The legends of the Christmas tree come to us from many countries. In Germany, Martin Luther was said to have cut a fir tree one cold Christmas Eve, and placed it in the nursery for his wife and children. He decorated the tree with lighted candles to represent the stars. From almost that time on there are records of Christmas trees, and as long ago as the beginning of the seventeenth century other decorations were added. In the tenth century, an Arabian named Georg Jacob, was said to have seen all the trees in the forest bloom the night that Christ was born. A thirteenth century French legend tells of a giant tree in the forest, lit with candles. Some candles were straight, and some upside down. At the top of the tree was an infant with a halo. The tree represented humanity; the candles people, good and bad, and the child, Jesus, to the pagans, evergreen trees were signs that winter would soon end, and warmth would soon return. At the feast of the equinox, the trees were hung with treasures and masks. The use of ornaments such as the sun, moon, stars and animals, are thought to descend from pagan customs.

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Portland Junior Symphony Concert, Sunday, January 10, 1971. City Hall Poinsettia plants courtesy of the Portland Park Department
The Portland Symphony Orchestra, Board of Trustees, Women's Committee, Staff and Management wish you and yours a good and peaceful holiday season.