

Cary Community Choir
50th Annual Presentation of
Messiah

George Frideric Handel



And the premier of the commissioned piece
“Unto Us a Child Is Born”
Written by our Director, Pepper Choplin

December 5, 2021, 7:30 pm
Westwood Baptist Church
200 Westhigh Street, Cary, NC 27513

TOWN of CARY
PARKS, RECREATION &
CULTURAL RESOURCES

50th Annual Presentation of

Messiah

George Frideric Handel

Pepper Choplin, *Conductor*

∞

Susannah Stewart, *Soprano*

Jennifer Seiger, *Alto*

Timothy Sparks, *Tenor*

Daniel Collins, *Bass-Baritone*

Patti Lingafelt, *Accompanist*

www.carycommunitychoir.org



Program Order

Opening Remarks

Pepper Choplin, Conductor
Candace Blackley, President, Board of Directors

Invocation

Dr. Tom Ogburn, Senior Pastor

Anthem

“Unto Us a Child Is Born” Pepper Choplin

Messiah

George Frideric Handel

Overture

Recitative

Comfort ye my people

Tenor

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Air

Every valley shall be exalted

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain.

Chorus

And the glory of the Lord

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Recitative

Thus saith the Lord

Bass

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet once a little while and I will shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the desire of all nations shall come. The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; Behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts.

Air

But who may abide the day of his coming?

But who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire.

Program Order, *continued*

Chorus

And He shall purify

And He shall purify the sons of Levi that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

Recitative

Behold! A Virgin shall conceive

Alto

Behold! A Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Emmanuel, God with us.

Air and Chorus *O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion*

O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

Recitative

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth

Bass

For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Air

The people that walked in darkness

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; and they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Chorus

For unto us a child is born

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Pastoral Symphony (Pifa)

Recitative

There were shepherds abiding in the fields

Soprano

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And lo! The Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the Angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the City of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying...

Program Order, *continued*

Chorus

Glory to God

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, goodwill towards men.

Air

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion

Soprano

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King cometh unto thee! He is the righteous Savior, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen.

Recitative

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened

Alto

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.

Air

He shall feed His flock like a shepherd *Alto/Soprano*

He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; and He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those that are with young. Come unto Him, all ye that labor. Come unto Him, that are heavy laden, and He will give you rest. Take His yoke upon you, and learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Chorus

His yoke is easy, and His burden is light

Chorus

Hallelujah!

Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. Hallelujah!

Chorus

Worthy Is the Lamb

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hath redeemed us to God by His blood to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing... Blessing, and honor... glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

Chorus

Amen

Program Notes

In 1741 Handel's fortunes were so low that he was considering leaving England. His opera company had collapsed and he had suffered a stroke. Handel accepted the invitation to compose an oratorio, a much more popular style of concert of the time. A text was presented to him by his good friend and patron, Charles Jennens, a wealthy landowner who had helped to finance every one of Handel's publications since 1725. The text was assembled from the King James Bible and Psalms as printed in the Book of Common Prayer. In a letter to a friend, Charles Jennens wrote that he hoped that Handel will "...lay out his whole genius and skill upon it, that the composition may excel all his former compositions as the subject excels every other subject. The subject is Messiah."

Handel secluded himself on August 22, 1741, and in some three weeks' time composed the vast majority of the work. He was able to achieve this because of his inspiration about the subject and because he was able to borrow music performed at that time.

For instance, the borrowed music for the joyous chorus *For unto us a Child is born* was originally profane and perhaps frivolous duet for two sopranos castigating "blind Cupid" and "cruel beauty."

In its report on a public rehearsal, the Dublin News-Letter described the oratorio, *Messiah*, as "... far surpassing anything of that Nature which has been performed in this or any other Kingdom." Seven hundred people attended the premiere on 13 April. So that the largest possible audience could be admitted to the concert, gentlemen were requested to remove their swords, and ladies were asked not to wear hoops in their dresses, a request that we also repeat tonight. The performance earned unanimous praise from the assembled press: "Words are wanting to express the exquisite delight it afforded to the admiring and crowded Audience." A Dublin clergyman, Rev. Delaney, was so

overcome by Susanna Cibber's rendering of "He was despised" that reportedly he leapt to his feet during the performance and cried: "Woman, for this be all thy sins forgiven thee!" The concert raised enough money to give a sizable donation to each of the selected charities, the Mercer's Hospital and the Charitable Infirmary, and released 142 prisoners from debtors' prison. Despite his success in Ireland, Handel was hesitant to take the work to London, in part, because of objections to presenting a sacred work in that most profane of buildings – the theater! True to his expectation, when he did finally introduce *Messiah* there in 1743, it was not well received. Not until 1750, when *Messiah* began to be presented in annual performances for a London charity at the local Foundling Hospital did the public truly embrace the work. Between that time and Handel's death in 1759, *Messiah* attained the exalted stature it has held to the present day, a musical tradition unparalleled in the English speaking world.

Messiah is without doubt the most popular and the most performed cantata in existence. The musicologist Charles Burney wrote some 40 years after the premier "...this great work has been heard in all parts of the kingdom with increasing reverence and delight. It has fed the hungry, clothed the naked, fostered the orphan and enriched succeeding managers of the oratorios more than any single production in this or any other country."

Instrumental Ensemble

Accompanist

Patti Lingafelt

Violin I

Wendy Rawls*

Dana Friedli **

Lyda Cruden

Lucy Greenleaf

Violin II

Belinda Swanson

Petia Radneva

Laura Thomas

Viola

Lisa Doherty

Emi Mizobuchi

Cello

Virginia Hudson

Lauren Dunsheath

Bass

Emily Buccola

Oboe

Carrie Shull

Jennifer L. Allen

Bassoon

Rebecca Libera

Timpani

Casey Sagolla-Slamp

*Concertmaster

**Orchestra Contractor

About the Artists



Pepper Choplin, Cary Community Choir's conductor, is a renowned composer and conductor of church music. As part of tonight's program, we are pleased to present the world premier of his commissioned anthem "Unto Us a Child Is Born". Choplin received the Bachelor of Music degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and a Master of Music degree in composition from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His published works include over 300 anthems for church and school choir with 20 church cantatas and two books of piano arrangements. Over 150 groups have commissioned him to write original works for them. An original hymn, "Come to the Water" appears in the hymnal, *Celebrating Grace*. In 2013, Pepper made his Carnegie Hall debut in a joint concert with Joseph Martin. Since then, he has conducted seven concerts of his music at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. He has also performed his cantatas in Raleigh's Meymandi Auditorium with area church choirs that combined to make up a 250 voice choir accompanied by an orchestra.



Susannah Stewart, soprano, received her Master's degree in May of 2021 from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied voice with Kathryn Cowdrick. Most recently, Susannah opened the Smedes Parlor concert series at St. Mary's School in Raleigh, NC (September 2021) with a solo recital. This past year she performed the role of Aveline Mortimer in *Elizabeth Cree* by Kevin Puts, and The Lady with the Cake Box in *Postcard from Morocco* by Dominic Argento, both mainstage productions with Eastman Opera Theater, and directed by her primary coach, Timothy Long. In 2020, Susannah was asked by Eastman's Dean Marie Rolf to perform in her "Debussy Premieres"

lecture recital, presented in Hatch Hall at Eastman and at the J.P. Morgan Library in New York City alongside Anthony Dean Griffey, tenor and Randall Scarlata, baritone. She graduated in May of 2019 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a Bachelor of Music in Voice and Political Science. At UNC, Susannah performed the title role in *Alcina* (Handel), Dido in *Dido and Aeneas* (Purcell), and Zerlina in *Don Giovanni* (Mozart). Other credits with orchestra include Handel's cantata *Crudel tiranno amor*, Schubert's *Rosamunde*, Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suite*, Bach's *Magnificat*, Handel's *Utrecht Te Deum* and *Messiah*, Haydn's *Theresienmesse*, and Barber's *Prayers of Kierkegaard*.



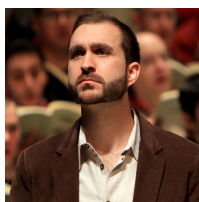
Jennifer Seiger, alto, is known for her “sonorous voice and superlative singing.” A native of North Carolina, Jennifer Seiger performs frequently across the state. Ms. Seiger received a BM in Vocal Performance and Pedagogy at East Carolina University and a MM in Opera from the Hartt School. She has appeared with the NC Opera, NC Symphony (Pops Concert Series), Carolina Ballet, NC Master Chorale, Concert Singers of Cary, Tar

River Orchestra and Chorus, Capital Opera and the Long Leaf Opera. Ms. Seiger toured extensively across the southeast with FBN Opera for Kids and was coordinator and performer with the arts outreach programs of Capital Opera and NC Opera. Ms. Seiger is also a sought-after choral collaborator working with professional chamber ensembles including the Raleigh Bach Soloists and the Duke Evensong Singers.



Timothy Sparks, tenor, has appeared with opera companies in the United States and Europe, including The Israel Vocal Arts Institute, Opera Festival di Roma, Jacksonville Lyric Opera, First Coast Opera, North Carolina Opera, Greensboro Opera Company, Triangle Opera, National Opera Company (A. J. Fletcher Opera Institute), Brevard Music Center, Capital Opera Raleigh, and Durham Savoyards, Limited. Mr. Sparks currently serves as a Lecturer in Voice at UNC-Chapel Hill and was an

Instructor of Voice at Meredith College for ten years. Each summer, Mr. Sparks teaches and performs for the International Young Artists Project, based in Monte San Savino, Italy. Mr. Sparks is an active adjudicator, a member of N.A.T.S., having served as a state district officer and as the Mid-Atlantic Regional Governor, and is a member of Pi Kappa Lambda. He received his BM in Vocal Performance from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and MM with the Performer's Certificate in Voice from the Eastman School of Music. His teachers include Joel R. Adams, Dominic Cossa, Fredric Moses, Dr. Terry Rhodes and John Maloy.



Bass-Baritone **Daniel Collins** has performed at Carnegie Hall and with the Metropolitan Opera chorus in New York City. He received his Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from the University of North Texas and earned both his Master of Music and Doctor of Music degrees in Vocal Performance from Florida State University. Dr. Collins

was a finalist in the Dallas and El Paso Opera Guild Competitions, the NATS Singer of the Year Competition, and the NATSAA National Competition. He has performed in opera, concerts, and recitals throughout the United States and as a soloist at some of the most prestigious churches and synagogues in New York City and Washington, D.C. Dr. Collins was described by Tim Page with the *Washington Post* as a “funny, exuberant, and enormously likable” Papageno during Summer Opera Theater’s performance of *The Magic Flute*. The *Post* also celebrated him in Opera Theater of Northern Virginia’s *The Barber of Seville* as a “bright and bouncy” Figaro who delivered his lines with “aplomb.” He was a young artist in the studio programs of Portland Opera, Kentucky Opera, and El Paso Opera.

Dr. Collins maintains a private voice studio at his home in Durham, NC and at the National Opera Center in New York City where he teaches singers of all skill levels including those who perform on Broadway and at the Metropolitan Opera. He is a member of the College Music Society, the American Guild of Musical Artists, the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the Music Teachers National Association, Pi Kappa Lambda, and Opera America.



Patti Lingafelt, accompanist, received the Bachelor of Music degree from James Madison University in Organ Performance and the Master of Divinity with Church Music degree (organ concentration) from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. She and her husband Steven have lived in Durham since 1982. Mrs. Lingafelt, an ordained Baptist minister, has served several churches in the Triangle area as Minister of Music/Organist, retiring from Trinity United Methodist Church in Durham in February 2021. She has accompanied middle school and high

school choruses, as well as numerous soloists and instrumentalists and continues to serve as a freelance accompanist. This is her eighth appearance as accompanist for the annual Cary Community Choir performance of Messiah. Mrs. Lingafelt is a member of the American Guild of Organists, Durham-Chapel Hill and Central NC Chapters; American Choral Directors Association; and Choristers Guild. The Lingafelts have two grown children.

Contributors to Cary Community Choir

We would like to express our deep appreciation to the following businesses, agencies and individuals who have generously given donations in support of tonight's concert.

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Acknowledgments

Cary Community Choir is supported in part by grants from the Lazy Daze Arts and Crafts Festival, an annual Cary-based festival supporting local arts and non-profit organizations and activities. Operational and promotional support is also given by the Town of Cary Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources, William Lewis, Cultural Arts Manager.

Thank you to Dr. Tom Ogburn, Senior Pastor, and Derrick Arellano, Associate Pastor for Music and Worship, at Westwood Baptist Church for their invitation and support in hosting this concert in their facility.

Special thanks to Zebulon Drug Company for providing masks for our singers.

Dedication

Tonight's performance is dedicated to the three musical directors who have led the Cary Community Choir over the last 50 years. The late Charles Gatwood organized the choir in 1971 and directed it for 30 years. David Mellnik took over from Charles in 2002 and was its musical director until 2018. This is Pepper Choplin's third year directing the Cary Community Choir. There are probably few community choirs that can boast having only three directors in its fifty year history. We are truly thankful for these three talented, dedicated musicians.

Following tonight's presentation, a free-will offering will be taken at the door to help defray the program expenses. Your contribution to the Cary Community Choir is tax deductible and greatly appreciated.

Checks may be made out to Cary Community Choir. You may also contribute online at www.carycommunitychoir.org. Please help to ensure the future of this Cary tradition through your generosity.

Cary Community Choir Board Members 2021

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Alan Booker

Elizabeth Booker

Jim Bridges

Denise Buckner

Benita Budd

Nancy Canterbury

Marketing/Communications: Regina Kaiser

Fundraising: Nancy Canterbury

Webmaster: Alan Booker

The date and location of next year's 51st Anniversary performance of Handel's "Messiah" will be listed on the Cary Community Choir website as soon as those details are confirmed. Find us at

www.carycommunitychoir.org



“I’m delighted to once again feel the energy of our singers and orchestra. Many generations have sung this work through the challenges of their day. Now it is our turn to faithfully share ‘Messiah’ with our generation. I admire our choir officers, singers and instrumentalists for their remarkable efforts to present this music for you tonight.”

Pepper Choplin, Director