

THE MOZART CLUB OF WINSTON-SALEM PRESENTS
THEIR 90TH ANNUAL PERFORMANCE OF
GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL'S

Messiah

Gary Thor Wedow, Conductor

Soloists

Soprano: Claire Griffin

Mezzo: Callie Iliff

Tenor: Ghalip Ekbert

Baritone: Robbie Raso



Chorus Master: Rev. David Williamson

Rehearsal Accompanist: Terry Hicks

Orchestra

Violin 1

Sebastian Leczky, Concertmaster
Ryan Keith, Associate Concertmaster
Tomas Posada, Assis't Concertmaster
Nick Williams, Principal Second
Lina Casas
Ann Jones
Deanna Miller
Sara Palacios

Viola

Maureen Michels, Principal
Mark Snow
Marian Wilson

Cello

Meagan Skogen, Principal
Emily Grissing

Double Bass

Rebecca Marland, Principal

Bassoon

Brianna Cantwell, Principal
Winfred Felton

Trumpet

Calvin Godfrey, Principal
Karl Kassner

Oboe

Kayla Bull, Principal
Hanna Noughani

Timpani

Dante Thomas

Harpsichord/Organ

Joshua Sobel

Orchestra Contractor and Manager

Ken Wilmot

Reynolds Memorial Auditorium

Sunday, December 6, 2025

3:00 p.m.



The Mozart Club gratefully acknowledges the following for their support of our performance:
First Baptist Church on Fifth Street and Rev. David Williamson, Minister of Worship and the Arts,
for providing rehearsal facilities and harpsichord.

Dr. Marilyn Taylor for securing today's soloists.

Jake Hill and Cornel Zimmer Organ Builders for portative organ.

The wreaths by Jeffrey Driver.

Community Chorus

Soprano

Rita Anderson
Mary Bergstone
Martee U. Brown
Katherine Campbell
Maike Copeland
Nancy Copeland
Judy Daley
Bobbie Eschenbach

Heidi Good
Kelsey Good
Ashley Hauser
Debbie Hauser
Jennifer Hsieh
Carol Kirby
Trisha Monroe
Alisa B. Ortman

Marilyn Rowe
Shirley Sadler
Heidi Shafer
Ann Stoebe
Cecelia Wadford
Mary Weyant
Barbara Wilder
Donna Williams

Alto

Colleen Atwood
Lydian Bernhardt Averitt
Sally Brown
Linda Collins
Parker Freeman
Sonya Fulton
Allison George
Elnora Gore
Alaina Hochstedler
Alexandra Hoskins

Maureen Irwin
Lili Loftis
Beth Manning
Sandra J McAvoy
Ruth McCandless
Patty McKenzie
Julie Meiburg
Pam Neighbors
Kathryn Schlee
Alison Sharp

Sandra Smith
Cynora Sprinkle
Olivia Sprinkle
Lorena Stephenson
Kayla Stoltzfus
Bev Tosi
Claire Wait
Carol Westmoreland
Joan Winner
Katrina Zimmerman

Tenor

Harvey Bailey
Joshua Bragg
Jeanne Evans
Alex Good
Terry Hicks

Kenton Hochstedler
Ben Limehouse
Stan Meiburg
Dennis Monaghan
Al Ray

Steven Shafer
Isaiah Stephenson
Micah Stoltzfus
Dave Westlake

Bass

Brian Adolph
Jim Beiswenger
David Bergstone
Mark Conrad Black
Wesley Brown
Richard Downs

Anthony Hochstedler
Bill Irwin
Harry W McCandless
Jason Oraker
Brent Piper
Paul Stephenson

Wesley Stoltzfus
Dave Tosi
Joshua Webb
David Williamson
John Woodmansee

This dedicated group of community volunteer singers typically rehearses twice a week for four weeks, then five times the final week for this performance. Some are performing for the first time, while others have been involved for decades if not generations of their families. We encourage anyone interested in joining, to contact us at wsmessiahchorus@gmail.com if you would like to get notice about rehearsals next year in November. This is a massive piece of music to learn, so it is not unusual for people attend rehearsals a year or two before performing. Attending rehearsals offers an in-depth understanding of vocal technique and about the oratorio.

Mozart Club Board of Directors

Mary Bergstone, Chair	Lydian Averitt
David Bergstone - Vice Chair	Ben Limehouse
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Joshua Bragg - Treasurer	Steven Shafer, President Elect
Terry Hicks	Carol Westmoreland
Brian Adolph	Rev. David Williamson

Program

PART I God's Plan to Redeem Mankind

Scene 1 Isaiah's Prophecy Of Salvation

Symphony.....Orchestra
Comfort ye my peopleTenor Recitative
Ev'ry valley shall be exalted Tenor Air
And the glory of the Lord Chorus

Scene 2 The Coming Judgement

Thus saith the Lord of hostsBaritone Recitative
But who may abide the day of His coming.....Mezzo Air
And he shall purify the sons of Levi Chorus

Scene 3 The Prophecy Of Christ's Birth

Behold, a virgin shall conceiveMezzo Recitative
O thou that tellest good tidings to ZionMezzo Air and Chorus
For behold, darkness shall cover the earth Baritone Air
The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light
..... Baritone Air
For unto us a child is born Chorus

Scene 4 The Annunciation To The Shepherds

Pifa.....Orchestra
There were shepherds abiding in the fields.....Soprano Recitative
And lo, the angel of the Lord Soprano Air
And the angel said unto them..... Soprano Recitative
And suddenly there was with the angel..... Soprano Air
Glory to God in the highest Chorus

Scene 5 Christ's healing and redemption

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion..... Soprano Air
Then shall the eyes of the blind be openedMezzo Recitative
He shall feed his flock like a shepherd ... Mezzo and Soprano Duet
His yoke is easy Chorus

INTERMISSION

PART II The Redemption

Scene 1 Christ's Passion

Behold the Lamb of God..... Chorus
He was despised and rejected of menMezzo Air
Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows..... Chorus
And with his stripes we are healed Chorus
All we like sheep have gone astray..... Chorus
All they that see him laugh him to scorn Tenor Recitative
He trusted in God Chorus
Thy rebuke hath broken his heart..... Tenor Recitative
Behold and see if there be any sorrow Tenor Air

Scene 2 Christ's Death and Resurrection

He was cut offTenor Recitative
But thou didst not leave his soul in hell Tenor Air

Scene 3 Christ's Ascension

Lift up your heads, O ye gates Chorus

Scene 4 Christ's Reception In Heaven

Unto which of the angelsTenor Recitative
Let all the angels of God worship Him Chorus

Scene 5 The Beginnings Of Gospel Preaching

Thou art gone up on high..... Mezzo Air
The Lord gave the word Chorus
How beautiful are the feet Soprano Air
Their sound is gone out Chorus

Scene 6 The World's Rejection Of The Gospel

Why do the nations so furiously rage together.....Baritone Air
Let us break their bonds asunder Chorus
He that dwelleth in heaven Tenor Recitative

Scene 7 God's Ultimate Victory

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron Tenor Air
Hallelujah Chorus

PART III An Anthem for Thanksgiving for the Defeat of Death

Scene 1 The Promise Of Eternal Life

I know that my Redeemer liveth Soprano Air
Since by man came death Chorus

Scene 2 The Day of Judgment

Behold, I tell you a mysteryBaritone Recitative
The trumpet shall sound Baritone Air

Scene 3 The Final Conquest Of Sin


Then shall be brought to passMezzo Recitative
O death, where is thy sting? Mezzo and Tenor Duet
But thanks be to God..... Chorus
If God be for us, who can be against us? Soprano Air

Scene 4 The Acclamation Of The Messiah

Worthy is the Lamb..... Chorus
Blessing and Honour Chorus
Amen Chorus

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributors, whose gifts reached us in time to be included in this program. We are entirely dependent on donations to support this annual event, so please consider a gift toward next year's performance. Use this QR code or go to our website: wsmessiah.org. The suggested donation is \$10 per person. Any donation is greatly appreciated.



Albert and Marilyn Griffin	Janice and Thom Brown, in memory of Joanne Federchuck	Kevin Stoltzfus	Rick and Debbie Hauser, in honor of Jay and Gaye Rhyne
Alex Good	Jean C. Davis	Laura Vaughan	Rick and Megan Erickson
Alisa Ortman, in memory of Helen Anderson Boyette	Jeanne Evans	Lauren Eberle	Robert V Ford Jr.
Allison George	Jennifer and Stephen Hsieh, in honor of Bob and Carol Rhoads	Lawrence and Bernice Hudspeth	Ronald and Sandra Jones
Bill and Maureen Irwin	Jeffrey Tribou	Lydian Bernhardt Averitt, in Memory of Dr. Norma Bernhardt	Sherri S. Collins
Bobbie Eschenbach	Joana Xipolitas	Marilyn Rowe, in memory of Dr. and Mrs. O.D. Rowe and family	Steven Plante
Brian Adolf	Joanne Henley	Mark Conrad Black	Susan Griffin Worth, in memory of Renard D. Griffin
Carol Westmoreland	John and Nancy Hunt, in memory of Philip Allen Hunt, in Honor of Rev. Carolyn Hunt Burrus	Mary Lewis	Suzanne Bridges
Caroline Brost	John C Warren	Mary Weyant	Terry Hicks
Chip and Billie Cole	John Ray	Matthew Hochstedler	The Brown Family, in memory of Joanne Federchuck
Colleen M Atwood	John Woodmansee	Michael Brown	Timothy and Barbara Wagner
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David and Mary Bergstone	Joshua and Elizabeth Bragg	R.W. Smith, in memory of Paula Gilbert and in Honor of Sherri Collins	Wilma Stoltzfus
David and Rita Anderson	Karla Good	Raine and Jane Remsburg	
David and Ruth Knesel	Katherine Gonzalez	Rick and Debbie Hauser, in honor of Charlie and Linda Rhyne	Corporate Supporters
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Deborah Couch	Kathryn Schlegel		Things to Go
Dennis Monaghan	Kayla Lucas		Jason Bragg
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Hoyt S. Beard			

The Artists

Conductor Gary Thor Wedow has established an enviable reputation for dramatically exciting and historically informed performances with opera companies, orchestras, festivals, and choral organizations throughout North America. Opera News has hailed him for his “hot music making” and “convincingly elegant period style.” His debut with the New York Philharmonic conducting Messiah was noted in the New York Times for ‘a fleet, lithe orchestral performance, aptly complemented by the buoyant singing of the chorus.’

Upcoming during the 2025-2026 season, Wedow leads productions of *La Cenerentola* with Lyric Opera of Kansas City and Arizona Opera and returns to Opera Omaha for *Il barbiere di Siviglia*.

Born in LaPorte, Indiana, and now a resident of New York City, he has been a member of the Juilliard School faculty since 1994 where he has led performances

of *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *La finta giardiniera*, *Ariodante* and *Don Giovanni*. Of particular note was the tour of Bach's St. Matthew Passion with Juilliard 415 Historical Performance Ensemble that culminated at Alice Tully Hall ‘in a performance that caught fire and magic’ according to the New York Times. Mr. Wedow studied piano with virtuoso Jorge Bolet at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University and received his Master of Music degree at the New England Conservatory.

Robbie Raso, Bass, is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music and the Carnegie Mellon University School of Music. He is excited to be continuing his education at the A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute, studying under Dr. Marilyn Taylor.

In addition to singing, Robbie is also an instrumentalist, having studied trombone since middle school.

Soprano Claire Griffin has been characterized as a classical vocalist, soloist, recitalist, and thespian, but her treasured designation is “storyteller.” Striving to become a well-rounded singing actress, Claire is in pursuance of her Professional Artist Certificate as a member of the A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute of UNCSCA, where she also received her Master of Music in 2025. She trains here under the guidance of Dr. Marilyn Taylor. A North Carolina local, the triad-based soprano hails from Brevard in the Blue Ridge Mountains. In 2022, she completed her BM at UNC Greensboro where she studied with Carla LeFevre and coached with Arlene Shrut.

Callie Iliff, Mezzo-Soprano is a vibrant singer from San Marcos, Texas, returning for a second year of the *Messiah*. She holds a B.M. from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and during her time there she participated in a dynamic

assortment of artistic avenues such as stage managing, directing, and performing.

Callie is currently pursuing her M.M. in Vocal Performance with the A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute at the UNCSCA. She is a student of Phyllis Pancella.

Ghalip Ekber, Tenor, is from Ghulja, China. He will continue his vocal training at the A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute under the guidance of Dr. Marilyn Taylor. He earned his Master of Music degree in 2025 from the Central Conservatory of Music, where he studied with Professor Dilbèr Yunus. During the 2023–2024 academic year, he furthered his studies with Professor Katherine Ciesinski at the Eastman School of Music. He also holds a bachelor's degree from the Central Conservatory of Music.

More detailed background is available on our website