



# Newsletter

American Guild of Organists  
Utah Valley Chapter  
2009-2010



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## Dean's Message

Recently, I was reading some of the messages online on the BYU Organ Learning Discussion Group. One of the discussions concerned reverence in worship services, and each participant offered their suggestions on how to achieve this. I would like to share some of my experiences and offer some suggestions concerning this subject. My worship tradition is in the LDS faith, so my comments will refer to that tradition.

I have served for the past six years as the ward and stake organist in the Pleasant Grove area. I've not shared my responsibilities with other organists, such as alternating weeks to play or the like. In those six years I've rarely missed a week of playing. The congregation in my ward is very reverent before and during the services, and many of the stake meetings I've played for have been the same. There have been times when I've been playing the prelude music for a sacrament meeting, turned to look at the congregation, and have been shocked at how full the chapel and overflow areas were, because I had not heard the people come into the chapel. Once, at a stake adult conference session, the huge congregation was seated and so quiet that the person conducting the meeting stood to begin five minutes early, saying, "I guess we might as well begin"!

In order to achieve reverence, or a quiet atmosphere prior to a worship service, the environment must be controlled, much like a thermostat controls the climate in a home. And everyone involved must be willing to contribute to it, including the presiding authorities, the choir, the congregation, and the organist.

### The Presiding Authorities

These are the guys who set the standard and example for reverence. If they don't encourage it, it's probably not going to happen very easily. They, along with everyone else sitting on the stand, should be in place at least ten minutes before start time, sitting in quiet contemplation.

To achieve this, when I first began playing for meetings, I would play very quiet, slow hymns for at least 20 to 30 minutes before the meetings began. Eventually, the leaders picked up on the reverent atmosphere and encouraged reverence by being in their seats on the stand well before the meeting began. If the climate is set, reverence will follow. In my stake it is important to our leaders that the sacrament meeting occurs first in the three-hour meeting block to allow for better reverence, so they've arranged the meeting schedules to accomplish that.

### The Choir

If the choir is seated on the stand prior to the meeting, they too should be encouraged to set an example of reverence, sitting quietly with no visiting and only whispering when it is necessary to communicate. This concept must be taught to them during their rehearsals, and they should be reminded of it every time they are scheduled to sing. If the choir director isn't willing to do it, you, as the accompanist at the rehearsal, may have to humbly chime in with the reminder.

## The Organist

I arrive at the chapel about 45 minutes before the meeting is to begin. I'm able to set up my music, check the pistons, and maybe warm up a little. Rehearsals with the music director, choir warm ups, or special music "run throughs" should be done earlier or the day before. Sometimes, out of necessity, the choir run-through will have to be considered part of the prelude!

I'm ready to begin playing the prelude when the first person walks into the chapel and sits down. This could be anywhere from 20 to 30 minutes before the meeting begins. There are always the same four or five families who are there early to hear the music. I may choose to begin with a chorale prelude or a slow movement from the classic repertoire. Sometimes I may choose to preview my postlude selection. Then, if there's time, I will move into a hymn prelude or a quiet hymn voluntary. The swell box is closed and as the selections progress, the registrations decrease in volume until they are as soft as the organ can play. About 15 minutes before start time, I begin playing hymns from the hymnal, sometimes selected to the topic of the meeting. The hymns are compiled in key orders, which provide pleasing harmonic transitions from hymn to hymn; and I repeat each hymn several times, using subtle registration changes for each

verse. The tempo is very slow and sustained, and I stay with the harmony in the hymnal with very little, if any, improvisation. During the hymn section of the prelude, the presiding authorities and others on the stand have quietly entered the chapel and sat down. (A few years ago at one of our Super Saturdays, I gave a workshop presentation on playing preludes from the hymnal. The detailed, four-page outline is posted on our chapter's Web site. Scroll down to near the bottom of the home page and click on Super Saturday Organ Workshop Handouts.)

### **The Congregation**

Imagine entering a chapel with quiet, sustained organ music being played very slowly and everyone on the stand, including the choir, seated and only whispering if communication is necessary. The atmosphere is set and the climate is controlled. As you entered the chapel, you would definitely want to contribute to that quiet atmosphere, and you would do your best to only whisper and to encourage children to do the same. This whole process takes time and patience, but I affirm that a conscious reverence can be achieved.

Mike Carson, Dean

### **Upcoming Events**

- Oct. 10 Eastern Idaho AGO Chapter Super Saturday  
8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Snow Performing Arts  
Center, BYU Idaho, Rexburg, ID
- Oct. 15 David Chamberlin Hymn Sing, 7:30 p.m., Ruth  
Barrus Concert Hall, Eliza R. Snow Performing  
Arts Center, BYU Idaho, Rexburg, ID
- Oct. 16 David Chamberlin Master Class, 9:00 a.m. (same  
location)
- Oct. 30 Chapter Event – 30-Year Anniversary Party!  
6:30 p.m., Edgemont South Stake Center, 2950 N.  
Canyon Road, Provo
- Nov. 6 Richard Elliot Organ Recital, 7:30 p.m.,  
Assembly Hall, SLC
- Nov. 13 Chapter Event - Hymn-Based Organ  
Literature, presented by Dr. Kenneth Udy,  
U of U Organist, 7:30 p.m., Grove Creek  
Stake Center, 1176 N. 730 E., Pleasant Grove

### **2009 Eccles Organ Festival Cathedral of the Madeleine (Sundays at 8:00 p.m.)**

- Oct. 11 Carole Terry, University of Washington
- Oct. 25 David Higgs, Eastman School of Music
- Nov. 8 Frédéric Champion, First Prize, 2008  
Canadian International Organ Competition

### **September's Opening Event Was a Huge Success**

On September 18 at the Oakhills Stake Center in Provo, the chapter sponsored a musical tribute to the late Dr. A. Laurence Lyon. The program featured music for organ, choir, strings, and voice of this well-known LDS composer. Chapter members Florence Hawkinson, Claire Rogers, Lori Serr, and David Chamberlin performed Lyon organ works; Lella Pomeroy, event coordinator, accompanied vocal soloists; Lyon's family members and former students played string

ensemble compositions; and the Utah Valley University Chamber Choir, under the direction of Dyanne Riley, sang two choral pieces. The program was a great success. Everyone seemed to really enjoy it and appreciate it. Thank you, Lella, for all the organization and rehearsing on your part that went into it and for providing the printed programs. We had a full chapel (with the choir, about 200)! There were a number of BYU Music 101 students in attendance taking notes for their class and many people from the community and from the Lyon ranks.

Thank you, Lella, Florence, Claire, David, and Lori for your excellent performances. The UVU Chamber Choir was magnificent. We are very grateful to these young people for sacrificing their Friday evening to provide this wonderful service for the community. A special thank you to Gayle and her husband, Lee, for setting up such a pretty table and serving the carrot cake, and to Ruth Ann for providing the refreshing lemon water. It was very, very nice. And Claire brought a lovely fall floral arrangement for in front of the pulpit, so everyone pitched in and it was great! We saw three news briefs in the Daily Herald leading up to the event, and KBYU-FM announced it on-air in their Community Calendar every day during the week of the program.

In addition to over 200 published compositions, 30 of which were recorded and performed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, Laurence Lyon wrote the music for the LDS hymns: "Each Life That Touches Ours for Good" and "Saints, Behold How Great Jehovah." Over 120 performances of Lyon's choral and organ works have been featured on Mormon Tabernacle Choir broadcasts since 1975. Lyon served over 30 years as professor of music at Western Oregon University. He passed away in September 2006.

### **A Special Invitation for You and Your Guest**

October 30: Utah Valley Chapter 30-Year Anniversary Party  
Edgemont South Stake Center  
2950 N. Canyon Road, Provo  
6:30 p.m.

It's time to party! We're celebrating our 30-year anniversary as a chapter of the Guild. You and a guest are invited to gather with us at 6:30 p.m. to meet and mingle and then enjoy a free dinner at 7:00. After dinner we'll enjoy recognition of the first charter members and past deans, followed by an address by Joan Stevens (AAGO), Utah Valley chapter dean from 1984-1986, and an organ performance by Seth Bott, recent winner of the *2009 AGO/Quimby Regional Competition for Young Organists* and student of Dr. Don Cook.

Current members, plus everyone who receives this newsletter via e-mail, are invited to attend. So that we may be prepared for you, RSVP by October 16 to Joan Barnett (801-375-7880) or Mike Carson (801-796-6293). Attire is best dress.

If anyone would like to lend a helping hand, we are in need of people to set up tables and chairs at 5:00 p.m. at the church. Also, we need people to help with the food at 6:00 and people to help with the clean up after the program. If you are willing and able to assist, please contact Gayle Farnsworth (801-374-0417) or Mike Carson (801-796-6293). (Note: Both Gayle and Mike will be out of town the first of October, so call before Oct. 2 or after Oct 14.) Thank you!

## November's Chapter Event

Nov. 13: Dr. Kenneth Udy - A Workshop on Hymn-based Organ Literature  
Grove Creek Stake Center  
1176 North 730 East, Pleasant Grove  
7:30 p.m.

Here's a chance to invite your organist friends to attend an entertaining and informative chapter meeting. We are thrilled to have Dr. Kenneth Udy, University Organist at the University of Utah, present a workshop on hymn-based organ literature. Udy has been a professional organist for over 25 years. He currently serves as director of music and organist at Wasatch Presbyterian Church and at Kol Ami Synagogue in Salt Lake City, and he frequently appears as a guest organist at the Salt Lake Tabernacle and with the Utah Symphony.

Mark your calendars and bring a friend. You'll be glad you did!

### Member Spotlight

**Lori Serr**

My musical training began when I started taking piano lessons at a young age and continued through high school. My mother was always looking for the best piano teachers in the Logan area where I was born and raised. All my older brothers and my one sister took piano lessons. My oldest brother and sister also took organ lessons.

My first experience with the organ was when I was about nine or ten years old. My sister insisted that I accompany her to the church house when she was going to practice the organ. She refused to go alone, and so she dragged me along with her. I guess I was her companion and protector. A few years later, I began playing the piano part for organ and piano duets with her. I knew one day I would eventually get to play the organ.

While my sister was going to school at Utah State University, she started organ lessons with Parley Belnap, who was traveling up to Logan to teach organ on certain weekends. When I was about 13, she introduced me to the organ using an original copy (a hand-written score) of the Basic Organ Technique and Repertoire Method of J. J. Keeler and Donnell Blackham that she had been using at her lessons.

About a year later I began my own formal organ training. My first teacher was Linda Margetts, just fresh from BYU, and then Lynn Thomas. Both were graduate students of Parley Belnap. USU was in the process of creating an organ department and building a concert organ, so lessons were taken at a stake center across the street from the fine arts building. When the organ was completed, my lessons moved to the Kent Concert Hall. Then, shortly after that, Parley Belnap again traveled to USU to teach each month. By this time I was graduating from high school. I attended one year at USU, then came to BYU where I remained a student of Brother Belnap and graduated with a bachelor of music degree in organ performance.

Since graduating, I have focused mainly on raising my four children, helping my husband, Casey, through school, and serving in the church and community, but all the while maintaining some involvement in piano and organ—mainly teaching. I have done several organ training workshops for stakes over the years as well as teaching at the Church Music

Workshop and at the chapter's Super Saturdays. I have taught piano and organ for about 25 years. I have always served in some music capacity in the church, including ward and stake organist, temple organist, choir accompanist, Primary pianist, etc., and most of these while also serving in leadership capacities.

Currently, I am back studying organ with Linda Margetts at the University of Utah, working on the Associate certification of the AGO. I also serve as the education coordinator in our chapter and chairman of the chapter's Super Saturday training for organists. I am a nationally certified teacher in piano and organ in the Utah Music Teacher's Association and a Colleague of the American Guild of Organists.

Now that my husband and I are entering the "empty nest" years, I'm happy to be back in association with the Guild and studying organ again. I am grateful to all the piano and, especially, the organ teachers I've had over the years. I have learned many valuable lessons and important life skills from them.

### **Report on September Informal**

**Ruth Ann Hay**

Twelve people attended the Informal on September 11. The first part was a dress rehearsal for Lella Pomeroy, Ernie Messerly, Florence Hawkinson, Claire Rogers, and Lori Serr, who participated in the Laurence Lyon tribute. Afterwards we had the good fortune of hearing from two first-timers, Alec Powell and Norma Horton. Alec played *Noel Nouvelet* by Malcolm Archer, then his own arrangement of Battle Hymn. Norma played Dubois' *Grand Choer Dialogue*. Both were very impressive. Claire shared a movement from Dan Locklair's *Salem Sonata* and Ruth Ann played Bob Cundick's *O Store Gud*.

Details are still being finalized for our October and November informals

### **Important Web Sites**

Utah Valley Chapter AGO Web Site:  
[www.uvago.org](http://www.uvago.org)

BYU Organ Information  
(including off-campus programs):  
[www.organ.byu.edu](http://www.organ.byu.edu)

Salt Lake Chapter AGO Web Site:  
[www.slicago.org](http://www.slicago.org)

National AGO Web Site:  
[www.agohq.org](http://www.agohq.org)

Source of Music for the LDS Organist:  
[www.wardorganist.com](http://www.wardorganist.com)

Resources for the LDS Organist:  
[www.LDSorganists.info](http://www.LDSorganists.info)

David Chamberlin's music  
[www.chamberlinmusic.com](http://www.chamberlinmusic.com)

Free music for the LDS Organist  
[www.ldsorganist.org](http://www.ldsorganist.org)

## Our Chapter Membership

We are happy to report that as of September 26, we have had 38 people either renew their memberships or join our chapter for the first time. A warm welcome to everyone!

There are 14 members who were on the roster last year but have still not renewed for one reason or another. We hope to hear from them soon. We appreciate everyone's support so far, but we need EVERYONE! Just think, when we receive the additional renewals, our membership will have reached over 50! That would be so great.

Following is a current membership roster with names and towns of residence. If you would like a list with contact information for convenience in friendshipping, carpooling, etc., please request one from Joan Barnett, chapter secretary/registrar, and she will e-mail it to you.

Lorelea Anderson Orem	Joan Barnett Provo
Michael Bigelow American Fork	Janice Bunker Provo
Dr. Douglas E. Bush Provo	Mike Carson Pleasant Grove
David Chamberlin American Fork	Mark Clark Orem
Carol Dean, CAGO Provo	Felipe Dominguez Provo
Christian Draper Provo	Gayle Farnsworth Provo
Aubrey Fitzgerald Mapleton	Meg Griffith American Fork
Ruth Ann Hay Provo	Nora Hess Orem
David Hobson, DDS Provo	Norma Horton Provo
Judith Hunsaker Provo	Claudia Johnson Cedar Hills
Donna Johnson Sandy	Marie Johnson American Fork
Susan Jorgensen Orem	Quinten Knudsen Newark Valley, NY
Jeanine Lepinski Draper	Gwen Miner Springville
Dr. Joan Palmer Draper	Laura Pettersson Provo
Lella Pomeroy Springville	Alec Powell Lehi

Claire Rogers  
Provo

Lori Serr, CAGO  
Mapleton

Thomas Watkins  
Provo

Judith Wright  
Provo

Katherine Rosenvall  
Provo

Janet Stout  
Orem

David Worlton, CAGO  
Lehi

Steven Wright  
Draper

## Recipe

### **Slow Cooker Pot Roast**

1 can cream of mushroom soup (can add fresh or canned mushrooms as well)  
1 can beef consomme or beef broth  
1 pkg. dry onion soup mix  
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce  
2 bay leaves  
one 3 to 4 lb. chuck or other higher quality roast

Mix all ingredients together in a crock pot (larger one works best). Salt and pepper your roast and submerge in mixture. Top with bay leaves. Cook on LOW for 10 hours. Turn the roast half way through.