

American Guild of Organists Newsletter

Utah Valley Chapter
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Dean's Message

I had just finished my household chores for the night and was prepared to go to bed, when I heard a noise in the front of the house. I went downstairs and into the living room to see what it was. As I entered the living room and looked in, out stepped Santa Claus out from behind our Christmas Tree.

He placed his finger in front of his mouth, motioning me not to cry out. "What are you doing?" I started to ask. The words choked in my throat as I noticed that he had tears in his eyes. His usually jolly demeanor was gone. Gone was the eager, jolly old fellow that I had always known.

Then he answered me simply, "Teach the children."

I was puzzled. What did he mean? He anticipated my question and with one quick movement brought forth a small, miniature toy bag from behind the tree. As I stood bewildered, Santa said, "Teach the children! Teach them the old meaning of Christmas. The meaning that now-a-days Christmas has forgotten."

Santa then reached into his bag and pulled out a FIR TREE and placed it before the mantle.

"Teach the children that the pure green colour of the fir tree remains green all year round, depicting the everlasting hope of mankind, all the needles pointing heavenward, making it a symbol of man's thoughts constantly turning towards heaven."

He again reached into his bag and pulled out a brilliant STAR. "Teach the children that the star was the heavenly sign of promises long ago. God promised a Saviour to the world, and the star was the sign of the fulfillment of His promise."

He then reached into his bag and pulled out a CANDLE. "Teach the children that the candle symbolized that Christ is the light of the world, and when we see this great light, we are reminded of He who displaces the darkness."

Once again he reached into his bag and removed a WREATH and placed it on the tree. "Teach the children that the wreath symbolizes the real nature of love. Real love never ceases, Love is one continuous round of affection."

He then pulled from his bag an ornament of himself. "Teach the children that I, Saint Nick (Santa Claus) symbolize the generosity and good will we feel during the month of December."

He then brought out a HOLLY LEAF. "Teach the children that the holly plant represents immortality. It represents the crown of thorns worn by our Saviour. The red holly berries represent the blood of the atonement shed by Him for us."

Next, he pulled from his bag a GIFT. "Teach the children that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten SON." Thanks be to our God for this divine gift."

"Teach the children that the wise men bowed before the Holy BABE and presented HIM with gold, frankincense and myrrh. We should always give gifts in the same spirit of the wise men."

Santa then reached into his bag and pulled out a CANDY CANE. He then hung it on the tree. "Teach the children that the candy cane represents the shepherd's crook. The crook on the staff helps to bring back His strayed sheep to the flock. The candy cane is the symbol that we are our brother's keeper."

He reached in again and pulled out an ANGEL. "Teach the children that it was the angels that heralded in the glorious news of the Saviour's birth. The angels sang 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will to all men.'"

Suddenly I heard a soft twinkling sound, and from his bag he pulled out a BELL. "Teach the children that as the lost sheep are found by the sound of the bell, it should ring mankind to the fold. The bell symbolizes guidance and return."

Santa looked back and was pleased. He looked back at me and I saw that the twinkle was back in his eyes. He said, "Remember, teach the children the true meaning of Christmas and do not put me in the center, for I am but a humble servant of the One that is the center of everything, and I bow down to worship Him, our Lord, our Saviour."

May each and every one of us remember the true meaning of Christmas this year. Take a few minutes, think of the meaning of the words of our Christmas music. Save the meaning within our hearts to share every day of the coming year.

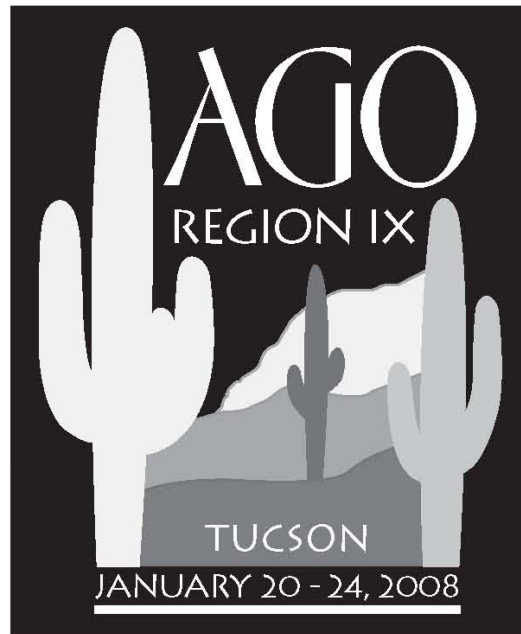
Merry Christmas to each one of you. My thoughts and prayers are with each one of you. May your Christmas be happy, and your hearts, and homes be filled with joy!

Sincerely,

Nancy Christensen, Dean

PIPES IN THE DESERT,
the 2008 AGO Region IX Mid-Winter Conclave,
is pleased to announce a competition for
new organ music:

A COMPOSITION FOR ORGAN
of 3–5 min. duration, on a desert theme from
Scripture, and suitable for performance in a
church or concert setting.



This competition is open to residents of, or students in, AGO Region IX (no age restriction) who have not yet had commercially published works.

The 1st place award consists of \$1000, performance of the piece as part of the conclave, informal publication of the piece prior to the conclave, and free conclave registration. The 2nd place award consists of \$500 and informal publication of the piece prior to the conclave.

Submissions must include a CD or cassette tape, a score (Finale or Sibelius format preferred) of the work, and a resume. Send all submissions to

AGO Tucson 2008
P.O. Box 42495
Tucson, AZ 85733-2495

Deadline: March 31, 2007

Today

December 1 is a soup and sing Christmas party at Jeanine Lepinski's house. We already have the soups assigned out. If you were not assigned soup please bring a dessert or salad. We will sing and play Christmas carols, enjoy each other's company, and eat good food. Jeanine's address is:

909 E Rocky Mouth Lane in Draper. On I-15 take exit 289 (Draper Bluffdale exit). Turn East (away from the prison). Take the first right after 2 stoplights. The name of this street is Vestry. You will come to a round-a-bout. Take the second exit off the round-a-bout. (The first one will take you past the church and the third one will take you past the pool.) This is the Rocky Mouth that will take you to the house, it is on the left side of the street. If you get to the end of the street you will have gone too far. Jeanine's phone number in case you have any questions or are lost is 523-5944. .

January 9th we will try to have a panel on organ pedagogy. We will be discussing new methods available, effective practice techniques, and graded repertoire for every level. "A New Start for a New Year"

February 7th David Chamberlain will be sharing his experiences in Germany and Ruth Eldredge will be sharing her experiences in Portugal.

March is of course the Bach festival.

April will be our Super Saturday.

May we will have our closing social.

Please be aware that times and places may change for some of these events. Be alert for e-mails and be sure to check the most recent newsletters for the date.

Other Events of Interest

Sunday, Dec 10th, 7PM The Salzburg Folk Ensemble will perform at the [Utah State Hospital Chapel](#). This is a local group which performs Austrian, Swiss and German Folk music on hackbrett (European hammered dulcimer), harp and guitar and their Christmas presentation will also include traditional carols of many nations.

December 17, 7 PM the annual Christmas Musical Program directed by Dr. Bush in the [Provo Central Stake Building, 500 N 1220 W](#)

The Salt Lake AGO's super Saturday will be on **January 6, 2007**. It will be in the [U of U Libby Gardner Hall](#) from 9AM -4 PM. You can download a copy of their registration form from their website (www.slicago.org). Fred Swann, the President of AGO is planning to attend and will give an afternoon concert. Craig Jessop will be the keynote speaker.

On **February 3** at 7:30 P.M. At the [Barrus Concert Hall, BYU Idaho](#) there will be a concert given by Cherry Rhodes who teaches at Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California.

Quote of the month

"The organ is in truth the grandest, the most daring, the most magnificent of all instruments invented by human genius. It is a whole orchestra in itself. It can express anything in response to a skilled touch."
(Honore De Balzac)

David's Christmas Voluntaries are printed. Claire will bring them to the soup and sing. If you can't be there and want a copy, you can call Claire Rogers (preferably in the evenings) and she can get them for you. Claire also has 4 more copies of Dan Gawthrop's 4 Trio Preludes in case some of you missed getting yours.

Did You Know?

The word *carol* came from a Greek dance called a *choraulein*, which was accompanied by flute music. The dance later spread throughout Europe and became especially popular with the French, who replaced the flute music with singing. People originally performed carols on several occasions during the year. By the 1600's, carols involved singing only, and Christmas had become the main holiday for these joyful songs.

Be sure to read James Drake's article on the Alexander Method in the December issue of the *The American Organist*. For those of you who were at the November meeting, it will help you remember the techniques he taught.