BYU's Heritage Series on Tantara Records
releases another inspiring CD by Robert Cundick

PROVO, Utah: Retired Mormon Tabernacle organist and former BYU music faculty member (1957-1965), Robert Cundick has dedicated his entire career of more than 50 years to changing lives and serving others through the power of music.

As the oldest living member of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir music staff, Cundick continues to enlarge his contribution of Gospel-centered music. Through The Redeemer and other works, thousands have had their testimonies strengthened, and The Gospel Restored continues that tradition of consecrated devotion.

This latest CD of three previously composed works provides new insights into the Restoration for members as well as non-members. Each is intended to teach core principles of the Restored Gospel and to strengthen testimonies of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

The first is entitled “Remembering Joseph.” It depicts the first vision when God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ appeared to the 14-year-old Joseph Smith. Thanks to his son Robb who wrote the text for this particular work, the music whisks listeners away into the 1820s and makes them feel as if they were there with the Prophet Joseph during this sacred time.

The second work, “The Song of Nephi,” based on 2 Nephi 4:16-35 (one of the richest literary passages in the Book of Mormon) symbolizes the fundamental scriptural importance of that ancient record. Cundick composed this setting for his doctoral dissertation at the University of Utah.

The final work, “To Utah,” emphasizes the pioneers and their journey across the plains. On a text by the late BYU poet Edward L. Hart, this work reminds the listener of the many trials and tribulations endured by the pioneers.

Cundick hopes that every listener will become an advocate by telling others about the message and purpose of this unique CD. Thus they themselves may become advocates to continue to spread the word to an ever-expanding audience.

Initially a pianist, Cundick began playing the organ at age 12 and shortly after became the ward organist. Excelling as a musician, his teacher quickly realized he had an exceptional gift.

“I fell in love with the organ and after some private lessons, my teacher recommended me to Alexander Schreiner who was the organist at the tabernacle during this time,” Cundick
said. “Thanks to my teacher’s recommendation, Schreiner took me on as a student. I was the only scholarship student that he ever took because I couldn’t afford the lessons.”

Following his graduation from high school, Cundick joined the Merchant Marines and later enrolled at the University of Utah as a music major. Later as a student teacher, he met and married Charlotte Clark, who was one of his many organ students.

“The biggest influence in my life is my eternal companion, my dear wife,” he said cheerfully. “She has been invaluable to me and to my music. Sometimes I get discouraged with my music and I get ready to throw it in the wastebasket. When I’m discouraged while composing, she urges me to continue by saying it will turn out just fine.”

To his surprise, Cundick was called to serve as the organist at Temple Square in 1964. He served faithfully for 27 years before retiring in 1991. "For any Mormon organist, the pinnacle of achievement is to sit at that bench. I was no different,” Cundick said in a 2004 article by the Deseret News.

Now 87, Dr. Cundick views this CD as the culmination of his life's experience and testimony.

“BYU is very pleased to have this new CD of Robert Cundick’s works as part of its Heritage Series,” said Stephen Jones, Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication at BYU. “Bob’s unflagging commitment to use his gifts as a composer to bear witness of important doctrines of the gospel has left us a rich legacy of works that I trust will endure for many years to come.”

Tantara Records offers a free download of “The Gathering,” one of the tracks on the CD, at the website link bit.ly/cundick. The CD is available at Seagull Book, Deseret Book, and BYUMusicStore.com. For more information call 1-800-879-1555.

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Robert Cundick is available for interviews. For more information or to set up an interview, please contact Ben Fales at bfales@tantararecords.com or 801-422-8385. Digital versions of this press release and images (CD cover, artist pictures, etc.) are available in the “News Room” at www.tantararecords.com.