

**From an interview with
Elder Lowell M. Snow
of the Seventy; by
Callie Buys**

Playing the

Praise the Lord . . . with music (D&C 136:28).

When I was nine years old, my mother announced that she wanted me to learn to play the piano. I thought there were better things for a nine-year-old boy to do, like riding my horse or roaming the hills behind our home. But I did not want to disappoint my mother, so I agreed to take piano lessons.

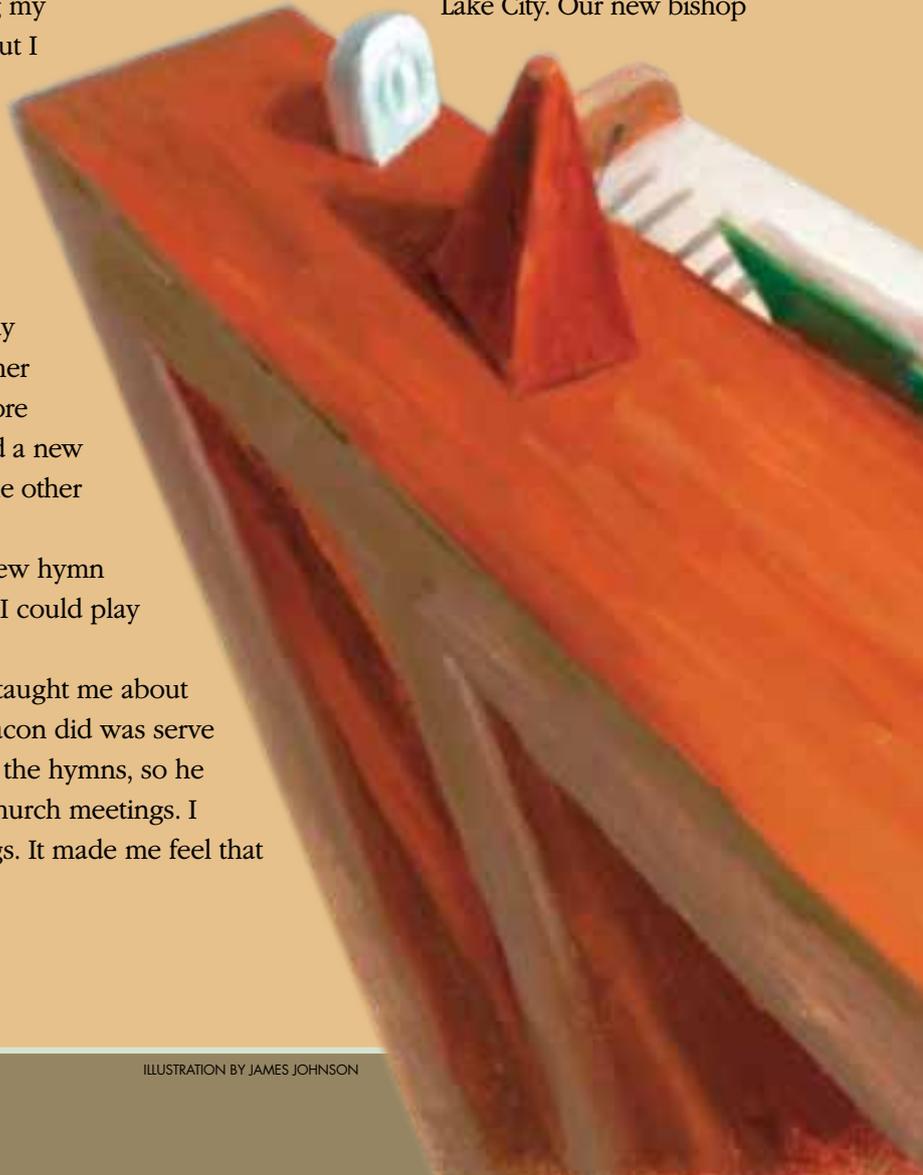
Every week my piano teacher gave me a new song to learn. I didn't like to practice, but every day Mother set the timer to make sure I practiced the right amount of time. After a few months, my mother suggested that I learn to play some of the Church hymns. I agreed, and together we chose a hymn and I practiced playing it before my lesson. After that, my piano teacher assigned a new hymn for me to learn every week, along with the other music I practiced.

For the next few years, I learned to play a new hymn every week. By the time I turned 12 years old, I could play most of the familiar hymns in the hymnbook.

When I was ordained a deacon, the bishop taught me about the priesthood and that one of the things a deacon did was serve others. The bishop knew I had learned to play the hymns, so he called me to be a pianist during some of our church meetings. I enjoyed playing the hymns during our meetings. It made me feel that

I could make a contribution to our worship services. Even as a young boy, I felt like an important part of the Church because I knew our ward needed me.

By the time I turned 16, our family had moved to Salt Lake City. Our new bishop



Hymns

asked me if I would be the ward organist. I told him that I did not know how to play the organ. “Well, you can learn, can’t you?” he asked. And I said, “Yes, I guess I can.” So I taught myself to play the organ by going to the church to practice.

That calling gave me a sense of service. That wise bishop who called me knew that playing the organ in sacrament meeting would help prepare me for a mission. And later, as a missionary in Germany, I played the hymns nearly every week in small branches that did not have a pianist.

That skill I learned as a nine-year-old boy really set a pattern for my church service through my whole life. Even today, long after I have forgotten the other music I learned to play, the hymns come easily to me. I can play them just like I did as a young boy.

I will always be grateful to my mother for encouraging me and helping me learn to play the hymns. Learning to play that sacred music had a profound influence on me, and it helped me learn to serve in the Church. I think that is the lesson my mother and my priesthood leaders really wanted me to learn. They knew that the sacred music would speak to my mind and my heart, and that the words and music would become familiar friends to bless me throughout my life. ●

