

# Augustana Winter Traditions: Musical Traditions

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# Longstanding Musical Winter Traditions: Bringing People Together

## Christmas at Augustana

- Fairly new tradition, began approx. 2007
- Combination of choirs, orchestra, band, and handbell
- Large performance
- Successful and popular campus performance that brings in students, alum, and individuals from the community
- This performance gets “a lot of positive feedback” (Hurty)
- Requires a great amount of preparation, but is a fun-lasting experience

Fig. 1



Introduction: The three of us participated in research and interviews to gain firsthand information concerning some Christmas traditions at Augustana. Our focuses were: Christmas at Augustana, Lessons and Carols, and the Messiah. It has been concluded that these traditions are important to the Augustana community because they unite the individuals that participate and see the performances.

## Lessons and Carols

Lessons and Carols is a long standing tradition that started in 19th century England, that tells the story of the birth of Jesus Christ. The tradition of lessons and carols combines biblical text with christmas carols. Students, faculty, and community members enjoy this tradition. Ensembles involved include the Chamber Choir and the Handbell choir. In the future, those involved with Lessons and Carols believe the usual Thursday performances will be moved to a Sunday performance, to avoid conflicts with final exams.

Fig. 2



### Future Semester Schedule

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Preparation for Mess.			Mess.		Summer		Preparation for C@A and L&C			C@A L&C	

## Messiah

- 1881: 1st performance
- Performed annually
- Performed by Augustana choir, Augustana Symphonic Orchestra, and the Handel Oratorio Society
- Piece written by George Handel (German composer)
- Written in english
- Outlines the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
- Originally performed 3 times, reduced to 2 performances
- Considered “a really fulfilling experience spiritually, as well as musically” (Schlouch)

Fig. 3



Dr. Jon Hurty;  
Director of Augustana  
Choral Activities;  
Head of Oratorio  
Society



Two individuals who contributed interviews concerning the topics discussed are Dr. Jon Hurty (left) and Sam Schlouch (right). Both are current campus staff members who have/currently participate within these traditions.



Sam Schlouch; Past  
Augustana Student;  
Participated in many  
of these choral  
activities

Fig. 1, Do, Maria. Digital Newspaper Photograph. *Augustana Observer*.

Fig. 2, Lessons and Carols. Digital Newspaper Photograph. *Augustana Observer*.

Fig. 3, Handel Oratorio Society Performance of Messiah directed by Dr. Henry Veld in 1916 gym, circa 1916, Photo C-F04251, Special Collections, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois.

Hurty, Jon. Personal interview. 17 April 2018.

Schlouch, Sam. Personal interview. 12 April 2018.