virginia for the Leadership Program for Musicians (LPM), and served as chair of the National Board. He has also served the American Guild of Organists in various chapters as Dean and Treasurer, as well as State Convener for North Carolina.

“It is an enormous honor for me to be invited to run for Vice President. Of the professional organizations that support my work in church music, I count AAM as the most important, and through the years have sought to serve its mission and ministry in any way I could. I attended my first conference in Chicago in 1989, and I recall the immediate sense of true collegiality and mentorship I felt, as well as the close friendships I made that remain to this day. These are the gifts that AAM has to offer the Episcopal Church, along with advocating for and supporting all of those who are called to serve as musicians in the Church. I am interested in the ways in which AAM can continue to increase the visibility of the church music profession as one that helps to build healthy worshipping communities, advocate for equity in employment practices for lay workers, and further the work of fostering positive clergy/musician relationships.”

For **Director-at-Large** (2-year term)



Margaret “Meg” Harper is Associate Director of Music and Organist at Saint Michael and All Angels in Dallas, TX, one of the nation’s largest Episcopal parishes. There, she helps oversee a thriving and diverse music department, including developing a new chorister program that’s currently in its fourth year. She assists in all areas of programming but has particular focus on education, and has created a series of music history courses for music lovers in the congregation.

Previously, Meg served as Director of Music and Liturgy at St. John’s Episcopal Church in Portsmouth, NH. She was the founding Director of The Choir School at St. John’s, an after-school music program aimed at low-income youth. In addition, Margaret has also served as Artist Faculty in Organ at the University of Southern Maine, on the faculty of the Young Organist Collaborative, and as a secondary instructor of organ at the Eastman School of Music. As a solo artist, she has performed in the U.S., Europe, and Asia and is on the roster of the Concert Artist Collaborative.

Meg holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree and a Performer’s Certificate from the Eastman School of Music. She currently serves as Co-Chair of the 2023 AAM Conference in Dallas as well as on the PCDC. She is also founding Co-Course Manager of the RSCM Dallas Boys Course.

“Thank you for the honor of standing for election for the role of Director-at-Large. The Association of Anglican Musicians is an organization that means a lot to me: it has given me meaningful friendships, mentors to guide me, support in difficult professional situations, and inspiration through its conferences and the Journal. I am happy for the opportunity to use my skills to further this organization, and to help it be for others what it has been for me.”



Zach Hemenway is Director of Music at Epiphany Parish in Seattle, WA, a post he has held since July 2018. At Epiphany, Zach serves as primary organist and oversees a large choral program that provides music for four weekly choral services, including twice weekly choral evensong. Prior to his appointment at Epiphany, he was Director of Music at Saint Paul’s Church, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia, for ten years, where he founded an RSCM-based chorister program.

Zach holds degrees in organ performance from the Eastman School of Music as a student of David Higgs, and the Institute for Sacred Music at Yale University as a student of Thomas Murray. Zach’s passion for church music lies in hymn playing, liturgical improvisation, and helping singers of all levels achieve excellence.

“AAM has provided me with so much to be grateful for over the course of my life in Anglican Church music. I have learned and grown as a result of attending conferences, conversing with colleagues, reading the journal, and relying on our close community for advice, support, and encouragement. In reflecting on all AAM has given me, I would be honored to give back by standing for election, and serving as Director at Large. The work of AAM is of key importance for the future of our profession, and I would happily lend my energy to that mission.”