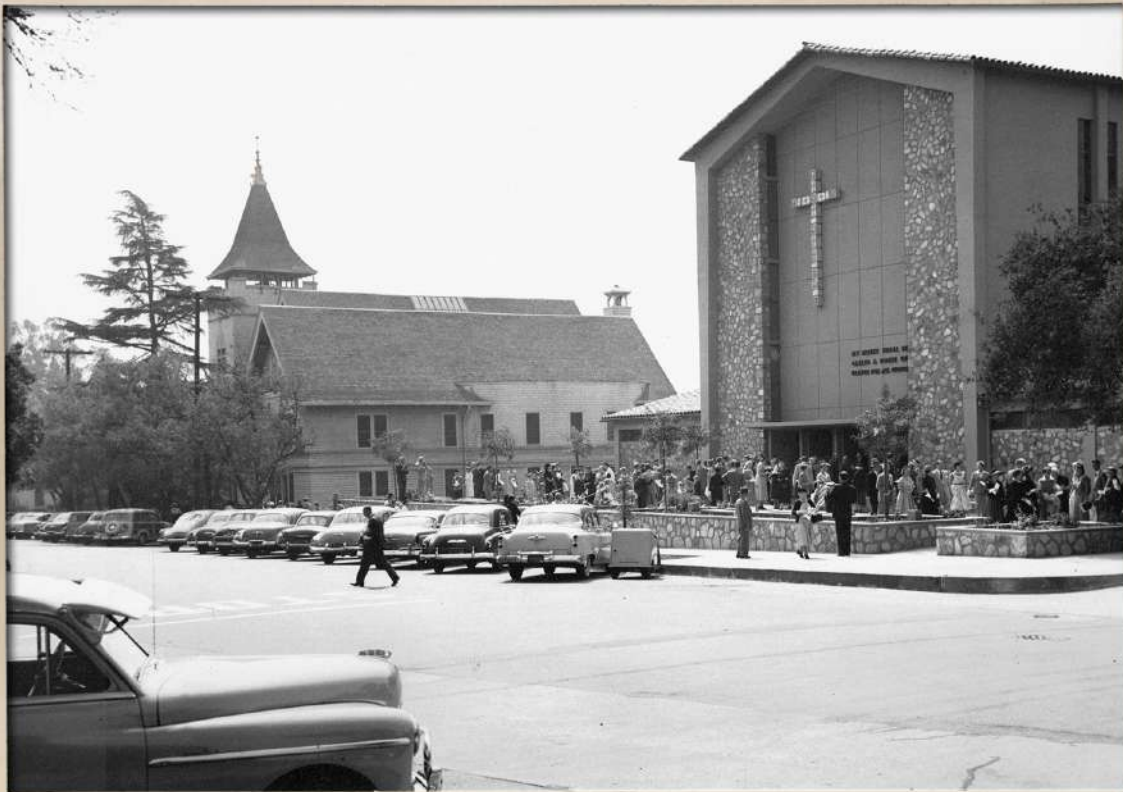


# A HISTORY of MUSIC MINISTRY AT CLAREMONT UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST



by JONATHAN D. CAMPBELL



A HISTORY OF MUSIC AT CLAREMONT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

By Jonathan D. Campbell  
Director of Music and Fine Arts, CUCC  
2020

Cover photo: This is the only known photo of both sanctuaries together, dated 1955. It was taken at the inaugural worship service in the new church. The 1906 structure was demolished shortly after this photo was taken.

Dedication and Thanks

**This booklet is dedicated to the congregation of Claremont United Church of Christ and the Claremont community.**

Special Thanks to:

**John Lewallen** for the cover designs.

**Professor Graydon Beeks**, Pomona College, for his knowledge and help regarding the history of music at Pomona College and in the community.

**Professor Donna Di Grazia**, Pomona College, for her help with the history of music at the school and for general edits.

**Dr. Carey Robertson** for her contribution of the organ chapter.

**Jill Carol** for her fine photography.

**Lee Waggener** for providing some of the old black and white photographs.

**Anne Sonner**, CUCC church historian.

**Kelly Zackman**, Senior Librarian, Local History, Ontario City Library.

**Every church member and staff member, and former staff member** who contributed words, memories, or general consultation.

JDC 2020

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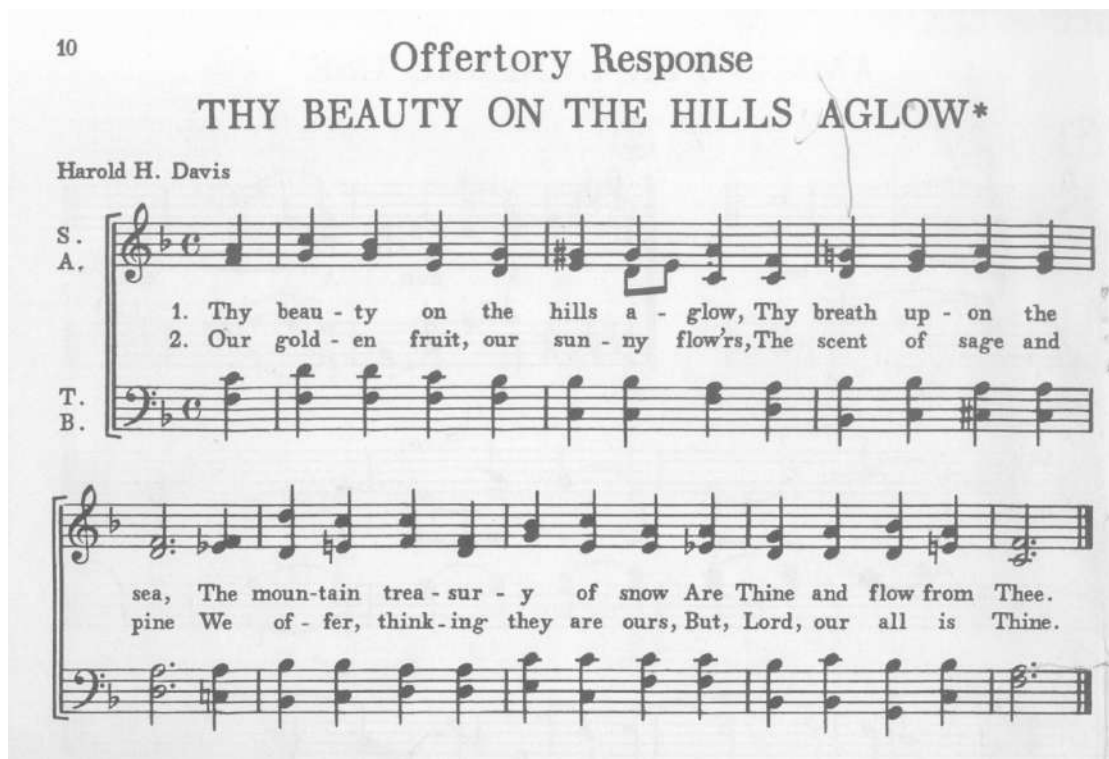


Figure 1. Chorale from William Blanchard's cantata *The Challenge* (1940), composed to celebrate the church's fiftieth anniversary. For decades it was sung at the church before going out of use sometime in the 1980s. The text (by Harold Davis) is highly evocative of Claremont and its surroundings.

## Introduction

Claremont UCC has a rich music history which up to now has not been clearly documented. The relationship of the church with the neighboring Claremont Colleges left an unusual legacy of musical collaboration between the institutions. Sadly, many of the names of those who served in the early decades of the church are forgotten. I have done my best with limited time and resources to organize and clarify who served the church's music ministry since its inception in 1891. There will doubtless be errors, omissions, and some wobbly assertions. But it is my hope that when this document is finished the community will know more than it did before. As the project has continued it has ballooned in scope. There are so many people who

have contributed to the music of the church's life that it's impossible to exhaustively research them all. To summarize a life in one or two sentences is impossible; this project does not aim to be biographical. Rather, the scope is to show the narrative of music and worship throughout CUCC's 130 years.

My goal is to give these hard-working and dedicated musicians their due recognition and also to unscramble the timeline of the musicians who have served at the church. By remembering those who have come before, we can have a greater appreciation for our place in the world. And we can say "thank you." The author has created a small archive of original documents, scores, etcetera, which are now stored in a closet in the music room. All documents relating to Blanchard and Ronfeldt have been donated to Honnold Library Special Collections.

Because the organs at CUCC have their own narrative—and because Dr. Carey Robertson has written a detailed summary—I have included the complete history of the pipe organs as a separate, final chapter.

Jonathan D. Campbell, DMA  
Director of Music and Fine Arts, Claremont, CA.  
Soli Deo Gloria

## **Chapter 1: Early Days, 1891-1940**

Harold Bruner's manuscript book "The Claremont Church" is comprehensive regarding the general course of history up until 1980. Since 1980 the church has gone through considerable change—most recently with a resurgence of growth and energized ministry under the leadership of Rev. Dr. Jacob Buchholz and Rev. Dr. Jennifer Strickland. It was their vision to bring on a full-time Director of Music and Fine Arts, a position the author now occupies. As far as I can tell, I am the first full-time musician at the church, a note of interest in itself. To flesh out the church's broader history between 1980 and 2020 (a full forty years!) is a task for someone else. Suffice to say, Bruner remains an excellent point of reference for the earlier days of the church. However, his book glances over most of the music history, which is not addressed in detail. This booklet addresses that paucity.

The church was founded in 1891 by many of the same people who also established Pomona College, including H.A. Palmer, the first President of the Board and Reverend Charles Sumner (1837-1927), first pastor of the church as well as professor of religion and history. Sumner Hall is his namesake. For most of the church's existence, its musicians were also music faculty at Pomona College (or other area colleges and universities). Over the decades the two institutions collaborated on many musical projects.

Worship services were first held in Sumner Hall—which still stands on campus at Pomona College (though unrecognizable from its 19<sup>th</sup> century form). Accounts of these services are fragmentary, but there are some interesting observations:

Good music highlighted the services. With the help of Frank Brackett's fine voice, Cassius Brannan's violin, a quartet grandly called "The College Choir," and the piano of Arthur Bissell, a



quality of music was established that has ever since prevailed and that has greatly contributed to the worship in this church.<sup>1</sup>

Brackett founded the Pomona College “Choral Union” in 1888 and was succeeded by Bissell in 1892. It is not known if these men conducted the church choir, but it is quite possible. In 1893 the congregation moved worship into the chapel of Holmes Hall and in 1894 purchased a “reed organ.”<sup>2</sup> Although no weekly bulletins (or “calendars” as they were called for many decades) exist from this era, we can suppose the organist(s) who played for these services were also music faculty at Pomona College.

The original sanctuary—dedicated June 3, 1906—was situated on the corner of Harrison and Harvard, where the Kingman Chapel now stands. On May 3, 1908, the three-manual Hope-Jones was dedicated as the “Memorial Organ.” Robert Hope-Jones (1859-1914) was an innovator of the pipe organ. He also helped invent the “theatre organ.” His contributions to pipe organs include tabs instead of draw knobs, improved pneumatic action, and the invention of the Diaphone and Tibia clausa stops. Unlike our current “tracker” organ where each key is physically connected to a pipe, this one featured “electro-pneumatic” action, whereby the pipes were played through an electrical current. This enables the console to be set further away from the instrument because it is only attached by a bundle of wires. Although out of style today, these electronic advances were cutting-edge technology in their time.

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<sup>1</sup> Bruner, The Claremont Church: A Historical Sketch, page 8. Frank Brackett (1865-1951) was a “science professor” at Pomona College and the observatory is named after him. Cassius Brannan was a professor of strings and harmony from 1890-1894. Arthur Bissell (1858-1925) was a professor of “modern languages” as well. In 1894 he built a home in Claremont known today as the “Arthur Dart Bissell historic home.” Who sang in the “College Choir” quartet is unknown. There was no ensemble at Pomona College called the College Choir until 1920. Bruner doesn’t cite his source. This author’s guess is the singers at the early services were singers from the community and/or students who rehearsed and sang *ad hoc*.

<sup>2</sup> Bruner, viii.

Today the instrument exists only in photographs. Its fate is unknown. Perhaps in some dusty drawer or box there is a record of its sale or dismemberment. It is worth noting that the Hope-Jones organ served CUCC for forty-seven years.

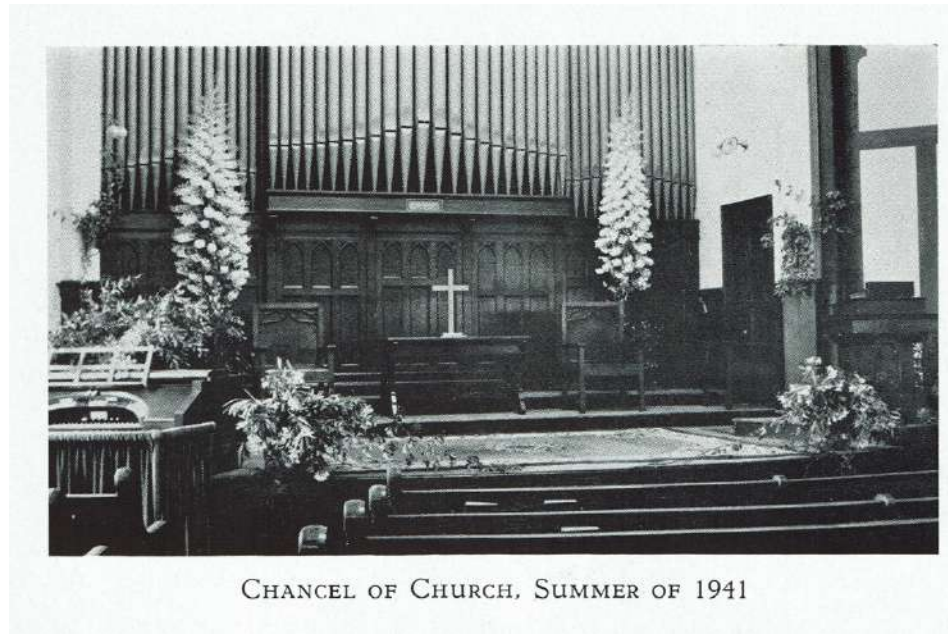


Figure 2. A rare photograph of the old sanctuary with the Hope-Jones organ, 1941. Note the console with “tabs” instead of draw knobs.

In old bulletins from 1910-1915 no staff are listed aside from Minister Henry Kingman and the janitor, “Dr. McDonald.” Presumably there was a choir director during these early years, but so far, no records have been located to identify him or her. Old documents in the Honnold Library Special Collections identify a “Professor Butler” as organist at Pomona College in the early 1900s, and, in an old School of Music catalog from the same era he extols the virtues of the “three manual” (sic) organ available to organ students. He was probably referring to the Hope-Jones instrument.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 4 for Dr. Carey Robertson’s complete history of organs at CUCC.

(288) 2-86 11/4/00

Kingman, Rev. Henry

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE RECEIVED \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

RECEIVED ☒ C ☒ R ☒ E ☒ A

RECEIVED FROM Union Congregational Church, Boston, Mass.

CHURCH

REMOVED Apr. 15 19 21 ☒ D ☒ R ☒ E ☒ T ☒ L

LETTER GRANTED TO

Pastor of the Claremont Church.

8/41

THE CLAREMONT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP RECORD

Figure 3. Rev. Henry Kingman's "membership record."

The oldest church bulletin located is dated from October 16, 1910. From this and other early bulletins we can see the organ repertoire included works by Rheinberger, Widor, Mendelssohn, Frank, Bach, Dubois, and Gigout. Choral anthems included works by Chadwick, West (*The Woods and Every Sweet-Scented Tree*), Handel, Stainer, Gounod, and more. A bulletin dated March 19, 1911 includes this interesting note:

An Easter Organ Recital will be given in the church. . .by Professor Butler, with one or two assistants. A silver offering will be taken, and the proceeds will go to the fund to purchase a pipe organ for the chapel. The present arrangement, by which the large church organ [the Hope-Jones] is used by pupils, is expensive and unsatisfactory to all concerned, and a chapel organ will be of great benefit to college and community.

From this we know “Professor Butler” served as the organist. It seems Pomona students were practicing on the church’s Hope-Jones organ, and a fundraiser was organized to purchase a chapel organ for use on campus. Possibly the same chapel in Holmes Hall formerly used as a place of worship for the congregation.<sup>4</sup> The results of the fundraiser and subsequent purchase of a new chapel organ are unknown.

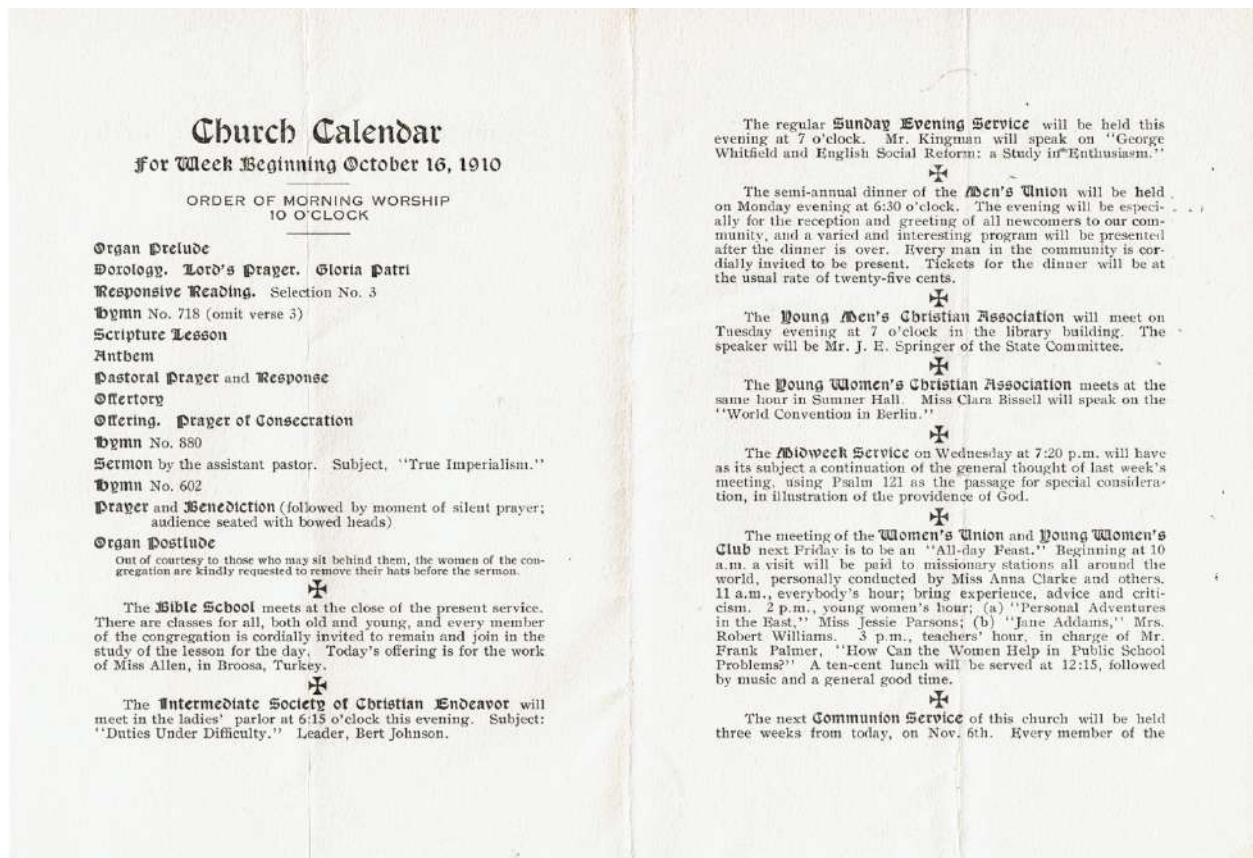


Figure 4. One of the oldest extant bulletins, 1910.

Walter Hartley is listed as “Organist and Director” in a bulletin dated December 4, 1921.

<sup>4</sup> Holmes Hall was demolished in 1990.

He also served as professor of organ at Pomona College from 1915-1926. By 1921 he was serving as both “organist and director” while at CUCC. In a letter I obtained from Graydon Beeks I learned that Hartley only served CUCC for one year.

In the 1920s a clearer picture of the music staff finally emerges. Vinal (Palmer) Frederickson (1894-1991) is briefly mentioned by Bruner:

Vinal Frederickson also began in that year [1923?] her eighteen years of service as organist.<sup>5</sup>

I was able to locate a book of genealogy about the Palmer family which luckily contained an excellent summary of Vinal’s career and personal life.<sup>6</sup> As her story has never been fully told, and she only received one sentence in Bruner’s book, I am including the following account in full:

Vinal Charlotte Palmer lived as a child in Ontario and Upland, California, moving with her parents to Claremont in 1906. At the age of 6 she began seriously to prepare for a career in music, pursuing her studies intently from that time onward without interruption. In 1908 she entered the School of Music of Pomona College, graduating in 1913 on completion of an intensive course of instruction in piano, pipe-organ, harmony and theory of music.<sup>7</sup> Appointed to the faculty of Chaffey Union High School and later of Chaffey Junior College in Ontario in 1914, she continued in that position until 1932 when she resigned to devote herself to private piano and pipe-organ instruction and pipe-organ work. **Over a period of 17 years she was pipe-organist of the Claremont Community Church and the Ontario Congregational Church** [author’s emphasis]. Although her career has emphasized teaching, she has appeared on various occasions

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<sup>5</sup> Bruner, 31. It appears she was organist from 1923-1940, the year “Doc” Blanchard began.

<sup>6</sup> Arthur Palmer, The First William Palmer of Augusta County, Virginia, and His Descendants: A Genealogical Account, 1964, page 58.  
[http://wvancestry.com/ReferenceMaterial/Files/The\\_First\\_William\\_Palmer\\_of\\_Augusta\\_County\\_and\\_his\\_Descendants.pdf](http://wvancestry.com/ReferenceMaterial/Files/The_First_William_Palmer_of_Augusta_County_and_his_Descendants.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> These dates appear spurious. She is listed as a member of the class of 1912 in the Claremont High School Alumni Association. Palmer is listed in Pomona College’s 1915 “Metate” yearbook as the pianist for the Women’s Glee Club as class of 1916. But since up until 1927 the “Metate” was published by the junior class, which featured their graduation year on the cover. So the graduation year of 1916 is correct.

in concert and in special pipe-organ programs. Seeking always the ultimate in her art she pursued advanced studies with Moritz Moszkowski in Paris in 1914 (returning home after the outbreak of World War I), later with Leopold Godowsky in Los Angeles, with Olga Steeb in Los Angeles in 1923, and with Paolo Gallico in New York in 1924-25.

For some years Vinal Palmer Fredericksen has been an active member of the Foothill Philharmonic Committee, a group organized to aid the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra and affiliated with the Southern California Symphony Association. She is also Chairman of the Youth Concert Committee which each year arranges a Philharmonic concert in Bridges Auditorium, Claremont, for interested children of the schools in the San Gabriel Valley and adjacent districts.

She has been a frequent visitor to the Eastern United States, the Pacific Northwest and Canada. In Ontario she is a member of the Congregational Church and the Friday Afternoon Club. She also shares the interest of her husband in Southern California Rotary affairs and in the University Club of Claremont. Her avocation is the growing of camelias.



Figure 5. Vinal Palmer Fredericksen in 1932. From the 1932 Chaffey College Yearbook. Special thanks to Kelly Zackman, Senior Librarian, Local History, Ontario City Library.

Vinal Fredericksen was still remembered in 1992 when CUCC established a fund in her name to build a new instrument. Perhaps this was done to honor her recent passing in 1991.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See page 59.



Ralph Lyman (1883-1954) came to Pomona College in 1917 to serve on the music faculty and shortly thereafter assumed the role as “director of music” at the church.<sup>9</sup> From about 1919 to 1948 Lyman conducted the choirs at CUCC and must have worked closely with Vinal Fredericksen.<sup>10</sup> Although there are no recordings of music from those days, there are some old wire tapes of various sermons throughout the 1940s and 50s. From the surviving bulletins we can see that the high standard for excellent church music continued through the 1930s and 1940s.

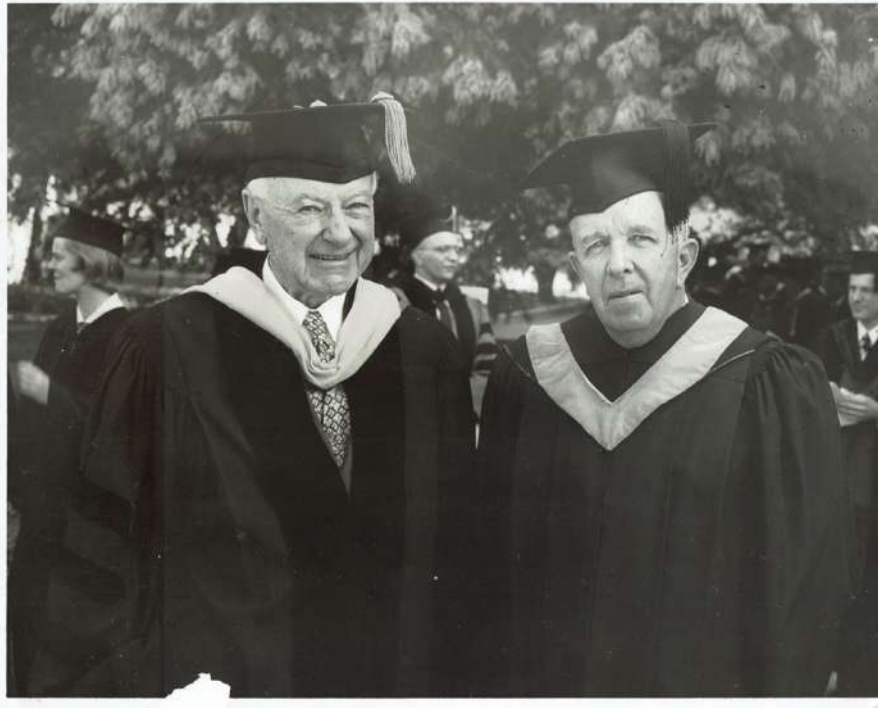


Figure 6. Ralph Lyman (left) with Walter Allen, photo dated 1954.

During the 1930s another Pomona College music professor was active on the scene, although he was only involved tangentially with the church. Joseph Clokey (1890-1960) is

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<sup>9</sup> Bruner indicates the years were 1923-24, page 31.

<sup>10</sup> According to records at Pomona College, Lyman was already at the church by 1919, because there is a record of him conducting a performance of *The Seven Last Words of Christ* by Dubois in a joint venture with college students and the church choir.

noteworthy for several reasons. He was a prominent church musician on the national level as an organist, composer, and author.<sup>11</sup> Of all the composers to pass through Claremont in the past 100 years, he is perhaps the most significant. Many of his choral works remain in print to this day—several of which were written in Claremont. We know from extant bulletins that Clokey occasionally played at the church as a substitute organist, and he was commissioned in 1954/55 to compose a dedicatory anthem celebrating the new sanctuary.<sup>12</sup> In addition, William “Doc” Blanchard (1905-1978) dedicated an anthem to Clokey<sup>13</sup> which suggests a close working relationship. Moreover, Clokey’s organ music was regularly played at the church (and still is to this day), including the prelude to the 1956 service dedicating the Moeller pipe organ. Clokey also worked with Blanchard on the specifications of the 1956 instrument and served on the design committee. Lastly, no one can discuss Clokey without also mentioning that his adopted son, Art Clokey (1921-2010), was the creator of the stop-motion animated character Gumby.

One of Joseph Clokey’s most successful and subtle anthems is *Treasures in Heaven* (1937) for unaccompanied mixed voices. The anthem is more artful and sophisticated than the standard fare often churned out by church music composers. It is composed in a flowing mixed meter, analogous to harmonized plainchant. The harmony is somewhat unstable; he avoids firm resolutions and often cadences on a final, inverted chord. His use of dissonance is effective and poignant. We know it was written in Claremont, but we don’t know if it was composed for services at Pomona College, the church, or both. It seems likely *Treasures in Heaven* was sung at

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<sup>11</sup> His short book “In Every Corner Sing” (1945) was an important treatise on church music in America in the early/mid twentieth century and remains an interesting read today.

<sup>12</sup> *The House of God*, for organ and mixed voices, dated August 12, 1955. I don’t know if it was ever published. The church retains some “ozalid” copies of the manuscript.

<sup>13</sup> *From the Morning Watch*, 1940.

the church, but I have not found evidence in any surviving bulletins. The work remains in print to this day and has even been re-recorded by the publisher for promotional use.<sup>14</sup>

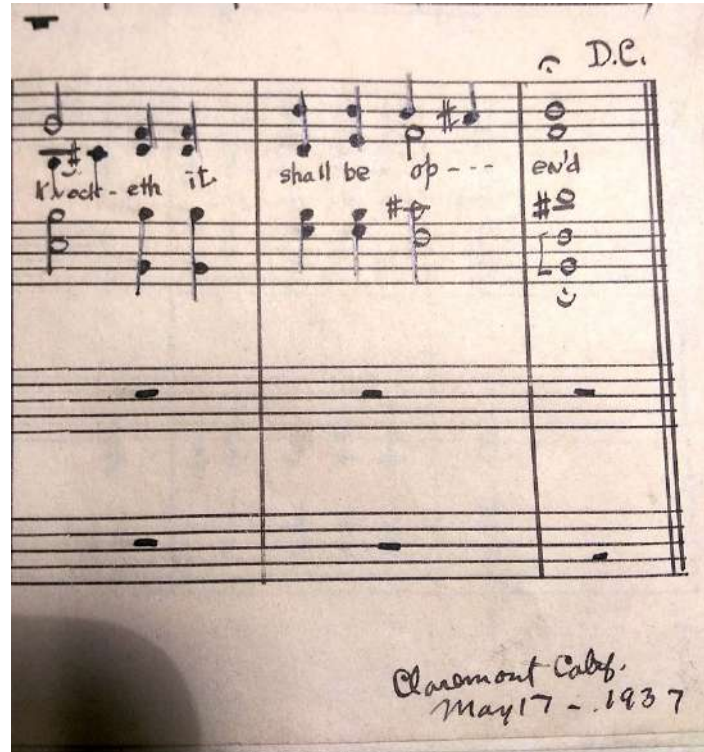


Figure 7. Clokey's signature on the manuscript score of *Treasures in Heaven*, which reads: Claremont, Calif. May 17-1937.<sup>15</sup>

Clokey left Pomona College in 1939 to serve at Miami University, where he remained until 1946. He returned to the Claremont area in the late 1940s or early 1950s and remained active in church and community life. It was during this later period that he consulted on the 1950s era organ and composed the dedicatory anthem for the new sanctuary.

<sup>14</sup> [https://jubilatemusic.com/products/treasures-in-heaven?\\_pos=1&\\_sid=713ae5dc5&\\_ss=r](https://jubilatemusic.com/products/treasures-in-heaven?_pos=1&_sid=713ae5dc5&_ss=r)

<sup>15</sup> Joseph Clokey Papers, Honnold library, Special Collections. Claremont Colleges, Claremont, CA.

## Chapter 2: We Have Buildded a Temple<sup>16</sup>, 1940-1980

The years 1937-1941 brought much change to CUCC. Vinal Fredericksen departed as organist, and, at about the same time, Clokey was succeeded by a young organist/composer in 1938 named William “Doc” Blanchard (1905-1978). Blanchard came to Pomona College in 1936 to direct the band, but soon found himself taking on duties as an organist. Although the exact date is uncertain, he was hired by the church by 1940 and was almost immediately commissioned to compose a cantata to celebrate the church’s fiftieth anniversary. The resultant work was *The Challenge* (1940), originally scored for mixed voices, speaker, baritone soloist, and organ (Blanchard later orchestrated it). *The Challenge* was premiered in Bridges Auditorium (“Big Bridges”) Sunday, November 9, 1941 and was a joint effort by the Claremont Church Choir, Pomona College Choir, Women’s Glee Club of Pomona College, Women’s Glee Club of Scripps College, Men’s Glee Club of Pomona College, and the Claremont Men’s Chorus. Ralph Lyman conducted and Blanchard accompanied on organ. This presentation is another example of the close musical ties between the colleges and the church. *The Challenge* was revived again in the 1960s for a similar collaboration. The 1960s program also resulted in the LP recording of some of Blanchard’s choral compositions.

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<sup>16</sup> *We Have Buildded a Temple* is one of the dedicatory anthems written by Blanchard for the new sanctuary.

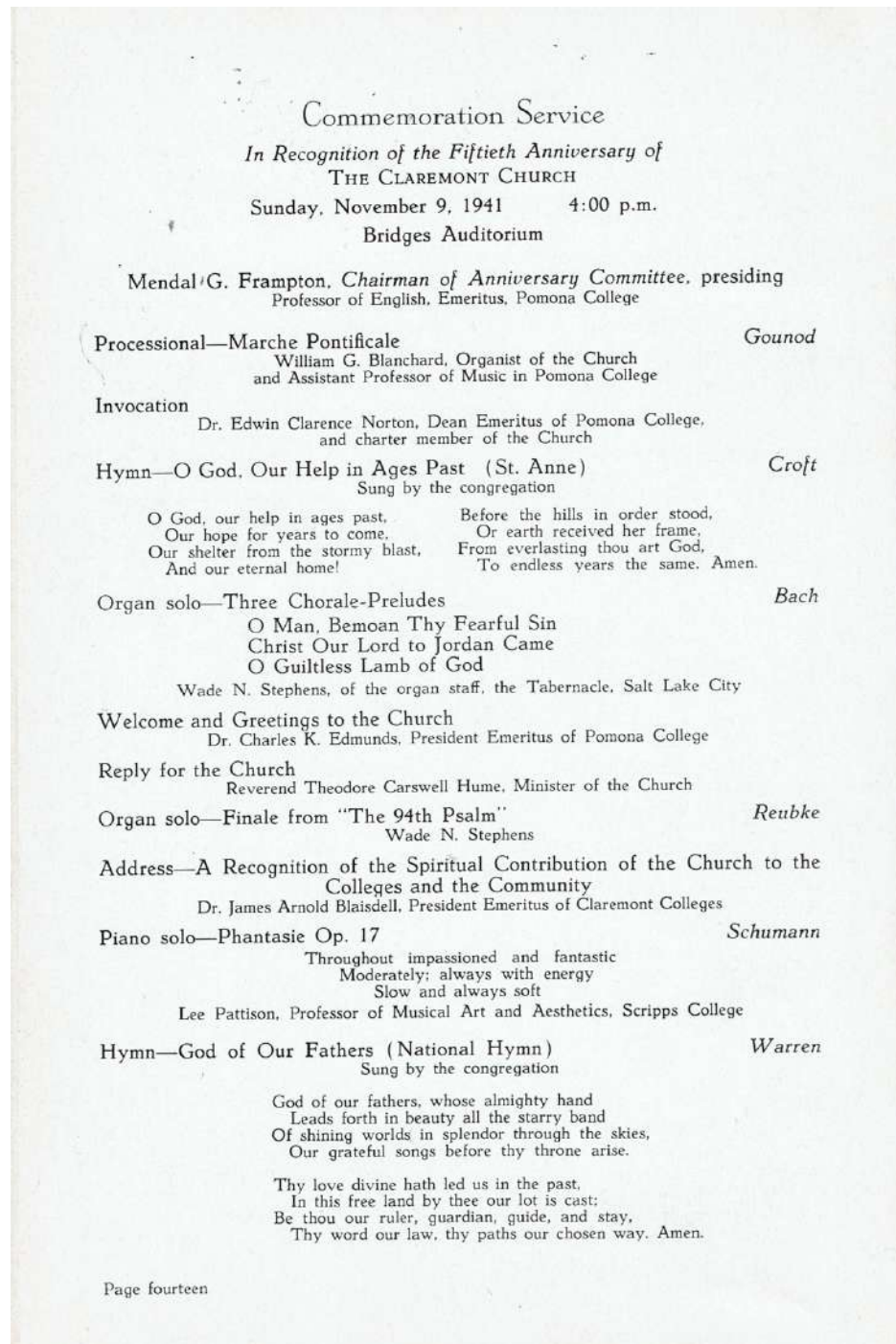


Figure 8. Fiftieth Anniversary celebration program, including the premier of *The Challenge*, page 1.

Anniversary Cantata—THE CHALLENGE

William G. Blanchard

Written by Mr. Blanchard at the request of the Anniversary Committee

Words of the first chorus by William Martin Blanchard, Dean Emeritus of the College of Liberal Arts, DePauw University. Words of the remaining choruses, excluding the canticles, written by Harold H. Davis, Associate Professor of English, Pomona College. Scriptural passages chosen by the Reverend Theodore Carswell Hume.

The Claremont Church Choir  
The Pomona College Choir  
The Women's Glee Club of Pomona College  
The Women's Glee Club of Scripps College  
(Mrs. J. Edward Caster, Director)  
The Men's Glee Club of Pomona College  
The Claremont Male Chorus  
(R. G. McCutchan, Director)

RALPH H. LYMAN, Director of the Church Choir, *Conductor*  
WILLIAM G. BLANCHARD, Organist of the Church, *Organist*  
M. SHIRLEY SNIDER, Instructor in Music, Pomona College, *Pianist*  
DONALD SYKES, *Baritone*  
BENJAMIN D. SCOTT, Professor of Public Address, Pomona College,  
*Reader*

Foreword

*In a world of unrest it is fitting that we pause many times to reflect upon the tremendous influence which the Church is continually exerting in the cause of peace and in extending the areas of good will.*

*It is the purpose of this choral work to exemplify in a manner humble, but none the less sincere, the essential spirit of this institution which, however often it may have humanly failed and fallen short, yet remains the last and best hope of humanity as it points men to the life and the way of Christ.*

W. G. B.

\* \* \*

ORGAN INTRODUCTION

THE CHALLENGE

Chorus—"Ye Sons of God, awake! arise!"

Ye Sons of God, awake! arise!  
Assert your sonship everywhere!  
In bank and shop and marts of trade  
Set brotherhood in front parade,  
Do as the Master said,  
Teach men to live;  
Waste not a single ray of light  
Lest there may come too soon a longer night;  
Restore to hopeless men the gift,  
Long-lost through heedlessness amidst the so-  
cial drift.  
The gift of lasting peace to all.  
Hold fast the Truth, send forth its light  
'Tis Truth dispels the gloom of night.

Peace comes not from flashing sword,  
Exploding bomb or martial board,  
But only by conceding man  
His place in God's creative plan,  
And the dignity each human soul  
Inherits from the God of All.

Proclaim to men of every clime,  
Yet stands the noblest truth sublime:  
Though bodies sleep beneath the sod  
The souls of men are Sons of God.

THE PRAYER

Air (Baritone)—"All our proud glory shorn  
away"

All our proud glory shorn away,  
We come before Thee in deep humility,  
O Lord our God, Thou in whose sight  
All our vain years are as but yesterday;  
Take us, we pray, unto Thy wings  
In loving kindness at close of day;  
Father, bind up our wounds, teach us Thy way,  
For Thine is the glory alone and the honor for-  
evermore.

Page fifteen

Figure 9. Fiftieth Anniversary celebration program, including the premier of *The Challenge*, page 2.

Many years later, when Blanchard submitted his resignation letter, he had this to say about his beginnings at the church:



“It has been something of a standing joke that I was never officially appointed organist: I just started playing and kept on.”<sup>17</sup>

Regardless of the hiring process, Blanchard was a fixture at the church for many years, serving from 1940-1975. During this time he helped build a new sanctuary, installed a new organ, composed many anthems and organ works, collaborated successfully with the choral director and pastoral staff, played organ for silent movies, was a productive faculty member at Pomona College, and even served as a volunteer firefighter.<sup>18</sup> He suffered a stroke in the mid-1970s and subsequently resigned as organist. The following document from his daughter Margaret, as well as various newspaper clippings and articles, provide a fitting summary of Blanchard’s lasting legacy in the community.

Dad was born 1905 in Greencastle, Indiana to William Martin Blanchard and Hattie Godwin Blanchard.

1918 at age 13 became the regular organist of the College Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church in Greencastle.

1924 Graduated from Greencastle High school.

1927 – 1928 took two years off from college (DePauw) to pursue a variety of musical interests: playing theater organ for the silent movies, demonstrating the Wicks organ, broadcasting radio shows on the organ, organizing a dance band called the Old Gold Seranaders, working as a projectionist in local theaters as well as teaching music lessons.

1930 Graduated from DePauw University.

1930-1932 Director of High School Music in Sidney, Ohio.

1933-1936 Director of High School Music in Sidney, Ohio.

1932 Married Mary Elizabeth Briggs.

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<sup>17</sup> Blanchard resignation letter, dated November 13, 1975. CUCC collections.

<sup>18</sup> A fascinating bit of church trivia: if the curious reader examines the south wall between the doors of the 1955 sanctuary where it abuts with the old Guild Hall they will notice a rectangular depression, about the size of a wide double-door. This is the remains of the special doorway used by Blanchard (and designed for him) to leave the church if the fire department was needed. The organ console used to sit in the south choir loft, behind the pulpit. In days before cellular phones he probably would hear an old-fashioned fire alarm or siren and know he was needed.

1933 received his Master of Music from University of Michigan.

1935 Director of Sidney Municipal Band.

1936 Hired by Pomona College where he worked until his retirement in 1971.

1940 Installed the pipe organ that he had played on at his first church job in his home in Claremont after having designed the chambers to house the pipes in new construction off the side of the living room.

Was commissioned to write “The Challenge” for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Claremont United Church of Christ. He also composed “Envoy” while on sabbatical leave which was premiered at the State University of Iowa.

1971 Retired from Pomona College.

During the last years of his tenure at the College until he became ill in 1975 he gave programs on the Silent Movies, demonstrating how a theater organ could bring a movie to life. He designed the posters, coordinated the showings and gave short talks beforehand to highlight some of his experiences – both as the organist and as the projectionist

1978 died of complications of a stroke suffered in 1975.

He was a remarkably talented musician, able to improvise with ease, transpose according to the need at the singer, choir or instrumentalist, play just about any instrument with expertise other than strings. He could hear a tune once and then recreate it on the piano. He could rarely pass a piano without sitting down and playing a few pieces to the surprise and enjoyment of the owner or nearby spectators.

Above all he was an enthusiastic, happy, energetic man – evidenced by much of what people wrote about him.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Letter to the author, January 6, 2020.



Figure 10. Undated photograph, probably from the 1950s. Blanchard is the man in the middle holding the axe. Note Claremont City Hall in the background. It used to serve as the fire department.



Figure 11. Blanchard composing. From the Claremont Courier, June 21, 1955.

  
1495 VIA ZUREDA, CLAREMONT, CALIF. 91711  
November 13, 1975

Dr. David Held and the Church Council  
Claremont United Church of Christ, Congregational  
Claremont, California

Dear Friends,

For thirty-seven years I have been your organist. These have been years of fulfillment which have offered me opportunity for creative growth. Moreover, I prize the personal relationships that have resulted from this association.

It has been something of a standing joke that I was never officially appointed organist: I just started playing and kept on. Now it seems appropriate in our best mutual interests that I officially resign. My stroke last summer makes it impossible for me to predict with any degree of certainty when I might be able to return to active participation as organist.

With all good wishes for the future of the Claremont Church,

*W. H. Blanchard*

Copy to Louis Ronfeldt

Figure 12. Blanchard's resignation letter, dated November 13, 1975.



# Remembering Doc Blanchard

The occasion was an impressive memorial service conducted for William "Doc" Blanchard, retired Pomona College music faculty member and pragmatic Renaissance man. It was Sunday afternoon at the United Church of Christ, Congregational.

The recitation of Bill Blanchard's musical accomplishments seemed sufficient to fill any man's lifetime. His academic efforts occupied only one corner of his day, in a manner of speaking, for he was also a motion picture projectionist, college and church organist, volunteer fireman, plumber, printer, band leader and a veritable Mr. Fix-it of just about everything.

My thoughts moved to his participation in community life. Bill Blanchard lived in Claremont for almost half a century. He was attached to both town

and gown in so many ways that it is almost impossible to recount and probably to duplicate. His life and community endeavors portray vividly sharp changes in the way we live. And the way we look at our home town.

Who lives in one town for 50 years any more? Californians are on the move, one set of statistics indicating that average ownership of a single-family home is 5 years.

Who could be a volunteer fireman? That sturdy bunch of firefighters long ago disappeared as an organization. Fire protection became "professionalized" and the waiting list to join the county fire department is long and intensely competitive. Wages, hours and retirement benefits, among other items, are highly attractive. Bill Blanchard and his friends were moved by the alarm and under the banner of community service. One story was told of how he responded to an alarm while clad in a tuxedo, and reaching the municipal truck first, became the vehicle's driver. That's going to a potentially dangerous situation in first-class style.

He began exhibition of silent films at the colleges and added spice to the program with zesty organ music. Certainly today any projectionist-organist must belong to a tightly-limited union local.

There was nothing at the community level for which Bill would do anything less than give his best. We are so busy in 1979, and so mobile, that we simply do not think of our community in the same way. In fact, most community endeavors today involve young people's recreation such as sporting events. For Bill Blanchard, town life revolved around serious and popular music, the church, service clubs, firefighting, printing or setting type for local events and always lending a helping hand to a worthwhile project.

During recent times, most of us have turned inward to seek personal gain rather than to sustain the community.

That sort of self-centered gratification is probably part of a cycle that will run its course in due time. Hopefully this will sound something less than pompous, but to me participation in the well-being of the town in which we live is an essential base for democratic self-government.

I do not necessarily yearn for simpler times. I yearn for more Bill Blanchards.

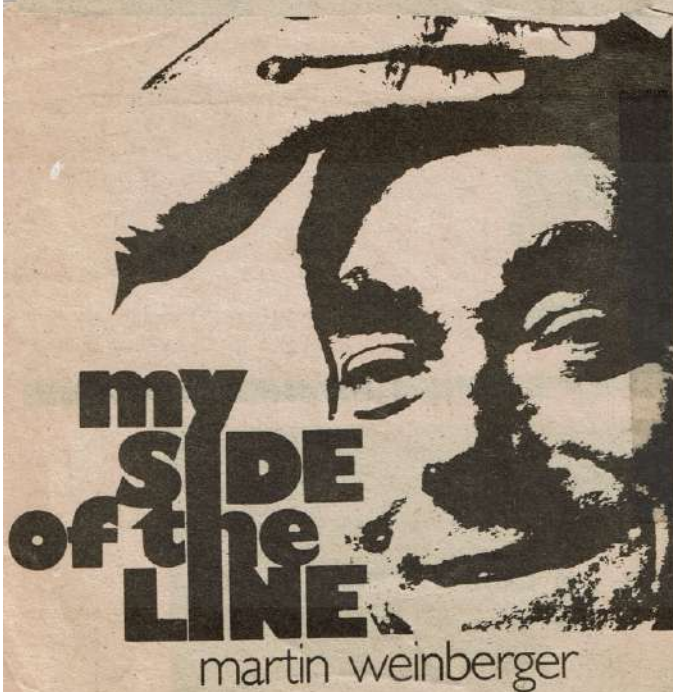


Figure 13. A fitting article honoring Blanchard's memory. January 10, 1979.



# Claremont organist 'Doc' Blanchard dies

William G. "Doc" Blanchard, professor emeritus of music at Pomona College and college organist for 36 years, died Tuesday evening in the medical unit of Mt. San Antonio Gardens.

Mr. Blanchard, 1495 Via Zurita, Claremont, was widely known for his service as a church and college



**WILLIAM G. BLANCHARD**

organist, as a composer and for his interest in silent movies.

Mr. Blanchard retired from Pomona College at the age of 65 in 1971 but had continued his interest in music. He served many years as the organist for the Church of Christ, Congregational, in Claremont. He also organized a Silent Film Series at Garrison Theater and performed as the organist during the series. His accompaniments to the films often drew standing ovations.

He masterminded the projection booth at the college's Garrison Theater.

Mr. Blanchard suffered a stroke in 1975 from which he never fully recovered. One of his few public appearances in recent years was to serve as the grand marshal in the city of Claremont's 1977 Fourth of July parade.

Mr. Blanchard was born Sept. 5, 1905, in Greencastle, Ind.

While still in high school, Mr. Blanchard worked as a substitute pianist in a silent movie house. By this time, he was an accomplished musician.

He pursued a double career as a projectionist and organist through high school and college. Mr. Blanchard decided he wanted to become a music teacher so, after several years of working at a number of music-oriented jobs, he returned to DePauw University for his bachelor's degree.

He went on to earn a master of music degree at the University of Michigan and also studied organ with instructors at Princeton University at the Union Theological Seminary.

He came to Claremont in 1936 as a member of the Pomona College staff and later joined the faculty of the Claremont Graduate School.

Mr. Blanchard's service to the community also included an active role in the Claremont Volunteer Fire Department for many years.

While he wrote sacred choral music, Mr. Blanchard was interested in popular music and jazz. He often appeared with local musicians in community programs.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Elizabeth; a son, William B. of Rancho Cucamonga; two daughters, Mrs. Mildred Blakeley of Brisbane, Australia, and Mrs. Margaret Nelson of Westchester; and 10 grandchildren.

Private services will be held at Oak Park Cemetery in Claremont with the Rev. David Held of the Claremont Church of Christ, Congregational, as officiant.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Figure 14. Blanchard's obituary.



The following quote from a program at the church dedicated to his compositions is a worthy tribute to Blanchard at the height of his career:

“The compositions chosen for performance this afternoon are representative. . . of a scholar whose amazing versatility is by no means restricted to the field of music. His contributions as a citizen to the Claremont way of life are a worthy counterpoint of the work for which he is honored in this event.”<sup>20</sup>

Lyman retired from the position of Director of Music sometime 1948. Ruth Krouch served as interim “Acting Director of Music” in the same year. She was a local music educator and taught at Claremont High School followed by Chaffey High School.



Bringing Claremont High into wide prominence is one who well deserves all the credit and acclaim she has received. All of the students have appreciated her enthusiasm in school activities. It has been a rare privilege for those in the chorus and ensemble to work under such an inspiring and capable director.

Figure 15. Ruth Krouch, with some other context of her work as a choir director in the community.

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<sup>20</sup> Anonymous. Concert program, circa 1965, “The Claremont Congregational Church Presents a Program of Compositions by William G. Blanchard with Combined Choirs and Chamber Orchestra.”

The new sanctuary was dedicated September 25, 1955, and the Moeller pipe organ was dedicated December 16 of the following year. The construction of the new sanctuary and chapel—along with the demolition of the old sanctuary—is well documented and discussed by Bruner. For the sake of this paper, the following excerpt is included:

The dedication of the organ at the eleven o'clock service on December 16, 1956, an occasion long anticipated, marked a milestone in the musical history of our church. An heroic anthem, "An Anthem of Praise," was composed by William Blanchard and dedicated to Ralph H. Lyman. It was sung by the choir, directed by Louis Ronfedlt. In the afternoon of that memorable Sunday a special service was held at four o'clock at which time Blanchard gave an informative and interesting explanation of the organ and demonstrated its versatility. The choir repeated his anthem. A church and a choir worthy of a cathedral, augmented by an organ worthy of both, had become a reality...<sup>21</sup>

Louis Ronfedlt (1912-2001) came to CUCC in 1949 and assumed the task of choir director. His tenure marked several decades of stability and collaboration between himself and Blanchard. In some ways the two men—along with Ann Copple—helped create the "good old days" of music at CUCC; the choirs were large, music was ambitious, and many projects were undertaken. Their collaboration was so fruitful that Blanchard included this comment to Ronfedlt in a touching, personalized resignation letter:

Dear Louie (sic),  
I think you already know that I am exceedingly grateful to you for the continuous support you have given me in trying out my compositions and then using them throughout the years. Ours has been a rather remarkable working arrangement: two musicians surviving musical temperaments for more than twenty-five years. I think we can agree that the result has been superior church music.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Bruner, 46.

<sup>22</sup> Letter to Ronfeldt, dated November 13, 1975.

Ronfeldt attended Pomona College, then earned a (masters?) degree in the late 1930s from Union Theological seminar. He then attended Claremont Graduate School for further studies but was unable to complete his terminal degree due to the untimely passing of an advisor. He was a charter member of the music faculty at Mount San Antonio College (colloquially referred to as “Mount SAC”), a position he held until his retirement in the mid-1970s. His tenure at the church lasted from 1949 until the mid 1980s. Sometime around 1980 his status at the church changed to “emeritus” choir conductor. Ronfeldt also founded and conducted the Louis Ronfeldt Chorale, an ensemble that was active for decades in the Claremont area. The Chorale performed ambitious works, such as Verdi’s Requiem.

Ronfeldt was a composer, although less successful than Blanchard (Ronfeldt didn’t publish). A commentary and list of both men’s compositions follows in the appendix.

Ronfeldt collaborated with Blanchard on many projects, including the production of several vinyl records. These recordings are an invaluable primary source, as they capture Blanchard’s music in their original context. Special thanks to Claremont Heritage and its executive director David Shearer for digitizing these analog recordings.

Ronfeldt presided over a prosperous era in CUCC’s music-making. Of special interest today are photographs showing the choirs at church, some with Ronfeldt included. The spaces remain relatively unchanged. The following is a birthday poem written by the choir in honor of Louis. Here we see that choirs have always been, and remain, groups filled with fun-loving, creative people.

October 23, 1958

Now, Louis, we know you have added  
a year,

So we offer these gifts to add  
to your cheer.

A STAFF for your aging old limbs  
we here give,

For you must get around as long as  
you live.

Here is a CHORD to bring harmony  
Between Doc, the organ, the choir  
and thee.

Here is a BAR, but there's nothing  
to drink.

However, we toast you: Please  
keep in the pink!

(over)

Figure 16. Poem written for Louis Ronfeldt by "the church choir," dated 1958, page 1.

Here is the KEY to our loving  
hearts  
From each one of us in the four  
major parts.  
And now for a change, we give  
you the BEAT.  
Natural or sharp, we hope we're  
"all rete."  
Here is a FLAT, just why I do  
not know,  
But I couldn't find a sharp that  
in the bag would go!  
And last here's this NOTE to wish  
you today  
A life that is long, that is good,  
that is gay.

THE CHURCH CHOIR

Figure 17. Poem written for Louis Ronfeldt by "the church choir," dated 1958, page 2.



Figure 18. Ronfeldt at Union Theological Seminary. Photograph dated 1938-39.



Figure 19. Undated photograph of Ronfeldt rehearsing in the Thomas Choir Room.





R. C. FRAMPTON, CLAREMONT

Figure 20. Undated photograph of Ronfeldt rehearsing the choir on the chancel.

Choral Miniature No. 6 <sup>by Louis Ronfeldt</sup>

*Continued after Prayer or as response after the Doxology or Offertory Sentence.*

*Intro to* →

*Organ*

*(Bass)* Sing praises to the

*(Tenor line)* Sing praises to the Lord

*word* Sing praises to the Sing praises to the Sing praises to the

*(Alto line)* Sing praises to the Lord sing prai-ses, sing

*(4 voices)* A-le-lu-ia. *(Start here)*

*Organ*

*Organ*

*Organ*

Figure 21. Manuscript example of Ronfeldt's choral music.



Figure 22. The Chancel Choir processing into the old church labeled “Last service in the old sanctuary?” Circa 1955.

At Blanchard’s memorial service, these words were recalled as being spoken by Albert Stauffacher:

Thank you, God for Doc and Louis, who often take our limping words and give them wings so that they comfort and strengthen people despite of us.



# REPORT OF THE MUSIC COMMITTEE

January 1 to December 31, 1955

THE MUSIC COMMITTEE HAS SPENT MUCH TIME in discussing the expanding musical program of the church as we anticipated our moving into the new sanctuary. Now that we are well established in the sanctuary, we feel that we have much to anticipate in the contribution of music to congregational worship.

For the past two years we have been looking forward to the employment of a full-time Minister of Music. Some of his duties could be outlined as follows: the general supervision of all musical activities of the church; directing as many choirs as it would be practicable to organize, and coordinating all the choirs from the youngest to the chancel choir; assisting the present ministers of the church in calling upon people, more particularly those who in any way might be related to the music program; working with the Christian Education Committee in the Church School; organizing a plan of sponsors for the different choirs, particularly for the younger groups; in cooperation with the Pastor, assist in planning all worship services, particularly all special music services such as at Christmas and Easter or at other times, especially giving attention to the spiritual and educational purpose running through all his work.

The Committee has endeavored to help Mr. Ronfeldt during the past year in finding new members for the choirs for the dedicatory services, as well as for the Sunday services through the year. We are pleased with the progress in numbers in the choirs, but should like to see them increased still more. We have initiated a project to provide baby sitters for young couples who can give service with the choirs, the children being cared for during the Thursday evening rehearsals as well as on Sunday mornings. We have found a number of young people who because of this provision can be members of the choirs, and are happy to contribute in this way.

We have met with the Staff Advisory Committee, and with the Education Committee for discussion of the matter of coordination of the Church School music with that of the church choirs. The committee entertained the chancel choir at an informal dinner one evening in May.

Dr. Joseph Clokey and Mr. William Blanchard were asked to consider writing special anthems for the dedicatory services. Both graciously responded, Dr. Clokey with one anthem, the "House of God," and Mr. Blanchard with two anthems, "Into the House of God We Come Now" and "We Have Builded a Temple," also an antiphon, "Lift Up Your Heads." "The Challenge" which had been written previously was performed for the first time with orchestra. These were given at different services, making a fine contribution to them.

The Committee concurred with the suggestions of David Scott in the selection of the maroon robes for the Chancel Choir.

We have given long and careful consideration to the music budget for 1956. Morton Johnson, member of the committee, has presented and explained it to the Board of Trustees. We appreciate its acceptance in the total budget approved for submission to the annual meeting by the Board of Trustees, the Church Council, and the Quarterly meeting.

ARTHUR BABCOCK  
Chairman, Music Committee

Figure 23. Music Committee report from 1955, the year the new sanctuary was dedicated.

### Chapter 3: Children's Music and Handbells

Children and youth music as well as handbells have a long history at CUCC, but it has been less consistent. And, as is to be expected, it is much less well documented. We know there were children's choirs and Sunday School music throughout the church's history. And, as can be seen in some old bulletins, there were children's and youth choirs. There is a single, precious recording made in the 1960s where some of these children's and youth choirs can be heard. What no one could have predicted was the almost total collapse of music ensembles for young people in churches during the following decades. Anecdotally, when I arrived at CUCC in the spring of 2018 the children's choir was a tiny group of six or seven young children...and that was all that existed. We've since tried shifting energy to "Sunday School Music" so *all* the children can sing together and have a sense of a critical mass of voices, but this creates its own challenges.

In the 1950s, 60s, and early 1970s Ann Copple was the director of the children's music at the church. The program was begun under the impetus of Rev. Harold Jones and his wife Mrs. Jones who, "...called on them [Ann and her husband] to say a graded choir program was needed and to ask Mrs. Copple to organize it."<sup>23</sup> And by all accounts she did a stellar job, working from the spring of 1956 until 1971. Under her tutelage there were three "grades" of choirs:

...she organized the Primary Choir [for young children], the Carillon Choir for girls in the third through sixth grades, the Crusader Choir for boys through the same grades and the Cantata Choir for seventh, eighth, and ninth grade girls. Six years later the Bellringers were organized [1961] when the church bought a set of 49 Dutch handbells.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Claremont Courier, page 4, May 5, 1971

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.



Her choirs were so good they sang their music memorized, and even participated in concerts at the Claremont colleges.

One manifestation of her and their success was a series of performances of the Crusader Choir...of St. Matthew's Passion [by J.S.Bach] with the Pomona College Choir and Orchestra under the direction of William Russell.<sup>25</sup>

In 1961 Ann had 115 children in the Primary Choir, 60 boys in the Crusader Choir, 60 girls in the Carillon Choir, 40 Girls in the Cantata Choir, a high school choir called Pilgrim Fellowship as well as the youth handbell choir.<sup>26</sup> I personally have no doubt that such heights could again someday be achieved by children's choirs at CUCC and elsewhere. Because children are children no matter which era they live in. Their accomplishments are only limited by the adults who govern their world. That, however, is a topic for a different paper.



Figure 24. Undated picture of a voluminous children's choir. 1960

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Claremont Courier, May 25, 1961.



Figure 25. Photograph labeled "Crusader Choir from [19]66."



Figure 26. Cantata Choir, 1960s.

In the same year she purchased the church's first set of handbells. The story of the first handbell group is interesting and possibly more nuanced than many people know. It was originally begun for seventh, eighth, and ninth grade boys, "...designed to give them a musical experience when their voices are unpredictable."<sup>27</sup> In other words, lacking confidence that young men with changing voices could sing well, they were given handbells.

Copple retired from her position in 1971 and the Claremont Courier honored her with a substantive article. It concludes with this tribute:

Of the church assignment she is leaving, Ann Copple says, "One of my favorite hymns is, 'O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing.' Who knows? Perhaps Dave and I have come near that goal."<sup>28</sup>



Figure 27. Ann Copple, undated photograph published in the Claremont Courier, 1971.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

## **Chapter 4: Change and Renewal, 1980-2020**

After the passing of Blanchard and Ronfeldt, CUCC's music ministry entered a period of transition, in some ways similar to the departure of Vinal Fredericksen and Ralph Lyman decades earlier. Several musicians served as interims through the late 1970s and early 1980s. Throughout these changing times the high standards of music were sustained by faithful staff musicians. But church music is truly sustained by the volunteer musicians, who serve week after week and year after year. A word should be added to commend the mostly anonymous choir members who have sung and played at Claremont UCC (and in Christian churches around the world and throughout history!). Without volunteer musicians the worship life of the church would suffer greatly. It is only because people continue to attend rehearsals that we have a church music program at all. In the following pages we move into more recent history. Many of the musicians are alive and well. So, whenever possible, they speak for themselves.

A monumental service to the church began in 1971 when Lee Waggener succeeded Ann Copple as director of children's music. Lee and her husband Bill worked tirelessly until 2018 with children's choirs and handbells. Lee founded the adult handbell program which continues to this day. I conducted a written interview with Lee:

### **• How many choirs did you direct in your time at CUCC?**

The choir that began in 1974 and is still going is the Choral Bells. At one time we had a group called the Carilloneers which was a group of high school-college students that were advanced ringers. Over the years several advanced players who were older played in the group. We also had kids as young as 5th grade playing when our daughter and Robyn Echeverri were that age, the kids' group was the Campanile Ringers and it lasted until 2011. From about 2004 to 2010 we had the 5C Ringers made up of college kids. At one point early on we had a choir of all high school

girls and Mark MacKenzie. When I first retired we had a Wednesday Morning Ringers group made up of some of the Choral Bells who wanted to play more than once a week. We did programs for local service clubs. There were other ad hoc groups that we put together for special occasions.

• **When did you start playing for Disney Candlelight services?**

1992. We have played every year since then except for 1996. We were originally invited when a group backed out. We had connections through AGEHR with some who had Disney connections and we were recommended. Some Disney folks came to a rehearsal and we got the job.

• **What are you most proud of as handbell directors?**

We developed a program for children and adults that at one point had about 60 participants. Many of the singers in the Carillon Choir were also bell ringers. We toured throughout California, Oregon, Washington and New England, as well as 2 trips to Australia, England, and Toronto for Symposiums and tours. 28 of us toured New England with 3 choirs, ages 10 to senior adult. Our family performed as a quartet on tours and at conferences across the country. Bill has conducted several massed ringing festivals in California, Nevada, Illinois, Oregon, Massachusetts, and New Zealand. We both conducted a festival in Mankato, MN. We have also taught at many local, area, and national conferences as well as in England, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. We have had tremendous loyalty to the program throughout the years and consider our ringers and singers part of the family. Perhaps our most famous gig was with the Campanile Ringers in 1985 when we performed on "St. Elsewhere". The group ranged from 4th to 10th grade and we all had an unforgettable day at the studio recording, eating lunch in the cafeteria with the actors, having a tour of the lot, and having Pierce Brosnan walk out a back door of a studio and say "Hi". It was quite a day. That episode can still be seen on some of the streaming services.

• **What was your experience in working with kids' choirs?**

I accompanied the Carillon Choir, which was grades 4 - 6 at the time, during my entire college time with Ann Copple, director. After she retired I believe someone else directed the choir for maybe a year. I was hired in 1971 and directed the choir



until 1992 then again from 2006 to 2012. 1971 was in the middle of a church crisis and there were 5 singers on the first Sunday. All 5 also became bell ringers and Mark is still in the group. The choir eventually grew to between 30 -35 singers each week. Some of the singers stayed on in middle school which helped immensely with part singing. We put on a musical each year as a fundraiser for our annual retreat at Pilgrim Pines and participated in Children's Choirs Festivals. In 2006 when I was invited to take on the choir again there were 8 singers on the first Sunday. There was a very different commitment level at that time and most of the young singers had no music experience. I started afternoon groups which evolved into Orff groups thanks to the generous donation of Orff instruments from Georgia Warden. This brought in community families, many of who started attending church and the children joined the choir. We also did musicals during that time. One of the most successful was "The Rock Slinger's Greatest Hit" with Goliath played by Jim Martin with a young Zachary on his shoulders wearing a fierce looking helmet. The parents also participated in the play with some of the dads being the bad Philistines and some of the moms joining in the singing.

• **When did Bill conduct the Chancel Choir?**

From March 1987 to about 1989. We recruited many of our friends for the choir and for the 11 PM service on Christmas Eve in 1987 we had 51 singers.

• **What year did Lee play the organ?**

From March 1987 to sometime in 1988.

Bill and Lee shared much of their music career at CUCC. For their dedicated partnership the church is forever grateful. Many of the same handbell ringers who joined in the 1970s, and 80s continue to ring to this day. Many of the children they worked with have grown up with music as an important part of their lives and their faith journey. Lee also founded the treble choir Joyful Voices which provides a venue for women of all ages to sing, perform, and experience fellowship. Lee and Bill Waggener exemplify what it means to be “ministers” of music.

**Jon Bailey** served as interim organist/choir director in the early 1980s. He was chair of the music department at Pomona College where he also directed the choirs. According to his own account, he was at the church for “...less than a year.”<sup>29</sup> Around this time **Clark Anderson** also played. Anderson was an organ student at Pomona College. **John Steele Ritter** also played during this time. Ritter is a renowned pianist, organist, and harpsichordist. He was a professor at Pomona College from 1963-1991 and collaborated frequently with the L.A. Philharmonic.

**Rick England** was the Director of Music (choir and organ) from 1984-1986. While at CUCC he organized many concerts and facilitated some improvements on the aging Moeller organ. Rick moved on to teach high school and has had a successful career writing and publishing educational music for bands and orchestras.

**James Gall**, Director of Music, 1988-1992, as recalled by Wanda Griffiths:

He was born in September of 1949 and died March 25, 2010, in South Dakota, due to complications from the onset of early Alzheimers (he’d had it for a number of years but was only 60 when he died). James H. “Jim” Gall was Director of Music from 1988 through 1992. A native of Minnesota, Jim came out to Southern California to pursue a Masters in Choral Conducting at Cal State Fullerton. During his tenure at CUCC he used his significant sense of humor along with his strong choral directing skills to bring the Chancel Choir to a level of musical excellence that is not often found among volunteer church choirs. He left the position in 1992 to pursue his DMA in Choral Conducting at the University of Arizona in Tucson.<sup>30</sup>

**Wanda Griffiths**, principal organist, 1987-1990, in her own words:

I was Principal Organist from October of 1987 to September of 1990. During my time at CUCC I presented several organ recitals,

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<sup>29</sup> Email to the author.

<sup>30</sup> Email to the author.

including one featuring the music of Wilbur Held, revered church musician who was retired and living in Claremont at that time. I also laid the groundwork for beginning the process of replacing the existing pipe organ. The instrument could no longer be maintained in a way that would allow it to function consistently and was therefore no longer capable of supporting the church's needs for congregational song, accompanying the choir, and supporting other groups in concert.

**Charlotte Van Ryswyk** is a church member, violinist, and music teacher in Claremont.

She directed the Carillon Choir in the early 1990s and helped produce several youth musicals, including *Of Mice and Mozart*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and *It's Hot in the Furnace*. The plays took place on the Refectory stage. Ellen Laszlo often accompanied. Some additional comments from Charlotte about her roll at CUCC:

I was a Carillon Choir director sandwiched between Lee's two terms. I led the choir starting in the early 1990s (I actually think it was 1991) for several years until I went on sabbatical. Then Georgia Warden, a soprano in the Chancel Choir, took over that year. When I returned, we co-led the choir, putting on a number of musicals.

**Michael Deane Lamkin** was a music professor at Scripps College. He retired in 2010 after more than 25 years of service to the school. He was Director of Music at CUCC from 1990-2015. The following biographical information is from the Scripps College website:

Lamkin founded and conducted the Claremont Chamber Orchestra in 1979. In 1996, the orchestra had grown so significantly that the name was changed to the Claremont Concert Orchestra as it remains today. On Sunday, May 2, 2010, Lamkin conducted his final performance with the Orchestra at Garrison Theater in the Scripps College Performing Arts Center. Lamkin also conducted the Claremont Colleges Concert Choir and Chamber Choir from 1977-1997. In addition to his service to Scripps College, Lamkin was also on the staff at the Classical Music

Festival in Eisenstadt, Austria for 24 years. From 2000- 2007 he served as the festival's Artistic Director and Principal Conductor. In 2007, he received the *Grosse Ehrenzeichen* — Great Medal of Honor — for his work in bringing Americans and Austrians closer together through music. This is the highest civilian honor given by the state government of Burgenland, Austria. In the United States, Lamkin is responsible for co-founding the Haydn Society of California, and assisting with the organization of the Haydn Society of North America. In addition to his conducting at Scripps College, and the Classical Music Festival in Eisenstadt, Lamkin has also conducted concerts at the Iowa Center for the Arts, the Munich Conservatory Opera School, the Bratislava Chamber Orchestra in Slovakia, and in Xiamen, China. He holds degrees from Baylor University (BME. and MM) and a PhD in musicology from the University of Iowa.<sup>31</sup>

Michael Lamkin was hired in 1977 as faculty at Scripps College and as Director of the Joint Music Program of Claremont McKenna, Harvey Mudd, Pitzer and Scripps, with responsibilities as choral director and courses in music history and humanities. During his 33 years as a faculty member, he served several terms as Chair of the Music Department, faculty chair of several academic committees, and was appointed as Vice President and Dean of the Faculty for 11 of his last 13 years of tenure.

**Michael Lamkin, in his own words:**

During 15 years of service as Director of the Chancel Choir the choir contributed to Worship with an Offertory Anthem plus Introit each Sunday from the first Sunday in September through mid-June. On several occasions the choir would provide additional service music in the way of prayer responses or a second anthem. Frequent contributions to worship included vocal and instrumental solos, usually presented during the offering, with the choral work moved to enhance the scripture reading or pastoral prayer. Additional services in Advent and Lent also included choral worship. Choral music either coordinated with and enhanced the sermon topic with specific text or provided worshipful praise or meditation.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.scrippscollege.edu/news/releases/scripps-college-vp-and-dean-of-faculty-michael-lamkin-retires>. Accessed May 6, 2020.

There were usually four music Sundays each year with the Chancel Choir joined by an orchestra or other instrumental ensemble for three of those and with enhanced use of the organ for the fourth Sunday. The choir presented, as an integral part of worship, major works for choir and orchestra or instrumental ensemble, including oratorios, masses, Te Deums, and extended anthems, by Handel, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Faure, Durufle, Charpentier, Saint-Saens, Gounod, Rutter; and works for organ and choir by Vierne, Schubert and others.

The choir was supplemented by the church's own brass ensemble for the July 4<sup>th</sup> patriotic service; the brass also performed carols prior to the Christmas Eve 11.00 p.m. service. The congregation was fortunate to have many dedicated and devoted chorus members, with participation each Sunday of between 40 and 45 singers, and on the special music Sundays between 45 and 55 singers.

Once each year we welcomed the Night Blooming Jazzmen to our service for a jazz worship service. Especially appreciated was the support and leadership provided by the staff headed by senior pastor Homer D. "Butch" Henderson.

From mid-June to the end of July the Summer Choir formed, usually of around 25 singers, as many of the vocalists arranged vacations and other time away during these weeks. Soloists provided worship music in the month of August.

The highlight of those years was the redesign of the Chancel, the improvement of the acoustics in the Nave, and the addition of the beautiful new Glatter-Goetz organ. This organ project was led first by John Tower, working closely with the church organist Dr. Carey Robertson. Mr. Tower provided seed funding for beginning the process of visiting several organ builders, their workshops and examples of their instruments, generously contributing the first ten percent of the estimated cost of a new instrument, as well as vigorously championing the need for a new instrument with the congregation. The organ project became a part of a church wide capital campaign, which included several other projects. Following the death of John Tower, Dudley Rauch accepted the leadership of the project. Mr. Rauch provided essential enthusiasm, organization, leadership and resources as well as arranging the cooperation of the organ voicer Manuel Rosales with the builder and designer Caspar Glatter-Goetz, working with Dr. Robertson, to create an outstanding team for this project.

Subsequently a second organ, also built by Glatter-Goetz, was donated and installed in the Chapel. Both of these carefully and



lovingly crafted instruments create inspiring musical beauty for our worship.<sup>32</sup>

**Dr. Earl Richards**, Director of Music 2005-2018, as recalled by Chancel Choir member alto Lucia Galloway Dick:

Earl was lively and jolly as a director of the Chancel Choir. He took an interest in everyone. He had a good sense of humor, a quick wit, and an agile repartee. Professionally, he was dignified and well-spoken. He was also an accomplished pianist. In fact, we first knew him as an accompanist for Wayne Shepperd, bass section leader and soloist under Michael Lamkin. Somewhat later, Butch Henderson recruited him, hiring him away from his position at Pilgrim Congregational in Pomona.

The choir was a cohesive social unit during his regime. He was good at delegating responsibility, which included choir members who served as librarian and keeper of the membership roster; someone who took charge of the robes; and someone who recruited instrumentalists when we needed to assemble an orchestra or instrumental ensemble. Social events—at Christmas and the beginning of the summer—occurred predictably.

Earl inspired fierce loyalty from many of the members. But what I valued most was the opportunities he offered to sing some of the great vocal music of the Christian repertoire: for example, Vivaldi's Gloria, Rutter's Gloria, and especially Mozart's Grand Mass in C Minor, which we performed in concert with a choir Earl was directing in San Bernardino.<sup>33</sup>

Chancel Choir soprano Susan Achuff wrote this tribute to **Dr. Richards**:

Dr. Earl Richards, DMA, conducted the Chancel Choir at CUCC for many years. Under his leadership, the choir performed many large pieces including: Faure Requiem, Rutter's Gloria, Vivaldi's Gloria and pieces by Rutter, Mozart, Haydn, Vivaldi and Handel. Many of Dr. Richards' students from La Sierra University sang with the Chancel Choir over the years and went on to careers in music. Several of them sing with the LA Opera, some with the LA Master Chorale, some have recorded CDs, and some have gone on to earn doctorates in music. Dr. Richards is a gifted musician whose talents include playing the piano in addition to his choral and

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<sup>32</sup> Email to the author.

<sup>33</sup> Email to the author.

orchestral conducting. He is an eloquent speaker who frequently captivated the attention of the congregation when explaining the history or background of an anthem. His talent for teaching others was always on display as he guided singers and instrumentalists through performances. Dr. Richards always memorized the anthems for Sunday and worked out each detail of conducting so that he was impeccably prepared, but he was always able to improvise on the fly when a guest artist was sick or when there was a last-minute change to the service. Dr. Richards holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, M.Mus, and DMA in choral conducting, having studied with Donald Neuen at UCLA.

**Dr. Richards**, as recalled by retired CUCC pastor Butch Henderson:

Following the retirement of Michael Lamkin as Chorale Director in 2006, Earl Richards was selected as successor from among several candidates interviewed. At the time, Earl was Director of Music at Pilgrim Congregational Church in Pomona and was completing his doctoral work at UCLA. He already had an informal relationship with CUCC through his friendship with Chancel Choir bass section leader Wayne Shepperd. Wayne had brought to CUCC a connection with Seventh Day Adventist musicians. Since Earl was on the faculty at La Sierra University in Riverside, he continued that connection as several SDA students sang with the Chancel Choir on Sundays. Earl's tenure at CUCC for over a decade built upon the tradition of excellence established by Michael Lamkin.

**Dr. Carey Roberston** is Professor of Organ at Claremont Graduate University and Principal Organist at Claremont United Church of Christ. From her official biography:

Her career includes being a clinician, educator, adjudicator and concert organist. She also teaches music in the Fontana Unified School District. Dr. Robertson's efforts during an international ten-year search for a new pipe organ builder for the sanctuary of Claremont United Church of Christ contributed to the acquisition of the Glatter-Goetz/Rosales 1998 tracker organ. This organ is hailed as a significant contribution to the organ world. 2021 will mark Dr. Carey Robertson's thirtieth year of serving at the church.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> She began in December of 1990.

If “Doc” Blanchard was the rock of organ music at CUCC in the mid-twentieth-century, Carey is that rock in modern times. Her contributions to the musical life in the church over the past 29-plus years cannot be over-stated. She plays organ and piano in all styles, she accompanies the choir and soloists with confidence, and is a good collaborator. Her preludes and postludes are chosen with care and reflect the themes of the day. And she always provides music worthy of the grand organ. One anecdotal observation: I believe it is because of the quality of Carey’s musicianship combined with the superb organ that the congregation remains seated and attentive for the Postludes.



Figure 28. Principle organist Dr. Carey Robertson.

One of the most significant events of the past forty years at CUCC was the fundraising, building, and dedication of one of the finest pipe organs in the country. It is a marvelous instrument, loved by literally everyone who plays it, capable of the broadest compass of sounds

and colors, from the softest and most gentle to the most earth-shaking roar. The following chapter was written by Carey Robertson and covers the pipe organs in detail.

There are other composers and musicians of note in our church community. They include John C. Campbell [no relation] (1911-1990), Anne Hungerford Griffis (1937-2014), Judith (Judy) Chatfield (b.1940), James (Jim) Manley (b.1940), and Wilbur Held (1914-2015).

How amusing to discover there was another “John Campbell” associated with the church who was also a musician. **Mr. John C. Campbell** was at CUCC during the 1950s and 60s, as can be seen from bulletins. He wrote a little music in the style of Blanchard, which survive in ozalid copies. He published at least one choral anthem, *Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord* which bears this dedication: “To my friend, Professor William G. Blanchard, Pomona College, Claremont, California.”<sup>35</sup> Campbell did some conducting at CUCC and played the organ from time to time. His primary vocation was as a music teacher. Campbell’s son, also named John Campbell, is a successful film, TV, and radio composer. He lives in Upland.

**Anne Griffis** was a member of CUCC from approximately 1950 to 1962. She attended Pomona College and majored in sociology. She was married to a CUCC minister, Richard Griffis. She was a poet and wrote music for at least two hymns. One of her hymns is included in the hymnal *Sing of the World Made New: Hymns of Justice, Peace, and Christian Responsibility* (Hope Publishing, 2014).<sup>36</sup> Her hymn is #30, “Praise God for the World: A Doxology for Life

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<sup>35</sup> *Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord*, by John C. Campbell, The Willis Music Co., 1951. In conversations with John C. Campbell’s son, it appears his father studied at Pomona College in the 50s under Blanchard’s tutelage.

<sup>36</sup> It is not commonly understood that a “hymn” refers to poetry only, not music. In this case Griffis provided the words which were then paired with a tune. She did, however, also write some music for one or two of her own hymns. These remain in manuscript form.

Now.” Her brother, Frank Hungerford, remains a member of CUCC. I’m grateful to him for bringing her work to my attention.

**Judy Chatfield** has been writing melodies and words her entire life. Judy writes both texts and music, which puts her in a special category. A personal tragedy silenced her music making for a period of twenty years, but since she has moved to the Pilgrim Place retirement community she has “...found her voice again.” Her self-published collection *On the Journey Home* includes fifteen hymns.

**Jim Manley** (b. 1940), in his own words:

I was born in Holyoke, Mass. July 23,1940, to Janet Warren Manley and Felix Alfred Manley. He was pastor of the South Hadley Congregational Church nearby. I recall much singing in church and parsonage, and during World War II we sang our way across the country to California as Dad became the Director of the Pasadena Council of Churches. “Mamma Sang a Loving Song” is one of my early ballads about that journey on ration stamps. Later Dad served as associate minister at what was then the Claremont Congregational Church.

I wrote little hymns and songs in grade school. When the folk music craze hit in the 1950’s and 1960’s I continued to compose and perform. I led music at church camps and conferences and in the churches I served. “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness” is a response to a sabbatical year at the School of Theology at Claremont, California. It was my effort to communicate the experience of “The One Who Calls” as my major professor Dr. John B. Cobb jr. inspired me in his Process Theology classes.

I've published several song books and CDs, and "Spirit" appears in many hymnals and other publications. The music has taken me to Australia, the United Kingdom, Hawaii, several South Pacific islands, as well as across the continental U.S. and Canada. My wife Judy and I live at Pilgrim Place in Claremont, and we are active members of the Claremont UCC.



Jim's beloved hymn "Spirit of Gentleness" appears in at least fourteen hymnals and is a staple of CUCC's congregational song.

**Wilbur Held** (1914-2015) moved to Pilgrim Place, Claremont, in 1978. He became active at CUCC both as a substitute organist and as a composer. He was commissioned to write an anthem to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Claremont.<sup>37</sup>

Held studied at the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. For seven years he was Leo Sowerby's (1895-1968) assistant organist at St. James Church. He served as music faculty of Ohio State University for over 30 years. During this time he also served as organist-choirmaster at Trinity Episcopal Church in Columbus, Ohio.

Held contributed a significant amount of organ and choral music to the repertoire, having his works published by Morningstar, Augsburg Fortress, Concordia, Hinshaw, Beckenhorst, Sacred Music Press, and Hope. One of his organ pieces, *Nativity Suite*, has sold over 25,000 copies.

These staff musicians, composers, and community members bring us up to the present day. In my own short time at CUCC I've worked to improve the musicianship of the Chancel Choir and Choral Bells. I've collaborated with the pastors and staff, and helped the church to grow. I have found CUCC an inspiring place to work and therefore have had some moments of prolific composing. My music publishers include Augsburg Fortress, Concordia, Falls House, GIA, Graphite, Morningstar, and Sacred Music Press. I also oversaw the remodeling of the choir

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<sup>37</sup> *Who has Measured the Waters*, Augsburg Fortress, 1990.

room. This involved unpacking dozens of boxes and making all sorts of discoveries.<sup>38</sup> Some of these discoveries were the impetus for this book.

The most recent historical development at the church is the Covid-19 global pandemic which we're enduring at this moment. Churches all across the country are closed for the spring, with no opening in sight. The hope is to slow the spread of the disease and reduce the strain on medical resources. At CUCC we've cancelled all activities, including music ensembles, probably for the first time in the church's history.

On Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup> 2020, we undertook an unprecedented task. We recorded seven worship services concurrently, from Lent 4 all the way past Easter. From about 9:30 AM to after 5 PM we simply performed one worship service after another. I hired various musicians to help out, and we did our very best. The recorded services were live-streamed over Facebook for our members at home. Our hope is that this will help people to stay connected and reassure them that church life goes on. Carey Robertson even changed her outfit for each service to make it seem as though each one was taped on a different day. It was a Herculean effort, led by the vision and energy of our pastoral team, Jen and Jacob. It is unfortunate that this is the event to be recorded in this document, but it's having a grave impact on our church and society at large. I pray that the church will emerge soon from this catastrophe and that our community can gather together once again.

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<sup>38</sup> For example, manuscript copies of choral music by Blanchard, Clokey, and Ronfeldt, forgotten in boxes.



Figure 29. The Chancel Choir in 2019, under the direction of the author with the Chancel Choir with Jack Sanders, guitar and Caleb Conner, percussion, in a performance of *Carols and Lullabies: Christmas in the Southwest* by Susa.



Figure 30. "The Winds of God" dance group in 1995. Note the chancel, shortly before the new organ was installed. Thanks for Charlotte Van Ryswyk for the photo.



Figure 31. Ibid.



Figure 32. Choral Bells, 2018.





Figure 33. Pastors Jacob Buchholz and Jennifer Strickland, Christmas, 2019.

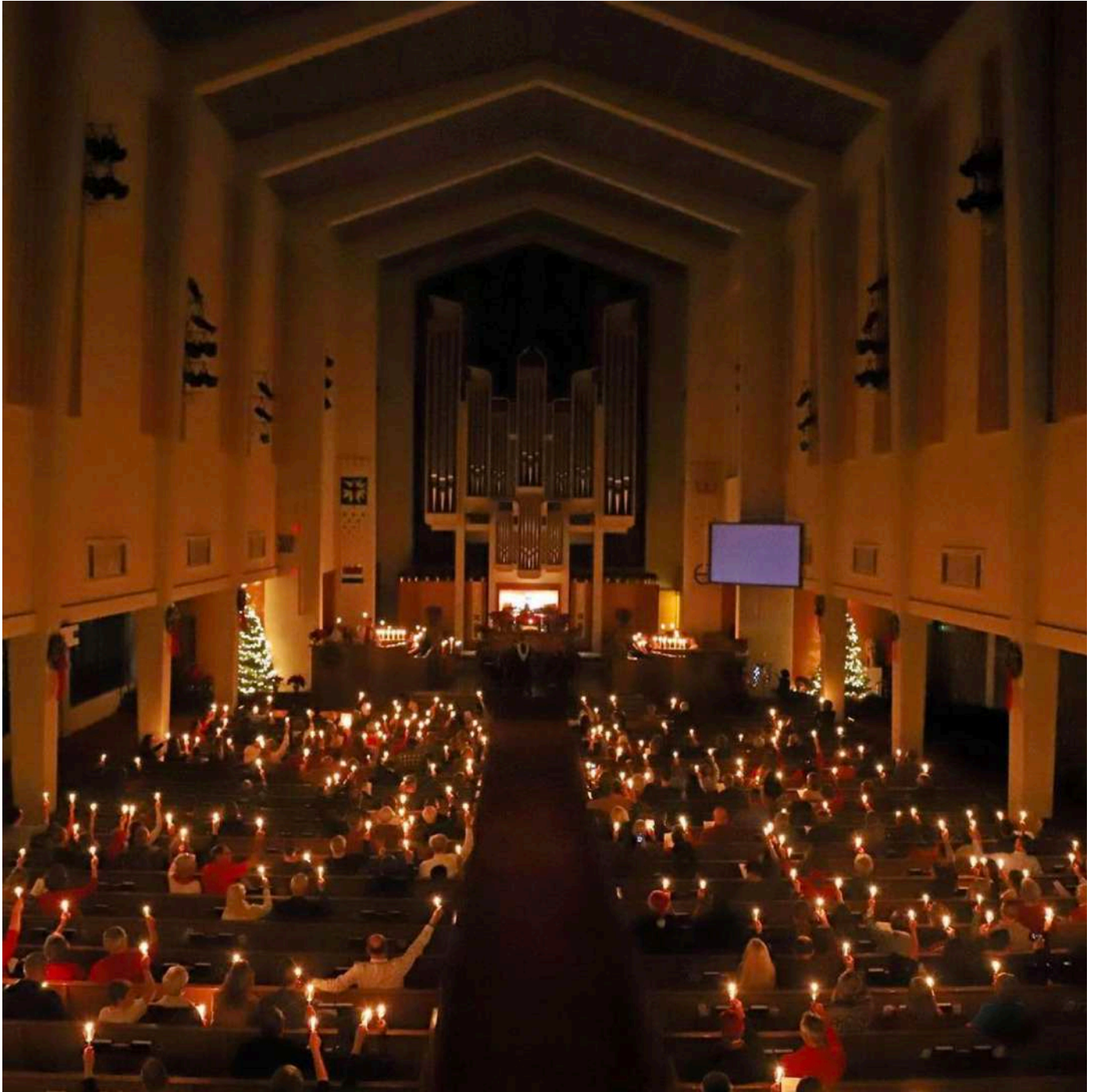


Figure 34. Christmas Eve, 2019.





Figure 35. The sanctuary in 2020.



Figure 36. An Advent service featuring the Chancel Choir as well as music students from the Claremont School of Music, 2019.



Figure 37. An anonymous Chancel Choir member's hands and score, 2019.

## **Chapter 5.A: The Glatte-Goetz Rosales 1998 Organ CUCC Organ History**

By Dr. Carey Robertson, Principal Organist

Music has played a central role in the life of Claremont United Church of Christ. In 1908, a three-manual Hope-Jones “unit organ” was dedicated and served a thriving music program for forty-seven years. When the present sanctuary was built in 1955, plans for a 100 stop Moeller organ were developed, but only a small portion of the instrument was installed due to budgetary constraints. In 1981, some additions were made, but by 1989, there were ever-increasing problems.

With the guidance of Dr. Ladd Thomas, Organ Department Chair at USC, several independent consultants and major organ builders were consulted as to the best way to proceed. The decision was made to replace the existing instrument and relocate it “in the room” taking it out of the deep chambers behind the *reredos* which acted as a sound absorbing screen. For the new organ, it became necessary to move the *reredos* from the front of the sanctuary to the rear balcony area, and the altar was moved forward several feet to make room for the new organ console and casing.

### **The Search for a New Sanctuary Organ**

I became Principal Organist in December of 1990 so was part of the project almost from the beginning. I initially prepared a preliminary stop list for a new instrument indicating the type of organ I envisioned as best serving the needs of this church.

In 1992, an Organ Fund was established in the name of Vinal Palmer Fredericksen, the church organist from 1923-1941. The new organ became part of the capital initiative campaign,

Strengthening Our Ministry, chaired by Jess Swick. In 1993, a “New Pipe Organ Task Force” chaired by John Towers was formed to guide the church through the process of choosing a builder, researching the need for any acoustical and physical modifications in the sanctuary, educating the congregation as to why a new organ was needed, exploring avenues of fund raising for the project and coordinating the project through to completion with appropriate committees and boards. As a means of educating the congregation, numerous organ demonstrations and tours of the organ chambers were arranged, displays were set up in the narthex on pipe organs, I regularly contributed articles in the church newsletter “The Fireseed” about the organ and wrote program notes that were included in the Sunday bulletins about a particular tone color of the organ featured in the music played that day. In 1992-93, I made a presentation “Why CUCC Needs a New Organ” to several boards, committees, Women’s Fellowship, Circles, Deacons and as a Sunday Forum. This gained much support for the project.

In 1993, John Towers financed and produced a movie entitled “The Pipe Organ.” It attempted to inspire, and inform – to describe what a pipe organ is – something of its historical role - the faults of the present organ – the potential for the church being a center for liturgical arts with broader community implications in addition to primary emphasis and benefit to CUCCs worship experience. Multiple showings were arranged and copies were loaned to church groups and families for home viewing.

The task force visited many organs to hear me play them to experience first-hand instruments that might be ‘right’ for CUCC. In addition, my search included travels to Kansas, Minnesota, Ohio, Oregon, Texas, Scotland, and various cities in Germany to evaluate and play a total of twenty-five non-local organs. The choir director at the time, Dr. Michael Lamkin,

accompanied me to Edinburgh and cities in Germany where we toured with Caspar Glatter-Goetz who hosted us at his home in Austria. In St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, Mr. Bunny, the organist, played for us and after I played the organ as well, we all had a toast to its beauty in the hidden 'Bunny's Pub' located right under the St. Giles organ! We also visited the Glatter-Goetz workshop in Owingen, Germany on the scenic shores of Lake Constance.

*Glatter-Goetz Orgelbau* became the final, unanimous choice to build the organ in collaboration with Manual Rosales of Los Angeles, who became the tonal director of design and voicing of the pipes. Later, I collaborated with Manuel Rosales, Ladd Thomas and Cherry Rhodes to develop the final stop list and console design. The contract between CUCC and Glatter-Goetz was signed in the Spring of 1995. The organ took one year to build in the Glatter-Goetz workshop.

The team of specialists involved in this project spans over several countries, from Germany to Switzerland, Scotland and the U.S. The services of Douglas Laird of Campbell & Arnott Ltd. were acquired to design the organ case due to their impressive design of the organ at St. Giles. The base of the organ there suggests that of a ship since the main donor was a ship builder. The work of Dana Kirkegaard of Chicago improved the acoustics of the sanctuary, thereby giving warmth, depth and character to music heard in the space while not sacrificing the spoken word. Fred Ashton was engaged as structural engineer and the entire project was coordinated by Brooks Cavin, III, CEDG, Inc. Architects of Claremont.

### **The Installation**

On St. Patrick's Day, 1997, four large containers from Owingen, Germany arrived in Claremont. Almost one hundred church members and staff welcomed the new organ and



helped carry the parts into the sanctuary. For the next six months, the Glatter-Goetz crew consisting of Heinz Kremnitzer, Norbert Jehle, Elmar Rist, and Christoph Schinke, assembled the organ, which weighed 25-28 tons, was 42 feet, 6 inches high and 25 feet wide. In June of 1997, Manuel Rosales and his crew began the voicing of the 4,041 pipes.

Manuel Rosales has been a major force in American organ building since the early 1980s. The initial tonal design was first suggested by Caspar Glatter-Goetz and further refined by Rosales. The details of pipe construction, wind consumption and pressures, placement of pipes on the windchests, etc. were provided by Rosales and his assistant, Kevin E. Gilchrist. The voicing team of Rosales Organ Builders included Rosales as team leader, Kevin Gilchrist, Rick Celestino, Christoph Rimmele, David Chamberlin, Duane Prill, Jonathan Ambrosino and John Panning.

### **The Finished Project**

The CUCC sanctuary organ, whose concept and construction span over four years and two continents, is the product of many innovative minds and skillful hands. It blends traditional organ building techniques with modern, state-of-the-art features. The stops (presets) are operated electrically, and a computerized memory system allows for approximately 2,400 preset stop combinations at the touch of a button. The key action is mechanical, or tracker, in which thin strips of wood (trackers) and a system of levers and rollers directly connect the keys to the valves that allow the wind into the pipes. This simplest and most traditional form of key action has been in place since ancient times yet is the superior system in obtaining the most excellent sound as opposed to electric key action.



The eclectic tonal design allows for versatility in hymn registrations, choral accompanying and interpreting solo organ repertoire. Even though the design is modern and completely new, influential were the organ building concepts of the time of J.S. Bach, the romantic organs of 19<sup>th</sup> century France, and organs of the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, including those of Murray M. Harris, Southern California's most prominent builder from 1895-1915.

The SERVICE OF DEDICATION took place on February 15, 1998 and included a newly-composed work written for the occasion for organ and choir by Dr. Tom Flaherty, Professor of Music at Pomona College entitled "Dedication." Later that same day, I performed the INAUGURAL RECITAL which included a commissioned work for the event written by renowned Southern California composer Norberto Guinaldo. Music was chosen for this recital to include that of all countries of those involved in this international project.

A year-long Dedicatory Series of organ recitals by prestigious organists followed this special dedicatory day. Performers included Daniel Roth, organist of Ste. Sulpice, Paris; Cherry Rhodes and Ladd Thomas, professors of USC and co-consultants on the organ design; Dick Hyman, whose recital also featured a commissioned jazz composition written by Hyman and performed by Dr. Carey Robertson; and Thomas Annand, a Canadian organist who performed on Canada Day.

In the words of Dr. Homer (Butch) Henderson, Senior Pastor during the project:

"Claremont United Church of Christ dedicates the Glatter-Goetz Organ to the glory of God, to the service of the church, to the benefit of students, and to the enjoyment of all!"

In the words of John Towers, Chair of the New Organ Task Force:

“The history of this organ is a remarkable story of the generous, dedicated individuals in the church who supported a group of talented, skilled craftsmen who have made this outstanding pipe organ a reality.”



Figure 38. The organ in various stages of construction.

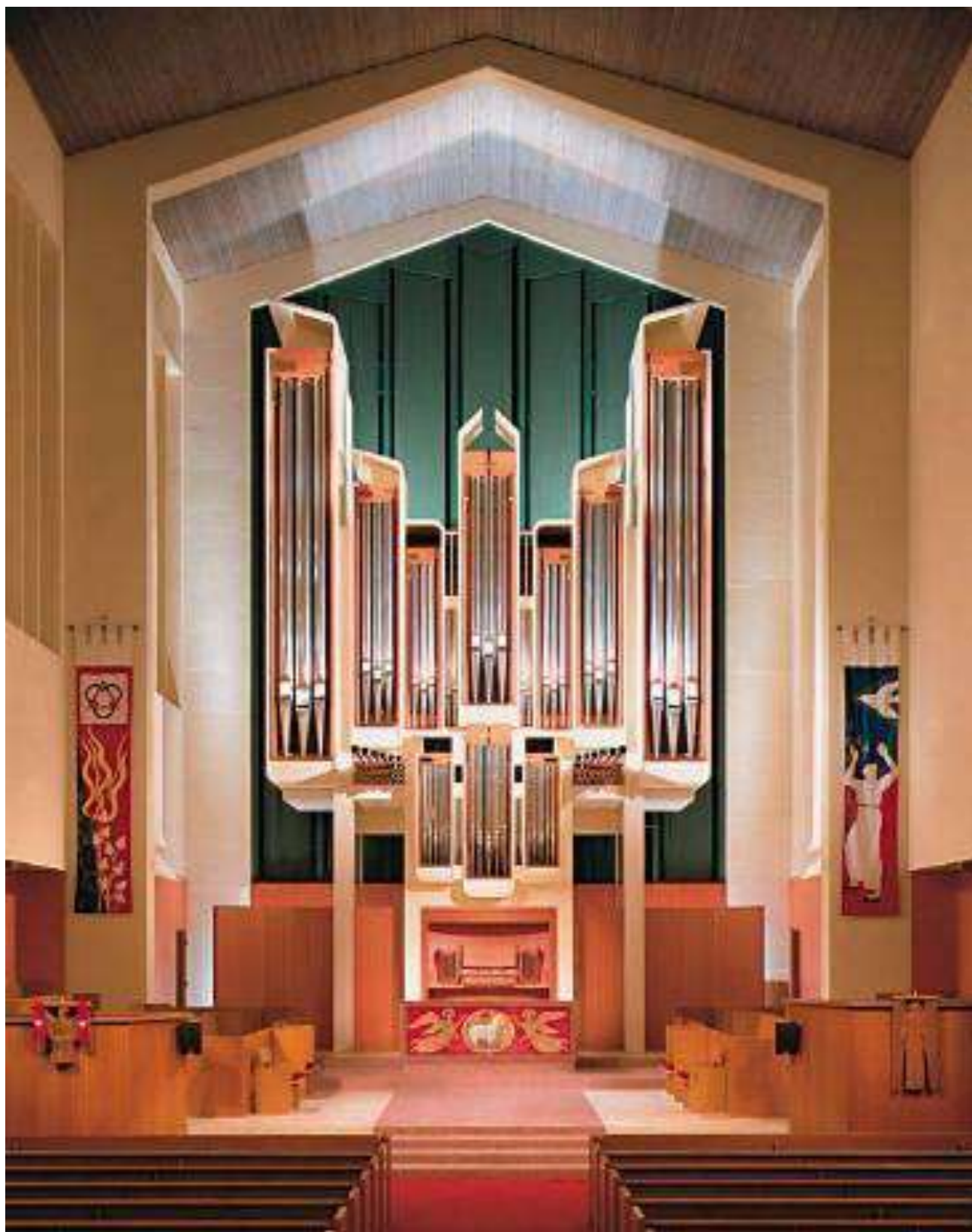


Figure 39. The completed instrument.

## **Chapter 5, B: The Kingman Chapel Glatter-Goetz Rosales Organ, 2003**

By Manuel J. Rosales, Consultant

The Glatter-Goetz in Kingman Chapel brings a sweet, new voice to the array of instruments in Claremont. In the modest acoustical space of the chapel, where one can appreciate music with clarity and intimacy, the individual stops have been designed and voiced to provide an array of crisp but gentle tone colors. Much like an artist's palette, the organists have at their disposal a full complement of tonal possibilities found in larger organs albeit in a more compact and efficient package. To further increase versatility of the tonal design, a special feature of this instrument is that one can play most of the stops from either of the two manuals.

Graham Tristram's bold visual design, with a façade of highly polished tin pipes, European beech hardwood and gilded metal accents, gracefully houses the rest of the instrument. With its 16 stops, 799 pipes, the tracker playing action, the expression box and even the blower and bellows, the inside parts are as beautifully made as any of the visible components.

No longer are the organist and organ pipes in the obscurity of the former arrangement with the previous instrument. This instrument invites the viewer to join with it in song and celebration!

## **Conclusion and Appendices**

I'm certain errors have been committed and accidental omissions have been made. But, where there was once nothing, now at least there is something. Hopefully I have organized disparate information into a single document that it is helpful and interesting. One thing we know about history: what we presume to be known will soon be forgotten and those details we consider unimportant may be greatly treasured by someone else. Claremont UCC has an unusually rich and complex musical history, primarily due to the parallel development alongside the Claremont Colleges. It is with gratitude that I serve this church and I'm honored to be a small part of what has come before. I hope the church continues to grow and thrive for the next 130 years. And I hope that good music continues to play an important part in the church's life.

### Appendix A: Richard Armour

Claremont UCC was also fortunate to have as a member Richard Armour (1906-1989). Armour authored more than sixty-five books and remains well known. He graduated from Pomona College and later served as faculty at Scripps College and Claremont Graduate University. He wrote three somewhat humorous/satirical poems about CUCC worship. The first poem was in response to the church's sixty-fifth anniversary (1955-56?). The second one was written in 1971 in response to a silent film "Doc" accompanied. Armour writes "...That was a triumph last night. Sheer genius, your playing."<sup>39</sup> The third poem is simply a tribute to three men: Blanchard, Ronfeldt, and Omri (who was church administrator).

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<sup>39</sup> Memorandum to Blanchard on Scripps letterhead, dated October 3, 1971. What "that" was isn't stated, but probably was Blanchard accompanying a silent movie on the organ.



LINES ON THE SIXTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE CLAREMONT COMMUNITY CHURCH

by

Richard Armour

Leaving to others the pious and serious,  
Permit me, my friends, to be slightly delirious,  
And also permit me -- I know you'd as lief --  
To be what is rare in a church; i.e. brief.

As one who sits back in the farthestmost pews  
(The result of late-coming, not what I would choose),  
While sermons are spouted and Scripture is read,  
For years I have studied the back of a head.

The same in the old church, the same in the new,  
I've sat through the service in some rearward pew,  
And there, though the preacher might whisper or shout,  
I've seen hair grow gray and I've seen hair come out.

I've seen lovers sit very close (it seemed fun)  
And prove, thus, that two can sit cheaply as one.  
I've seen married couples look daggers and knives,  
And husbands sit two or three feet from their wives.

I've seen those who slouch and those rigid as bats,  
Especially women displaying new hats.

I've seen people nod in assent and I've seen  
People nod in their sleep, if you know what I mean.

(more)

I've seen people eyeing the passing collection  
 With look of an auditor on an inspection.  
 I've seen children drawing with crayons and wriggling,  
 And girls who have started, and couldn't stop, giggling.

For years I've observed, in the new church and old,  
 And what I have noticed will not all be told,  
 But as I have sat in my farthestmost pew,  
 The church has grown older, and I'm older too.

And this I have noticed, yes this above all:  
 That though I grow weaker, and barely can crawl,  
 The church gains in vigor, in strength, and in drive —  
 And it's going like sixty, at sixty-five.

TO WILLIAM G. BLANCHARD

October 2, 1971

Gibraltar's other name's The Rock,  
Bill Blanchard's other name is Doc.  
Should Claremont ever fail or falter,  
Doc Blanchard will be our Gibraltar.

This maestro of the keyboard blends  
His music with his scenes of friends  
Like Laurel, Hardy, Chaplin, Keaton,  
A combination quite unbeaten.

He makes old movies young again  
And us young with them, we old men.  
Old women too, in haste I add  
Lest Women's Libbers feel too bad.

To those who were too young for knowing  
These movies in their early showing  
He brings more zest than one expects  
In movies rated R or X.

So hail to Doc -- his tunes, his movies --  
The grooviest of all the groovies.

*Dick*  
-- Richard Armour

A PLAYFUL-LOVING TRIBUTE  
TO WILLIAM BLANCHARD, LOUIS RONFELDT, AND EERO OMRI  
APRIL 30, 1975

BY RICHARD ARMOUR

It's time, high time, I think, that we  
Pay tribute to these unthanked three  
Who've given of themselves so freely  
That, these days, it's a wonder really.  
They're always doing for the church,  
Would never leave it in the lurch,  
Yet what we do for them, by thunder,  
I very often pause to wonder.

Why's Blanchard known as "Doc," pray tell?  
He works with organs, makes them well,  
Composes what would otherwise  
Be decomposed, you realize.  
His work's a pipe, and he's a pip.  
With hands on keys, he lets her rip.  
For church, or films of such as Keaton,  
Doc's music simply can't be beaten.

And as for Ronfeldt, known as Louis,  
He leads the choir in old and new,  
Brings forth from any singer's throat  
Some unexpected notes of note.  
Besides the voices, he presents  
The tones of varied instruments,  
And leads in hymns, though Lib prefers  
That they be called not hymns but hers.

And what of Eero Omri, friends?  
In him hard work with wisdom blends.  
He turns the sound device so soundly  
That hard of hearing cheer him roundly,  
And also keeps our cash in balance --  
The Government could use his talents.  
For all he does, and here's what's oddest:  
No one's more self-effacing, modest.

So Blanchard, Ronfeldt, Omri -- thank you,  
Right at the top we'll always rank you.

## Appendix B: Timeline of Musicians at CUCC

- 1891-ca. 1910, unknown (Bissell, Brackett?).
- Alfred Applin Butler, ca. 1908-1913, organ.<sup>40</sup>
- Walter Hartley, organ (& choir?), 1921.
- Vinal Palmer Fredericksen, 1922/23—1939 (?), organ.
- Ralph Lyman, 1919-1923—1948, Director of Music.
- Ruth Krouch, 1948, Acting Director of Music.
- William Blanchard, 1939/40-1975, organ.
- Louis Ronfeldt, 1949-ca.1980, choir.
- Anne Copple, ca. 1950-1971, children's choirs and handbells.
- Lee and Bill Waggener, 1971-2018, children's choirs and handbells, Chancel Choir (Bill), Lee (organ)
- 1976-1983, various interims including Clark Anderson (organ), Jon Bailey (organ & choir), and John Steele Ritter (organ).
- Rick England, 1984-1987, organ and Director of Music.
- Lee Waggener, 1987-1988, organ.

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<sup>40</sup> These dates are speculative. It is known Butler began his tenure at Pomona College in 1908 from an old periodical. However, it is not known exactly when he began as organist for CUCC or for how long he held that position. Ferris, Chester. "Southern California Sunshine." *The Congregationalist and Christian World*, vol. 93, issues 27-52 (1908), page 346, [https://books.google.com/books?id=QSx7h2BB\\_n0C&lpg=PA346&ots=b2G8TF0edk&dq=A.A.%20Butler%20pomona%20college&pg=PA346#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=QSx7h2BB_n0C&lpg=PA346&ots=b2G8TF0edk&dq=A.A.%20Butler%20pomona%20college&pg=PA346#v=onepage&q&f=false) (accessed March 6, 2020). He left Pomona College in 1913.

- Bill Waggener, 1987-1988, choir.
- James Gall, 1988-1992, Director of Music.
- Wanda Griffiths, 1987-1990, organ.
- Michael Lamkin, Director of Music, 1990-2005, Director of Music.
- Carey Robertson, 1990—present (2020), organ.
- Earl Richards, 2005-2018, Director of Music.
- Jonathan Campbell 2018—present (2020), Director of Music and Fine Arts.



### Appendix C: Commentary on the Choral Works of Blanchard and Ronfeldt

Many composers of note have passed through the church and the Claremont community. These include Clokey, Blanchard, Ronfeldt, Held, England, Flaherty, and others. Clokey's and Held's works are well documented.<sup>41</sup> Rick England and Professor Thomas Flaherty remain active in the community and may be contacted for further information. On the other hand, all of Blanchard's published works are out of print and Ronfeldt never published anything. Nearly all of Blanchard's and Ronfeldt's music was written for the community of Claremont United Church of Christ.

#### William H. Blanchard

The following list of choral pieces is not intended to be exhaustive or complete, but represents what was available to the author. It was compiled from Blanchard's own records as well as from scores found at the church. Some scores are simply "unavailable." If it is known what year a work was composed, that date is listed in parenthesis. Unpublished manuscripts are abbreviated MS.

#### Sacred Music:

- *A Prayer for Youth*, SSAA or SATB, organ. J. Fischer and Bro, 1948. Dedicated to his children.
- *African National Anthem*. SATB, (1970). MS.
- *An Anthem of Praise*. SATB, organ, three trumpets, trombone, (1956). R.D. Row Music Co. 1957. Dedicated to the memory of Ralph Lyman.

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<sup>41</sup> Held's complete works were compiled in December 2012 and are available elsewhere. Clokey's *corpus* of work is available in the Honnold Library Special Collections as well as online.

- *And they Shared a Vision/Anniversary Cantata/Prologue*<sup>42</sup>. SATB, organ, (1962). MS.
- *Anthem for Peace*, SATB, keyboard, (1949). Dedicated to John Browning and the Chapman College Choir, L.A., CA. MS.
- *Antiphons, Introits, Versicles, and Responses*. SATB, organ ad lib., (1956). J. Fischer & Bro. 1957. Dedicated to Carolyn and Wilson Lyon.
- *Benediction*. Unavailable.
- *Break Forth into Joy*, SATB, organ, (1974). MS<sup>43</sup>
- *Easter Anthem*. SATB divisi, organ, three trumpets, (1957). J. Fischer & Bro. 1959. Dedicated to Mrs. Charles A. Brown.
- *Father in Heaven Who Lovest All*. Unavailable.
- *From the Morning Watch*.<sup>44</sup> SATB, divisi unaccompanied. Hall & McCreary Co. 1940. Dedicated to Joseph Clokey.<sup>45</sup>
- *God of the Strong*. Hymn #311 in *Christian Worship: A Hymnal*. Judson Press, 1941, Philadelphia.
- *Hear My Prayer*. SATB, organ ad lib. The Willis Music Co. 1932.
- *Into the House of God We Come Now*. SATB, organ ad lib., (1955). J. Fischer & Bro. 1961. Dedicated to Louis Ronfeldt and the Chancel Choir of the Claremont California Community Congregational Church.<sup>46</sup>
- *I Will Extol Thee*. SATB, piano ad lib. The Willis Music Co. 1946. Dedicated to Edna Cogswell Otis and the choir of Christ Church Congregational, Fairfield, Connecticut.
- *In Triumph to Jerusalem*. SATB, organ. Harold Flammer INC, 1966. Dedicated to Harold Jones.

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<sup>42</sup> Despite the various titles and subtitles this appears to be a single anthem.

<sup>43</sup> It is likely *Break Forth into Joy* was the last piece Blanchard wrote.

<sup>44</sup> Possibly Blanchard's finest, most sophisticated anthem—worthy of revival. However, this choral conductor would omit final two measures.

<sup>45</sup> As noted earlier, this anthem is similar to Clokey's supple, flowing and modal *Treasures in Heaven*, composed in 1937. Did Clokey's piece (or Clokey himself?) influence this work?

<sup>46</sup> One of two dedicatory anthems for the 1955 sanctuary. The other is *We Have Builded a Temple*.

- *Lo! A Divine*. SATB, organ ad lib., (1956). R.D. Row Music Co. 1957. Dedicated to Seth Bingham.
- *Seek Ye a Greater Faith*. SATB, organ ad lib., (1965). MS.
- *Song for Christmas/On a Lonely Winter Night*. SATB, organ or piano, (1956). Summy-Birchard, 1958. Dedicated to Mary Elizabeth.
- *Sleep, Little Jesus*. SATB, unaccompanied (organ ad lib), (1965). Sacred Music Press, 1970. Dedicated to Margaret Lyman Langsdorf.
- *We Have Buildded a Temple* (also titled *Rejoice in the Spirit*). SATB, organ, three trumpets, (1955). MS.

Secular:

- *A Good Land, a True Land*. SATB, 1942. MS.
- *Headin' South*. Unavailable.
- *On Eastnor Knol*. Unavailable.
- *Sea Birds*. Unavailable.
- *Songs We Sing at Pomona*. Unavailable.
- *Star Spangled Banner* (arrangement). SATB, unaccompanied. 1972. MS.

Louis Ronfeldt

Ronfeldt gave the title “Choral Miniatures” to some of his pieces, as though he conceived them as a set or collection. Whenever he titled a work a “Choral Miniature” he also provided it with a number. Other small pieces were simply titled for the liturgical occasion,

“Christmas Introit,” for example. I’ve added incipit subtitles to some pieces for additional context. Much of Ronfedlt’s work is lost. What survives is listed below.

Anthems (dates included if available):

- *A Christmas Prayer*, SATB, organ, strings<sup>47</sup>. 1977.
- *His Fine Wind is Blowing the Future of Time*, SATB, organ, and guitar.
- *Mother’s Day Anthem*, SATB, soprano solo, flute, organ. 1978.
- *O Gracious Light*, unison, SATB, organ, piano.
- *The Star and the Shepherd Boy*, SATB divisi, two recorders, guitar, (use of keyboard is unclear).

Short Works for Liturgical Use:

- *Advent Choral Introit-Miniature 13: Behold!*, SATB. 1976.
- *Choral Miniature 6: Alleluia, Sing Praises to the Lord*, SATB, organ.
- *Chorale Response 2: My Peace I Give unto You*, SATB divisi, organ *ad lib*.
- *Christmas Introit and Choral Benediction: Gloria to God in the Highest*, SATB divisi.
- *Hear Our Prayer*, SATB, 1978.
- *Introit: This is Our Church*, two-part mixed (ST/AB), piano. 1977.
- *Miniature 10: The Heart of Christ*, SATB, organ *ad lib*. 1976.
- *O God, Amid Our Confusion, Hear Us*, SATB, soprano solo, organ.

Children’s Choir:

- *Children’s Marching Song*, unison, piano/organ.

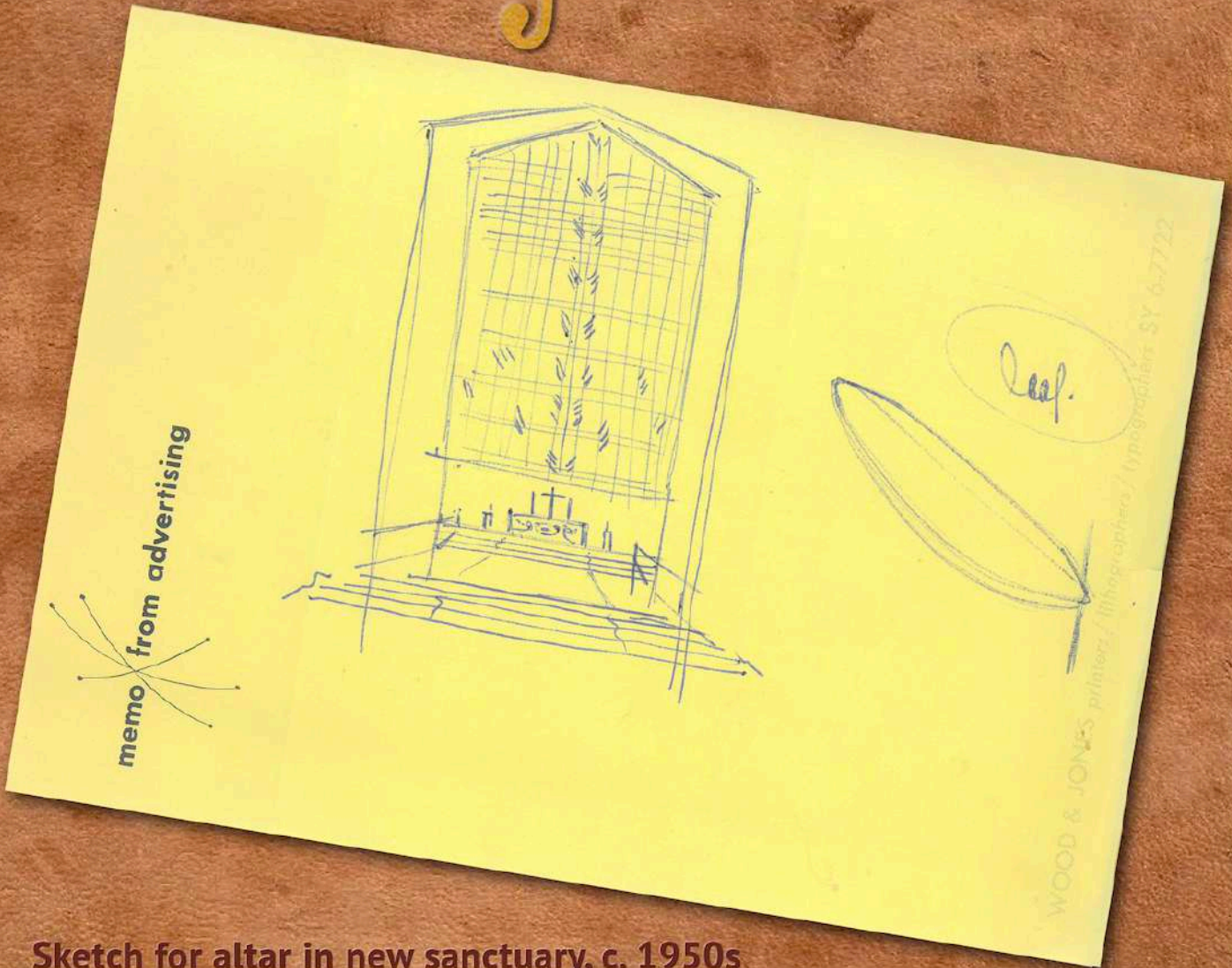
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<sup>47</sup> Only the first violin, page 2 of viola, and the cello parts survive.

Solo Voice:

- *Prayer from a Dream*, voice, piano.





Sketch for altar in new sanctuary, c. 1950s

Claremont United Church of Christ  
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