

Newsletter

OF THE PALO ALTO/PENINSULA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS

<http://www.geocities.com/agopeninsula>

November/December 2007

Notes from the Dean

ONE OF THE THINGS I LIKE ABOUT OUR Chapter is that our members and friends are so willing to step forward to offer help with programs. We are fortunate to have in our area many interesting and significant organs. We are just as fortunate to have generous members and churches willing to open their instruments for our use and enjoyment. They all deserve a big thank-you.

Starting this program year, Douglas Franks again hosted a repertoire-sharing program on October 20th at his church, Hope Lutheran in San Mateo. By the way, our chapter's very professionally produced newsletter is the result of Doug's painstaking efforts. Thank you, Doug.

Next up, November 11 will be a Members' Recital at the First Congregational Church of Palo Alto, 1985 Louis Road in Palo Alto, hosted by Joe Guthrie. Many of us heard the dedicatory recital recently given there by John Walker on the new Letourneau. We'll look forward to hearing what some of our own members would like to share on this grand instrument.

I invite anyone who would like to host a future program or recital to contact Angela Kraft Cross who as Sub-Dean plans Chapter activities.

Best holiday wishes to all!

✻ YOUR DEAN, PHILIP WINTERS



**Best holiday
wishes to all our
Chapter
members
and friends!**

► Peninsula AGO Chapter Members' Recital on November 11

November 11 at 3 p.m. will be the fall Members' Recital on the new Letourneau organ at First Congregational Church of Palo Alto, 1985 Louis Road in Palo Alto.

Many of us heard John Walker in the dedication concert on this beautiful new eclectic instrument last month, and it is a real honor and adventure for our Chapter to be able to hold a Members' Recital here! Don't be left out! For more information, contact Angela Kraft Cross at <krftcrss@yahoo.com> or by phone at (650) 368-6684. After the program there will be a reception hosted by members of The First Congregational Church of Palo Alto. Join us for this festive concert—and bring your friends and family! ✻



New organ console, First Congregational Church of Palo Alto

This newsletter is published by the Palo Alto/Peninsula Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Opinions expressed in these pages are those of individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect official policies of the Chapter or the AGO at large.

☛ **E-mail articles, job listings, and calendar items** to Douglas Franks at <dohfra@earthlink.net>. Unformatted text only, please (tabs and paragraphs okay). Send as e-mail text or MS Word attachment. Include phone number and some brief biographical information if submitting a signed article. Inclusion is at discretion of Editor and Dean and subject to space limitations.

☛ **Next Deadline: December 15 for Jan./Feb. 2008 issue**

☛ **Send address changes** to Jill Mueller, 777-40 San Antonio Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303, or <sjillmueller@earthlink.net>.

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☛ **Next Newsletter Deadline:**
December 15 for Jan./Feb. 2008 Issue

P E N I N S U L A
A G O · C H A P T E R
E V E N T S
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Sunday, November 11, 3 p.m.

Members' Recital on the new Letourneau instrument at the First Congregational Church of Palo Alto

January (date TBA)

Annual Organ Crawl

Sunday, February 10, 4 p.m.

50th-anniversary concert at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Palo Alto, James Welch, organist (Chapter plays supportive role)

Monday, February 11, 7 p.m.

Masterclass by Robert Huw Morgan on the fabulous historical organs of Memorial Church at Stanford University

April (date TBA)

Members' Recital on the von Beckerath mechanical-action organ of St. Bede's Episcopal Church in Menlo Park

May (date TBA)

Improvisation Class by Ron McKean, East Bay improvisation virtuoso

June (date TBA)

Composer's Forum; Chapter and other local composers will share their recent compositions

☛ **Soli Deo Gloria: "Time Enough for Joy"**

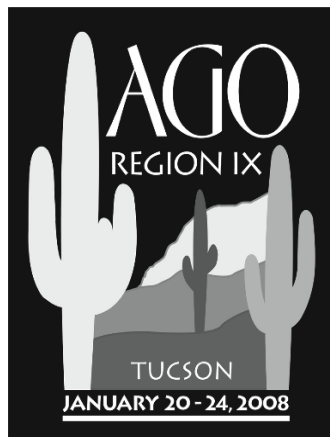
Come and join Soli Deo Gloria for an intriguing concert, "Time Enough for Joy," under the baton of Artistic Director, Allen H. Simon. The three seasons of Christmas—Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany—not just pages on a calendar, but seasons that have inspired generations of composers and musicians. Take time for yourself and experience Christmas joy with seasonal and traditional music, including pieces by Kodaly, Praetorius, Victoria, Britten, and Mendelssohn—and thought-provoking narratives set to music by Dr. Simon.



- ** Saturday, Dec. 1, 5 p.m., First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto
- ** Sunday, Dec. 2, 3:30 p.m., St. Mark's Lutheran Church, San Francisco
- ** Sunday, Dec. 9, 3:30 p.m., Church of St. Philip Neri, Alameda

For more info or to buy tickets, call 888/SDG-SONG or visit <www.sdgloria.org>.

PIPES IN THE DESERT



THE NEXT MID-WINTER CONCLAVE

EXPERIENCE ORGAN AND
CHORAL MUSIC IN THE
BEAUTIFUL SONORAN DESERT

EXPLORE WAYS TO
RE-ENERGIZE CHURCH MUSIC

ENJOY MUSIC AND HOSPITALITY
WITH A SOUTHWESTERN FLAIR

FOR ADDITIONAL INFO
VISIT: WWW.AGOIXAZ.COM

TUCSON, ARIZONA
JANUARY 20-24 2008



PIPES IN THE DESERT: FEATURED PERFORMERS, VENUES, AND WORKSHOPS

The AGO Region IX Mid-Winter Conclave ("Pipes in the Desert") will be held in sunny Tucson, Arizona, January 20-24, 2008.

Among the featured organ recitalists are Paul Jacobs, chairman of the Organ Department at the Juilliard School in New York; Pamela Decker, composer, organist, and Professor of Organ and Theory at the University of Arizona; and Richard Elliott, Tabernacle Organist, Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Choral concerts will be given by the world-renowned Phoenix Bach Choir, known as one of the finest professional choral ensembles in America; and by the University of Arizona's select Arizona Choir, the premier choral ensemble at the University's School of Music.

In addition, there will be an innovative and inspiring opening hymn festival led by Michael Burkhardt and an intimate recital by the chamber ensemble *Millennia Too!*

The venues will feature organs by David McDowell/Pipe Organ Artisans of Arizona; Schoenstein; Quimby; Aeolian Skinner/Pipe Organ Artisans of Arizona; Schlicker; and Schantz. The Phoenix Bach Choir will be heard at the historic St. Augustine Cathedral in downtown Tucson. Originally built in 1868, when Tucson had a population of 600 people, the cathedral was restored in 1968. The Arizona Choir will be heard at Santa Cruz Catholic Church, a national historic landmark since 1994.

A variety of workshops will also be offered at the Conclave. There are workshops on hymn-singing and playing; Bach performance practice at the organ; choral conducting; handbells in worship; Mexican organ culture; organ and instruments; presentation of the work in progress on the historic organ at St. John the Divine in New York City; organ music of Brahms; organ masterclass; accompaniment styles for leading congregational singing; children's choir techniques; new service music for the organ; and more!

Two composers with anniversaries in 2008 will be featured in the workshops. Johannes Brahms (175th anniversary of his birth) will be presented in a workshop by Dr. John Brobeck focusing on Brahms' organ music. Some of the organ music of Olivier Messiaen (100th anniversary of his birth) will be heard in the masterclass with Paul Jacobs (who has performed all nine hours of Messiaen's complete organ works!).

Please visit the Conclave web site at www.agoixaz.com and read all about it, then print the registration form and send it in! Special registration rates are available until November 15, discounted hotel rates until December 20. ❁

(submitted by Anne Keyl)

Colin Walsh Brings “Un Morceau de la France” to Southern England

BY DOUGLAS FRANKS

THE SOUTHERN CATHEDRALS FESTIVAL IN ENGLAND is one of the major “three-choirs” choral and organ music festivals that enrich summers in Great Britain. It takes place every July, migrating cyclically among the three “southern” cathedrals of Chichester, Winchester, and Salisbury. This year’s Festival was held in Chichester, the southernmost (and easternmost) cathedral town of the three. As one of the fortunate attendees of the SCF, I was privileged to enjoy four days of choral concerts sung by the cathedral choirs of Chichester, Winchester, and Salisbury—individually and combined—variously made up of men, boy, and girl choristers, along with workshops, a regular succession of exquisite choral services, and a celebrity organ recital by Colin Walsh, organist of Lincoln Cathedral.

Sponsored by the Chichester Cathedral Choristers’ Association, Mr. Walsh’s recital was the opening evening concert of the Festival. Having studied for three years with Jean Langlais at Sainte-Clotilde in Paris, he specializes in symphonic and 20th-century French repertoire, particularly the works of Franck, Vierne, and Langlais. These three figured prominently in his program, complemented by other French and German composers.

Throughout the vast reaches of Chichester Cathedral (oddly, the Dean of the cathedral apologetically stated in the program booklet, “I hope the modest size of our Cathedral will be outweighed by the warmth of the welcome you receive”), ticketholders gravitated to their seats in the nave, side aisles, quire, and transepts, hundreds of us altogether. As he performed, the organist was hidden by a fabric curtain just behind the organ bench perched high above the north side of the quire, but video monitors placed strategically throughout the cathedral enabled us to see his televised image as he played. Fascinating—and instructive!

Grand Choeur alla Handel by Alexandre Guilmant got the concert off to a rousing start. A near-contemporary of Widor, Guilmant was organist at Sainte-Trinité in Paris for thirty years, a post later held by Messiaen. This showpiece, with its massive chordal textures and powerful rhythmic drive, was tossed off with ease by Mr. Walsh, creating excitement and confidence that he would not fail to hold us spellbound for the duration.

In tribute to the 300th anniversary this year of Dieterich Buxtehude’s death, he treated us next to that composer’s well-known Fugue in C, Buxtehude’s own “precursor” to Bach’s popular “Jig” fugue, effervescently executed in the airy cathedral acoustics.

J. S. Bach’s Prelude and Fugue in G (BWV 541), initially dating from Bach’s youthful Weimar period and probably revised in later years, was an excellent foil for Mr. Walsh’s virtuosic command of the organ, with the exuberant, toccata-like figuration in the prelude and the Buxtehude-like repeated-note subject of the fugue set against continued 16th-note figuration in the countersubject. The delicate precision of the artist’s fingerwork was impressive.

He couldn’t have prepared us better for the reposeful, spacious outlines of the next piece, César Franck’s Choral No. 1 in E, the first of Franck’s *Trois Chorals*. As in the other two *Chorals*, Franck’s final compositions before his untimely death in 1890, he explores the incredible tonal and dynamic range of the organ in the context of a harmonically and contrapuntally complex extended work. Thus began Colin Walsh’s homage to three of his favorite composers.

Fantaisie-Improvisation sur L’Ave Maris Stella by Charles Tournemire (transcribed/arranged by Maurice Duruflé), the last and youngest pupil of Franck and successor to Franck at Sainte-Clotilde, was an absolute stunner. One was instantly drawn into the musical vortex set in motion by Mr. Walsh’s deep understanding of Tournemire’s music and his ability to project it. His interpretation had much to convey, and the musical eloquence of his playing did just that, in abundance.

Two pieces by Jean Langlais, whose birth centenary we likewise celebrate this year, were next on the program. They came, quite appropriately, just after Tournemire’s *Fantaisie-Improvisation*, as Langlais was among those in the generation following Tournemire who were markedly influenced by Tournemire’s music. *Evocation* and *Arabesque sur les flutes* gave us two contrasting examples of Langlais’ organ music, each uniquely echoing medieval ecclesiastical modality while fervently embracing modern conventions of dissonance, polytonality, rhythmic asymmetry, extremes of texture, and the like.

(continued on next page)

(Colin Walsh . . . continued from previous page)

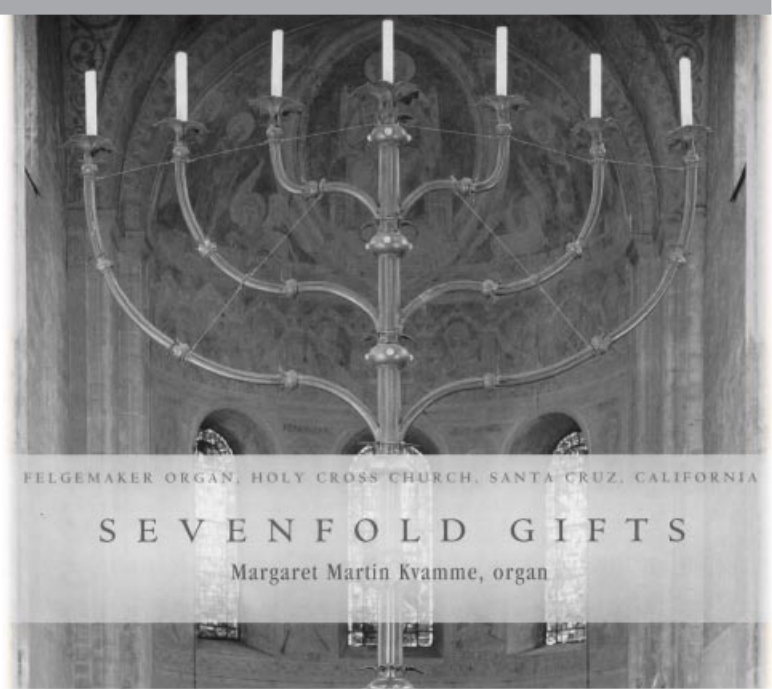
One cannot be in a British cathedral for very long without hearing some cherished British cathedral music. Mr. Walsh whisked us back from the Gallic corner of the Continent to very close to home. The Sussex composer and violist Frank Bridge, who wrote the penultimate piece of the concert, *Adagio in E*, was born and died just a few miles east of Chichester. His organ *Adagio* is a favorite of British organists and most likely a particular favorite of those listening to it that Thursday evening in mid-July. Choosing this gem, with its meditative yet steady ascent to a mighty climax, then expeditious descent back to a quiet, peaceful, exquisitely introspective hush, has to have been Colin Walsh's benediction upon the place he was performing in and the people for whom he was performing.

He sent us on our way with a traditional French toccata, the *Final* from Symphony No. 3 by Louis Vierne, the third French luminary occupying a place of honor in Mr. Walsh's repertoire. It was a final dazzling display of virtuosity infused with musical sensitivity and intelligence by this master British organist. Small wonder his career as an organist took him from St. George's Chapel (Windsor Castle) and Christ Church Cathedral (Oxford) to Salisbury and St. Alban's cathedrals to, finally, Lincoln Cathedral where he presently is Organist Laureate. I've heard the organ at Chichester Cathedral played numerous times by different organists, and never had the four-manual Mander (of Hill and Hele origins) sounded so fully utilized and brilliantly showcased as it did that evening with Colin Walsh at the helm.



Mander organ in Chichester Cathedral

It's a pity his appearance at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco last season had to be cancelled for some reason. If he should ever be scheduled again to give a recital in San Francisco, consider it a must-see. He was a highlight among highlights at this year's Southern Cathedrals Festival. Another highlight: Actress Patricia Routledge—who is closely associated with Chichester and an avid supporter of the choral program at Chichester Cathedral—was one of the readers in a concert of readings and music sung by the girl choristers of Salisbury Cathedral. Yes, Patricia Routledge of “Keeping Up Appearances” fame—you know, the “Bucket woman” and “Lady of the house speaking!” The SCF is a major international musical event well worth wanting to return to more than once, never mind the ever-plummeting dollar! Next year's venue: Winchester Cathedral! (See www.southerncathedralsfestival.org.uk>.) ❁



Peninsula AGO Chapter member Margaret Martin Kvamme has recorded *Sevenfold Gifts*, an album of seven works for solo organ, in May of 2006 at Holy Cross Church

in Santa Cruz on the 1989 Felgemaker organ (rebuilt in 1987 by Steuart Goodwin). The mission church's beautiful acoustics make this antique 23-rank instrument sing. The CD includes the Sixth Sonata of Felix Mendelssohn, J.S. Bach's Passacaglia, and works by Theodore Morrison, Emma Lou Diemer, Margaret Sandresky, Pamela Decker, and Florence Price—the first black woman in the United States to be recognized as a symphonic composer. Each piece is a set of variations, many on well-known hymn tunes. This recording is the final engineering project of the late Richard L. Krueger of Arkay Records. Chapter member Gwen Adams served as console assistant, including playing a few octaves to create a "super coupler" on the tiny but robust instrument. Margaret has some CDs on hand for \$15.00 each (payable to Margaret Kvamme), or you can go to <Albanyrecords.com> or <Amazon.com> to hear a clip and order online. Margaret can be reached at (408) 356-4267 or at <musicmomkvam@verizon.net>. ❁



More photos of the new Letourneau organ at the First Congregational Church of Palo Alto (photos: Ken Sasaki)

(Calendar . . . continued from page eight)

Silicon Valley Symphony

presents "A Tale of Two Symphonies." Works by Brahms, Saint-Saëns, and Gigout. Tickets \$20/\$15. For more information, contact Michael Gibson, (408) 873-9000 or <maestro@bamusic.org>.

Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos, 7:30 p.m.

Tallis Scholars, choral. "Music Before 1850." Cherished exponents of Renaissance sacred music. **GC, 8 p.m.**

2 Sunday

Arthur Johnson (Reno), organ. **CSMA, 3:30 p.m.**

Symphonic Chorus and Peninsula Symphony Orchestra, **Mitchell Sardou Klein**, director (same as 11/30). **MC-SU, 1:30 p.m.**

4 Tuesday

James Welch, organ; **Barbara Cramer**, soprano. Christmas Creche Exhibit. **LDS Church**, 3865 Middlefield Rd., Palo Alto. **7 p.m.**

5 Wednesday

The Early Music Singers, **William Mahrt**, director. Italian and English Music of the 16th century. **MC-SU, 8 p.m.**

7 Friday

Stanford Memorial Church Choir and the University Singers, **Gregory Wait**, director. Service of Lessons and Carols, based on King's College service. **MC-SU, 8 p.m.**

8 Saturday

"**Friends of Music Holiday Musicale.**" Lively holiday concert featuring Stanford's Chamber Chorale and Symphony Orchestra. \$10/\$5. **MC-SU, 2:30 p.m.**

Stanford Memorial Church Choir and the University Singers, **Gregory Wait**, director (same as 12/7). **MC-SU, 8 p.m.**

9 Sunday

Robert Huw Morgan, organ. Annual Holiday Recital. Free. **MC-SU, 1:30 p.m.**

Vytenis Vasyliunas (Germany), organ. **CSMA, 3:30 p.m.**

John Karl Hirten, organ. "Shepherd's and Bells." A program of unusual seasonal music plus Widor's *Symphonie Gothique* and works by Bay Area composers Mark Winges and David Hatt. **GC, 4 p.m.**

10 Monday

"**A Brass and Organ Christmas.**" The best of Bay Area brass in this annual holiday fest. **GC, 7 p.m.**

14 Friday

Annual "Sing- and Play-Along Messiah." A favorite of the campus and community! Orchestral parts available; choral scores available for purchase at door. **\$10/\$5. MC-SU, 8 p.m.**

15 Saturday

Advent Lessons and Carols. **Susan Jane Matthews**, director. St. Paul's Choristers and Chancel Choir. **St. Paul's Episcopal Church**, 415 El Camino Real, Burlingame. **5 p.m.**

15 Saturday through 23 Sunday

"**A Cathedral Christmas—Diamond Anniversary.**" A Bay Area tradition since 1947. Celebrate the season with the Choir of Men and Boys. **GC, 7 p.m.**

20 Thursday

David Hegarty, organ. Sing-along Christmas pops program by organist-extraordinaire of the Castro Theatre and the Grace Cathedral Carolers. **GC, 7 p.m.**

30 Sunday

David Hatt, organ. **CSMA, 3:30 p.m.**

31 Monday

James Welch, organ. Annual New Year's Eve concert. Music by B-A-C-H in D-E-F-G. **St. Mark's**

Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Ave., Palo Alto. \$10 at the door. **8 p.m.**

On the Horizon

Sunday/January 6

Epiphany Lessons and Carols. Cathedral Choir of Boys and Girls. **CSMA, 3:30 p.m.**

Sunday/January 20

Jonathan Dimmock, organ. **CSMA, 3:30 p.m.**

Monday/January 28

☞ *SF/AGO Chapter Event: Member Organ Recital.* **St. John's Presbyterian Church**, 25 Lake St., San Francisco. **7:30 p.m.**

Margaret Kvamme Performs with SVS

The **Silicon Valley Symphony**, under the baton of **Michael Paul Gibson**, presents "A Tale of Two Symphonies" at the **Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos, Saturday, December 1 at 7:30 p.m.** The program features Brahms' Symphony No. 1 in C minor and Saint-Saëns' Symphony No. 3 in C minor ("Organ Symphony"). The organ soloist is **Margaret Martin Kvamme**, performing on the newly refurbished and expanded Möller pipe organ at PCLG. She will also play Gigout's "Grand Choeur Dialogue." Join the musicians after the concert for a champagne reception with sumptuous snacks. Tickets are \$20 general and \$15 seniors and students; children aged twelve or younger are free with an adult. Church address is 16575 Shannon Road. For more information, contact Michael Gibson, Music Director, SVS, (408) 873-9000 (office); <maestro@bamusic.org>; or visit <www.bamusic.org/svs>.

Peninsula (and Beyond) Concert Calendar

Events, dates, times, and locations are subject to change without notice. If possible, contact venue to confirm. Concerts may require a ticket or donation for admission unless otherwise noted.

Please e-mail calendar listings to **Douglas Franks** at <dohfra@earthlink.net> by the newsletter deadline, making sure to accurately include all relevant information.

We are grateful to the San Francisco Chapter of the AGO for letting us reprint selected calendar listings from its newsletter.

Some concert venues are identified with an abbreviation in the calendar. Please refer to the following key:

- CSMA** Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption, 1111 Gough at Geary, S.F., (415) 567-2020, x213; free-will offering for all recitals
- GC** Grace Cathedral, California and Taylor, S.F., (415) 749-6350
- MC-SU** Memorial Church, Stanford University, (650) 723-2730

November —

4 Sunday

Christoph Tietze, organ. **CSMA, 3:30 p.m.**

☞ *SF/AGO Chapter Event:*

Member Composer Concert. St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 3 Bayview Ave., Belvedere. **4 p.m.**

7 Wednesday

James Dawson (All Saints' Episcopal Church, San Francisco), organ. Chorale-based and free works of Buxtehude, Bach, and others. \$10/\$5. **MC-SU, 8 p.m.**

11 Sunday

Hymn Festival. Douglas Franks, organ; **Eryl Aynsley**, conductor. With members of the Welsh American Society of Northern California. Featuring Welsh hymns, Vaughan Williams' *The Old Hundredth*, and organ works of Vaughan Williams and William Mathias. Benefit for the organization "Hope and Homes for Children." **Hope Lutheran Church**, 600 West 42nd Ave., San Mateo. **2 p.m.**

☞ *Peninsula AGO Chapter Event:* **Chapter Members' Recital, First**

Congregational Church of Palo Alto, 1985 Louis Road. **3 p.m.**

Langlais Symposiette & Recital:

"Jean Langlais: Composer, Organist, Teacher." A lecture presented by four Langlais students: **David Bergeron** (Gloucester, MA), **Karen Hastings Flegel** (Antioch, CA), **Elna Johnson** (Pittsburgh, PA), and **Christoph Tietze** (San Francisco, CA). A recital of music by Langlais and his contemporaries follows.

CSMA, 3:30 p.m. (lecture); **5 p.m.** (recital).

Alison Luedecke, organ. In recital following 5:30 p.m. Evensong. Free-will offering. Reception follows. **St. Mark's Episcopal Church**, 2300 Bancroft Way, Berkeley. **6:10 p.m.**

16 Friday

Chamber Chorale, **Stephen Sano**, director. Music honoring the Virgin Mary by Victoria, Dering, Bruckner, Butler, and Aquilanti. \$10/\$5. **MC-SU, 8 p.m.**

17 Saturday

"**Psallam**," a choral festival based on the Psalms in celebration of the 80th anniversary of the Royal

School of Church Music. **GC, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Choral Evensong and Hymn Festival. Susan Jane Matthews, director. St. Paul's Choristers and Chancel Choir. Stanford's *Evening Service in C* and Bach's *Now Thank We All Our God*. **St. Paul's Episcopal Church**, 415 El Camino Real, Burlingame. **5 p.m.**

18 Sunday

Robert Huw Morgan, organ. J.S. Bach's *Art of the Fugue*. \$10/\$5. (415) 928-7770 or <www.stmarks-sf.org>.

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 1111 O'Farrell St., San Francisco. **3 p.m.**

Angela Kraft Cross, organ. Works of Langlais. **CSMA, 3:30 p.m.**

Leo Abbott (Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston), organ. **GC, 4 p.m.**

25 Sunday

Benjamin Bachmann (Grace Cathedral's Assistant Director of Music), organ. Thanksgiving program with Music of Karg-Elert, Reger, Vierne. **GC, 4 p.m.**

Vincent de Pol (Germany), organ. **CSMA, 3:30 p.m.**

28 Wednesday

University Singers, **Robert Huw Morgan**, director. Seasonal music including *Carols and Lullabies of the Southwest* by Conrad Susa. \$10/\$5. **MC-SU, 8 p.m.**

30 Friday

Symphonic Chorus and Peninsula Symphony Orchestra, **Mitchell Sardou Klein**, director. Poulenc's *Gloria* and other works by Vaughan Williams, Holst, and Ravel. \$20/\$10. **MC-SU, 8 p.m.**

December —

1 Saturday

Margaret Kvamme, organ; **Michael Paul Gibson**, director.

(continued on page seven)