Sacred Music

Premiere Performances

G O D ’ S
everlasting
LOVE

A Service of Sacred Music

Composition by
Robert Cundick

Text by
Elder David A. Bednar

Featuring the BYU–Idaho
Symphony Orchestra, Collegiate Singers,
Men’s Choir & Women’s Choir
GOD’S EVERLASTING LOVE
A SERVICE OF SACRED MUSIC

COMPOSED BY
Robert Cundick

TEXT BY
Elder David A. Bednar

CONDUCTED BY
Robert Tueller

FEATURING
BYU–Idaho Symphony Orchestra, Robert Tueller, director
Collegiate Singers, Randall Kempton, director
Men’s Choir, Kevin Brower, director
Women’s Choir, Eda Ashby, director

SOLOISTS
David Olsen

COMMISSIONED BY
Brigham Young University–Idaho 2009

PERFORMANCE
November 6, 2009, Hart Auditorium
Rexburg, Idaho, 7:30 p.m.

November 13, 2009, Roper Auditorium
Twin Falls, Idaho, 7:30 p.m.

November 14, 2009, Tabernacle on Temple Square
Salt Lake City, Utah, 7:30 p.m.

November 20, 2009, Barrus Concert Hall
Eliza R. Snow Center for the Performing Arts
Rexburg, Idaho, 7:30 p.m.

Due to the sacred nature of the program, we ask that you refrain from
applause until after the benediction at the end of the program.
Prelude – Invocation

I.
God's everlasting love:
We will make an earth whereon these may dwell,
and prove them to see if they will do all things that
God shall command according to the plan.
For that purpose was the earth created. For that purpose we are here.
Will our natures be transformed bringing us closer
to God the Father and His Son?
Subject to desires of the flesh, we yearn for a mighty change of heart.

Our hearts are changed by His love, God's everlasting love.
The natural man declines — a Saint arises.
Through the Atonement of Christ the Lord,
our fallen nature is changed — bad to good, good to better.
We become new creatures through His love.

II.
As God's love strengthens us, we act — we change.
We become agents who act, rather than objects that are acted upon.
We are strengthened to change our circumstances.

III.
I pray for strength to burst these bands. I am bound; I am weak.
With and through and by God's love I receive strength.
I can burst these bands. I can; I will.
I pray for the strength of His love. His love changes me.

IV.
Through the power of God's love, burdens are made light.
We are strengthened to bear burdens with ease.
Though challenges may not be removed, we are patient.
We submit cheerfully to the will of God.

V.
Contemplation: “Jesus Once of Humble Birth”

VI.
Christ invites us to come unto Him and be changed.
His yoke is easy; the burden is light.
He invites us to learn of Him. He is meek and lowly in heart.

VII.
At the last supper in the upper room,
Christ spoke of comfort and peace.
Perhaps He was troubled in that moment, knowing what lay ahead.
Yet the Master reached out and offered the very blessings that
would have strengthened Him — comfort and peace.

VIII.
The great love of Christ is revealed.
He discerned the suffering of others — yet He himself was suffering.
Christ reached outward and ministered,
even as He experienced anguish and torment. He suffered the most —
yet Christ succors all of us who suffer so much less.

IX.
God’s love is the source of divine help.
His love provides strength beyond our own.
The atoning sacrifice of Christ helps us avoid and overcome the bad.
His Atonement strengthens us to do and become good.
We are changed by His everlasting love.

X.
INTROSPECTION: “I Know That My Redeemer Lives”

XI.
His love conquers all, gives us strength even unto deliverance.
We obtain the mind of Christ. We change; we grow; we become.
We receive His image in our countenance.

XII.
His love brings peace. He visits us with assurance.
Our faith grows. Our hope increases.
Our courage and determination are strengthened.
We go forth with all our might. Christ speaks peace to our souls.
The peace that passeth all understanding is ours from Him—
Because of His everlasting love.

XIII.
His love conquers death. The bands of death are loosed
which bind His people. His soul is filled with mercy.
He succors His people according to their infirmities.
His love conquers all things — all anguish, all suffering,
all weakness and infirmity. All things are changed by His love.

XIV.
God’s everlasting love:
We will make an earth whereon these may dwell,
and prove them to see if they will do all things that
God shall command according to the plan.
For that purpose was the earth created.
For that purpose we are here.
Have our natures been transformed bringing us closer
to God the Father and His Son?
Subject to desires of the flesh, we yearn for a mighty change of heart.
There is help from the Savior to change our very nature.
The Lord desires to live in us and also to empower us.
We journey in mortality to have our hearts changed.
Our hearts are changed by His love.
God’s everlasting love.

BENEDICTION – POSTLUDE
By Roger L. Miller, Professor Emeritus
University of Utah School of Music

God’s Everlasting Love is another in the biennial series of major musical works by prominent Latter-day Saint composers commissioned by BYU–Idaho. Its eloquent and instructive text is by Elder David A. Bednar, who, prior to his call to the Apostleship, served as the university’s president. The musical score, composed by former Tabernacle organist Robert Cundick, has been subtitled A Service of Sacred Music.

Rather than the traditional oratorio or cantata, it is patterned in the general form of Cundick’s highly acclaimed The Redeemer intended not as a concert work, but as a devotional experience in which the listeners, as well as the performers, participate together in a compelling, inspiring act of worship.

The collaboration between Elder Bednar and Brother Cundick has been fruitful. Elder Bednar’s thoughtful and sensitive selection of text is shaped in poetic prose that reflects a central theme of this church service — we are never far from the comforting spirit and guidance of a loving Heavenly Father. Through hymn quotations and other newly composed music, Brother Cundick has brought his gift as a composer to bear on the theme, as well.

Enclosed in a Prelude – Invocation and Postlude – Benediction, Elder Bednar’s text becomes the sermon, with two beloved hymns added to complete the sacred service. A third hymn melody is also heard, partially hidden in an inner part. Its appropriate text should be recalled by the listener when it occurs.

Music and poetry in combination have the unique power to inspire in a way that enlarges what each can say individually. Poetry, blessed with the intellectual potency of words clothed in beauty of form and richness of imagery can, by itself, inspire and impress its message upon the mind and heart. Music, even more directly attuned to the emotions, carries its meaning without the imposition of word symbols. Its structures are, like those of poetry, an essential part of what makes it memorable, yet music delivers its message in the clearest possible way, without the limitations and, indeed, the vagueness that, by their very nature, is the legacy of words. Yet, simply put, when words and music are combined, a special magic attends to both.

Just as the combination of tin and copper creates bronze, words and music together form a higher level of communication. Music has a wonderful means to intensify the text: the rising and falling of the musical line, the swelling of volume, the reinforcement or accentuation of important words and ideas, the assignment of specific themes to key persons and concepts, the use of harmony
and counterpoint to underscore conflict and resolution. For example, the initial seven notes, struck on the chimes, symbolize the seven dispensations.

The main theme, following immediately thereafter, signifies the very essence of God’s everlasting love. It is placed in clear form at the beginning of the work in such a way that the attentive listener can easily identify it and recurs again and again throughout the work without transformation, suggesting the ongoing power of God’s love and His stabilizing influence in our lives.

ABOUT ROBERT CUNDICK

Robert Cundick, the composer of *God’s Everlasting Love*, was born in 1926 in Sandy, Utah. He is perhaps best known for his 27 years as Mormon Tabernacle Organist on Temple Square in Salt Lake City. His principal teacher was Alexander Schreiner. He has composed in choral, orchestral and chamber genres. He studied composition with the late American composer Leroy Robertson. In 1955 he received his Ph.D. and began teaching at the University of Utah. He later taught at Brigham Young University for 24 years. As Tabernacle Organist Emeritus, he continues to devote much of his time to composition. A strong advocate of tonal composition in traditional forms, he believes that one can continue to compose music that speaks to both performer and listener in a fresh manner using a language that is familiar to general audiences.

ABOUT ELDER DAVID A. BEDNAR

Elder David A. Bednar, who wrote the text to this sacred music work, was ordained and set apart as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on Oct. 7, 2004. Prior to his call to the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Bednar served as an Area Seventy, Area Authority Seventy, Regional Representative, twice as a stake president, and as a bishop. Elder Bednar attended Brigham Young University, where he received a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree. He also received a doctoral degree in organizational behavior from Purdue University. After completing his education, he was a professor of business management at Texas Tech University and at the University of Arkansas. He then served as the president of BYU–Idaho from 1997-2004.
ABOUT ROBERT TUELLER

Robert Tueller directs the BYU-Idaho Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonietta, University Baroque Ensemble and teaches Applied Cello. He received his D.M.A. degree in early music performance as a student of James Tyler, and his M.M. degree in instrumental conducting as a student of Daniel Lewis at the University of Southern California. He holds a B.M. degree in violoncello performance from Utah State University. He joined the BYU-Idaho faculty in 2001 having previously directed orchestra programs at the University of Massachusetts, the University of Montana, and Modesto Junior College in central California. Active as a professional conductor and cellist in California, he served as assistant conductor of the Los Angeles Mozart Orchestra and played principal cello with the Los Angeles Baroque Orchestra. His baroque cello and viola da gamba playing have been recorded on RCM Records.

ABOUT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY–IDAHO

Brigham Young University–Idaho, located in Rexburg, Idaho, is committed to quality education and spiritual growth. Affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the university has broken new ground in higher education with creative calendaring and unique academic offerings. But the school is more than just a facilitator of academic degrees. BYU–Idaho is a disciple preparation center where students come to better know the Savior by following His example of service and love. These lessons in discipleship help prepare students for lifelong service in the home, the Church, and the workplace. A tradition of service, hard work, friendliness, and compassion is being preserved and enhanced throughout the campus community.

BYU–Idaho President Kim B. Clark has said that students are being “educated, developed, and prepared in a far more effective way than has ever been done before.” In this student-centered atmosphere, faculty and administration constantly focus on improving the quality of every student’s experience and making this opportunity available to even more young people.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

The Department of Music at BYU-Idaho is an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Music. The department is housed in the Eliza R. Snow Center for the Performing Arts, a beautiful and well-equipped facility. The faculty and facilities provide an excellent environment for the serious student of music. A full offering of baccalaureate programs
in music including performance, liberal arts, and education is available. In addition, the Department of Music offers a diversity of opportunities for the non-music major to develop musical skills. With more than twenty-five performing ensembles, the department has a place for all who desire to participate in a variety of music experiences.

**ABOUT THE SACRED MUSIC SERIES**

With a strong commitment to the performing and fine arts, BYU–Idaho is proud to present the tenth work of the Sacred Music Series. The initial commissioned work, which premiered in 1989, was Darwin Wolford’s *Behold, He Cometh!* This helped to establish the foundation of the current biennial series wherein BYU–Idaho commissions, performs, and records major Latter-day Saint religious music.

The music is performed by the various musical ensembles from BYU–Idaho including the Symphony Orchestra, the Collegiate Singers, and the Men’s and Women’s Choirs.

Partial funding for the Sacred Music Series comes from private donations with generous support from the Endowment for the Performing and Visual Arts and the Eliza R. Snow Society for the Performing and Visual Arts (www.byui.edu/snowsociety).

**PAST SACRED MUSIC SERIES**

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<td>The Tree of Life</td>
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<td>David A. Zabriskie</td>
<td>The Testament of Paul</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>A. Laurence Lyon</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Daniel E. Gawthrop</td>
<td>The Passion and the Promise</td>
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<td>1999</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>K. Newell Dayley</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Robert M. Cundick</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>Crawford Gates</td>
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Tonight’s performance is the tenth in a biennial sacred music series. Because of the overwhelming response in past years, the university is again offering recordings of this year’s presentation. A limited supply of previous sacred music recordings may also be ordered. Proceeds from the sales go toward continuing BYU–Idaho’s commitment to sacred music. For more information on the available CDs and DVDs, visit www.byui.edu/bookstore or call (208) 496-2211 or (800) 995-2713.

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