

Utah Valley Chapter American Guild of Organists

The mission of the American Guild of Organists is to enrich lives through organ and choral music.

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The Dean's Message

October 2012

Dear Members and Friends,

Thank you to everybody who helped with and/or attended our opening social! Mike Carson presented a nice installation of officers and Don Cook introduced us to the three-manual Johannus organ, in the new Multi-Stake Center, in Provo. It was wonderful to learn and visit together!

We have three new chapter members, Jay Goodliffe, Matt Beesley, and Quinten Knudsen. Welcome! We are grateful to have you a part of our chapter and look forward to associating with you!

In planning activities for the year, our board focused on two main areas: introducing youth to the organ and community outreach. Two activities in particular will focus on youth. The first will be the Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza, on Saturday, November 17, at 11:00 a.m. at the Provo Central Stake Center. It was a great success last year and we hope that it will be equally successful this year. Please start spreading the word now, inviting youth to attend. The second activity focusing on youth is our annual Bach recital. We will try something different this year. In addition to members playing pieces, we are extending an invitation to youth to have the opportunity to play a piece as well. If you know any youth who play the piano and would like the opportunity to try out a Bach piece on the organ, please inform them about the Bach recital. Also, if you know any piano teachers, please let them know about this opportunity. Of course, any youth who already play the organ would also be invited to participate. Obviously, we will only be able to have a handful of youth play in the Bach recital, but anybody may attend. Any interested youth should contact Carol Dean to reserve a spot.

In addition to our annual Super Saturday in April, the community will be invited to a hymn sing in February. Of course, the community is also invited to our Bach recital. For our closing social in May, we will be having another member recital. The theme for this recital is "If you can play it in church, then we don't want to hear it!" In other words, this is an opportunity to play the pieces you love, but aren't appropriate to play in church, or that you don't have a lot of opportunity to perform!

We will be co-sponsoring the Young Organists Competition with the Salt Lake City chapter. It will be held in Salt Lake City sometime between February 22 and April 7. The exact date and location are in the process of being scheduled. [continued on p. 3]

Upcoming Events

Utah Valley Chapter Meetings

- Oct 19 Louis Vierne 75th Anniversary Master Class with Clay Christiansen
Joseph Smith Memorial Building Chapel, SLC, 7:30 pm
- Nov 17 Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza: Provo Central Stake Center, 450 N 1220 W.
11:00 am
- Jan 5 Tabernacle Organ Crawl, Tabernacle, SLC, 12:30 pm
- Feb Hymn Sing, TBA
- March 22 Bach's Birthday Recital, Provo Central Stake Center
- April 27 Super Saturday, BYU
- May 17 Closing Social & Member Recital
- June 24-26 AGO Regional Convention, Bakersfield, CA

Eccles Organ Festival, Cathedral of the Madeleine, 8:00 pm

- Oct 7 Clive Driskill-Smith, Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, England
- Oct 21 Jonathan Ryan, First Prize, 2009 Jordan International Organ
Competition
- Nov 4 László Fassang, Franz Liszt Academy, Budapest

Additional Organ Recitals

- Oct 26 BYU Organ Majors' German Chorale Prelude Recital
Multi-Stake Center, 300 N 900 E, Provo, 7:30 pm

Please Join Us

On Friday, October 19, our chapter will sponsor the Louis Vierne 75th Anniversary Master Class with Tabernacle organist Clay Christiansen. It will take place in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building Chapel at Temple Square at 7:30 pm. If you would like to play in the master class, please send your name and contact information, a brief description of your experience with the organ, and what Vierne piece you would like to play for Dr. Christiansen's critique to Lori Serr (ljserr@yahoo.com) by Friday, October 5. If you are not playing, please participate as the audience.

The chapter will sponsor Pedals, Pipes, & Pizza, our youth outreach activity Saturday, November 17, 11:00 AM at the Provo Central Stake Center. This is a great opportunity to invite friends who might be interested in starting organ practice, especially youth, but of course any age is welcome. If each chapter member brought just one or two interested friends with them, we would have quite a crowd! There will be tours of the Bigelow organ, and beginners will have a chance to try their hands at the console. Pizza will be served for lunch.

At the Bench

by Blaine Olson

As the Provo Sunset Stake organ class was finishing up the 10-week "Organ 101: Fundamentals and Basics," I was busy working on some ideas for those who wished to continue for another 10 weeks. One thing that became obvious was that most of the students were terrified of the thoughts of playing in public, yet seemed to do better when another person was playing alongside them. As an experiment, I selected a descant to "Silent Night" and had 9 year-old Rachel play the single-voice descant while her 12 year-old sister Katherine played "Silent Night." Katherine did much better playing her part when Rachel played with her.

This prompted me to write duet parts for some of the hymns, in hopes that students would volunteer to play the duets in sacrament meetings, stake baptisms, and other meetings, as a means of gaining the experience needed to help them overcome stage fright and gain self-confidence. I started with "Precious Savior, Dear Redeemer." The night that I finished the first draft happened to coincide with a UVAGO informal. I had encouraged all of my students to attend the informal, as I wanted them to meet other people in the organ community that could help them continue their learning.

[continued on p. 4]

Dean's Message continued

Competitors must be under 24 years of age as of August 1, 2013. Membership in the AGO is not required. Applications must be postmarked by January 18, 2013. The winner of the competition will go on to compete at the Regional Convention in Bakersfield, CA, in June 2013. See the guidelines on page 5 of the newsletter.

If you are not presently involved in planning or helping with activities, but would like to be involved, please let me know and we'll put you to work! There's a place for everybody! I look forward to a wonderful year! Thanks, again, for all your help, participation, and support!

Sincerely,
Sheri

Member Spotlight: Matthew Beesley

I'm 23 years old, from San Diego, and currently a senior in the Organ Performance program at BYU. I taught myself the piano starting when I was 11 and encountered the organ for the first time when our ward organist was moving. She taught me one lesson on the organ, and I was left to figure out the instrument on my own for a year. When I came to BYU, I studied math and took private organ lessons for fun. That semester, I fell in love with the instrument and decided to audition for the program. I was miraculously accepted, and my love of music and the organ has only increased since. I was double majoring in Math and Music for a couple years and finally decided that I wanted to give my all to one subject. After much pondering and prayer, I decided that I'd pursue my dream of having a career in music. I'll be applying for the Master's program next semester.

Tempos of Devotional Music

by Mike Carson

No doubt you may own a copy of Alexander Schreiner's *Organ Voluntaries*, vol. 1, published by J. Fisher, and have, through the years, played many of the selections in church services, funerals, and weddings. I would like to point to the introduction of the book, written by Schreiner himself on Jan. 29, 1937, at age 35, while serving as organist of the University of California at Los Angeles. He writes about the voluntaries, the choice of instruments, the selection and placement of organs, and the tempo of devotional music. It is the latter subject on which I would like to focus for this brief article.

He writes, "Music which accompanies worship should never be performed in a fast tempo. Devotional music, whether vocal or instrumental, cannot be hurried without losing much of its purpose. The spirit of worship is opposed to any hurried feeling. Sometimes young organists or choristers allow their energy and enthusiasm to lead them into faster tempos, but seasoned and mature musicians always hold to moderate and slow speeds for church music.

"While slow music may be tedious to some, even to the point of dragging, yet it may be spiritually and devotionally powerful. This value can never be had from a hurried and nervous rendition. A sparkling rendition may be desirable in a concert performance, but not in a devotional service.

"Surely choristers and organists have observed that Sunday School children, as well as older people, do not enjoy being driven in a fast tempo. Church music has never been fast. Great composers, such as Palestrina, Bach, and Handel, have always written their inspiring church music in stately and slow rhythms. Care must be used not to allow the nervousness and speed of this recent age to invade God's timeless sanctuary."

While Schreiner's instructions come from an earlier generation and were written mostly in regard to the voluntaries at hand, I am sure the same things could be said about the tempos of congregational hymns today. As organ registrations should be carefully chosen to convey the utmost sense of devotion, likewise, tempos must be given equal attention.

[continued on p. 41]

At the Bench continued

The informal was held in a building in our own stake so nobody had far to travel, but our two 12-year-olds Katherine and Rebecca were the only students who could come. The turnout from the UVAGO group was not much better, and with myself, we doubled the meeting's attendance. At the end of the meeting, I asked the group to critique the music I had just written an hour earlier. As Florence and I played the duet and Mike made a few suggestions and experimentations with it, I could not help but notice the glow in Rebecca's eyes--she was absolutely in love with the music!

When her mother came to pick up the girls to escort them the 4 or 5 blocks back home, Rebecca whispered something in her mom's ear. She asked her mom to ask me for a copy of the music! She was in love with it, even though she had never before heard the hymn "Precious Savior, Dear Redeemer." It was not part of her ward's hymn-cabulary. Rebecca worked hard to learn the hymn book part of the duet, and requested that I play the duet part when she played it in sacrament meeting several weeks later. It was very well-done, and many people complimented Rebecca on her near-perfect performance.

Editor's Note: Blaine generously provided his duet score for "Precious Savior, Dear Redeemer" at the end of the newsletter. He will share a duet with the chapter each month.



Tempos of Devotional Music continued

It is crucial that hymns be played at singable tempos. Hymns should be sung fast enough to comfortably sing a short phrase in one breath, but slow enough to be spiritually and devotionally powerful. Consult the metronomic markings in the hymnal for a suggested tempo range. When I began playing for church services many years ago, I usually chose the faster tempos. But in the last several years I have noticed that I prefer the slower suggested markings.

Rehearse with the music director in advance to determine the desired tempo and style of the hymn to be sung. Experienced organists may think this is unnecessary, but when the director is prepared, rehearsed, and confident, the outcome is much more desirable. I have spent much time training music directors the basics of conducting in what was supposed to have been a 15-minute preparation session for the next day's service. Work things out in advance, and you will receive greater dividends in the end.

Many factors enter in when choosing hymn tempos, and, by demand, tempo choices may vary on occasion. For example, a hymn which could be used as either an opening or a closing hymn may require a different tempo and/or mood, depending upon the occasion or its placement in the service. Leopold Mozart (1719-1787), father and teacher of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, said, "Even if a composer endeavors to explain more clearly the speed required...one has to deduce it from the piece itself, and this it is, by which the true worth of a musician can be recognized without fail."

I hope these thoughts have caused you to consider the importance of tempos in devotional music. Chances are, if you are a church musician, someone has already mentioned to you the tempos of your music – whether complimentarily or critically. This is a topic on which many people have an opinion and few people agree. However, devotional music, when carefully prepared and skillfully played, can have a powerful impact on the worship experience and will bring great joy to the organist and worshiper alike.

Young Organists Competition Repertoire Requirements

- Competitors must be under 24 years of age as of August 1, 2013.
- Membership in the AGO is not required.
- Applications must be postmarked by January 18, 2013.
- The winner of the competition will go on to compete at the Regional Convention in Bakersfield, CA, in June 2013.
- Co-sponsored by the Utah Valley and Salt Lake Chapters of the American Guild of Organists
- The competition will take place in Salt Lake City between February 22 and April 7

Competitors will perform one work from each of the following categories:

1. A prelude (a toccata or fantasia is acceptable) and fugue or two contrasting movements of a Trio Sonata by Bach. BWV 582 is acceptable; BWV 553–560 and 572 are not acceptable.
 2. A work by a composer born between 1800 and 1890 (a single movement of a larger work is acceptable).
 3. A work composed by a composer born after 1890 (a single movement of a larger work is acceptable).
- The works in categories 2 and 3 must be contrasting in mood.
 - Three copies of each of the required pieces must be provided by each contestant for the judges.
4. Hymns – choose one:
 - “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”
 - “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today”
 - “What Wondrous Love Is This”
- The competitor will introduce the hymn and play two stanzas as if accompanying a congregation.
 - The first stanza of the hymn must be played from the version downloaded from www.agohq.org.
 - Published or improvised arrangements may be used for the introduction and/or other stanza if the competitor wishes.

Tips for Taking AGO Exams

- A candidate has 5 years from passing one section of the exam to pass the other section.
- 2013 Exam Dates:
 - Service Playing Test, Oct. 1 2012 – April 30, 2013
 - Colleague Examination: Nov. 16 2012, May 10 or Nov. 15, 2013
 - Choir Master Examination: June 5, 2013
 - Associateship Examination: June 6-7, 2013
 - Fellowship Examination: June 6-7, 2013

<http://www.agohq.org/education/indexpcertify.html>

Resources for Organists

“The LDS Organist”
(created by Jennifer Morgan)
www.organlessons.blogspot.com

“Pedal Points”
(created by Florence Hawkinson)
www.ldsorganist.wordpress.com

Doug Bush’s hymn arrangements
douglas_bush@byu.edu

David Chamberlin’s hymn
voluntaries
www.chamberlinmusic.com

Free music for the LDS organist
www.ldsorganist.org

Music for the LDS organist:
www.wardorganist.com

Resources for the LDS organist
www.ldsorganists.info

BYU organ information
www.organ.byu.edu

Local organ builder of fine
mechanical action organs
www.bigeloworgans.com

AGO Salt Lake City Chapter
www.slcano.org

AGO Utah Valley Chapter
www.uvago.org

AGO Region IX Blog
www.agoregion9blog.blogspot.com

AGO National Headquarters
www.agohq.org

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GT: 8' Flute 8va
SW: soft strings

Precious Savior, Dear Redeemer

#103

H.R. Palmer 1834-1907

Blaine A. Olson 1952-

Great

Swell

Pre - cious Sav - ior, dear Re - deem - er, Thy sweet mes - sage now im -

Gt:

Sw:

part. May thy Spir - it, pure and fer - vid, En - ter ev - 'ry tim - id heart; Car - ry


Gt:

Sw:


there the swift con - vic - tion, Turn - ing back the sin - ful tide. — Pre - cious

Detailed description: This is a musical score for three parts: Great Flute (8va), Guitar (Gt.), and Soft Strings (Swell). The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 1-3) shows the Great Flute part with a melodic line and the Swell part with a harmonic accompaniment. The second system (measures 4-8) continues the melody and accompaniment, with lyrics: 'part. May thy Spir - it, pure and fer - vid, En - ter ev - 'ry tim - id heart; Car - ry'. The third system (measures 9-12) concludes the piece with lyrics: 'there the swift con - vic - tion, Turn - ing back the sin - ful tide. — Pre - cious'. The Great Flute part features a melodic line with some grace notes and a final flourish. The Swell part provides a steady harmonic accompaniment with some dynamics markings like 'Swell' and 'part.'. The guitar part follows the same melodic line as the Great Flute.

Gt: ¹³



Sw: ¹³



Sav - ior, dear Re-deem - er, May each soul in thee a - bide.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for the second page of the hymn. It features two staves: a guitar part (Gt) and a piano accompaniment (Sw). The guitar part is written in a single treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature. It begins with a measure rest marked '13' and consists of a melodic line of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a fermata over a half note. The piano accompaniment is written in grand staff notation (treble and bass clefs) with the same key signature and time signature. It also begins with a measure rest marked '13'. The right hand plays chords and single notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics 'Sav - ior, dear Re-deem - er, May each soul in thee a - bide.' are placed between the piano staves, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes.