



HANDEL'S  
*Messiah*  
DECEMBER 5-7

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*Washington National Cathedral Choir  
& Baroque Orchestra*



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*Messiah*

*Washington National Cathedral Choir  
& Baroque Orchestra*

**Dana Marsh**  
*conductor*

**Laura Choi Stuart**  
*soprano*

**Andrew Brown**  
*tenor*

**Zoie Reams**  
*mezzo-soprano*

**Kevin Deas**  
*bass-baritone*

*PART THE FIRST*

*twenty-minute intermission*

*PART THE SECOND*

*twenty-minute intermission*

*PART THE THIRD*

*Presented with generous support from  
Robert D. Hevey, Jr. and Constance M. Filling*

# PROGRAM

## GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)

### *Messiah*

Today, we are so familiar with George Frideric Handel's landmark oratorio *Messiah* that it is easy to forget how revolutionary it was at the time of composition. Handel, who was born in Germany, trained in Italy, and spent most of his professional life in London, synthesized the musical styles of these places to create new genres of music—namely, the English oratorio. For 30 years, Handel was focused on bringing Italian opera to London. However, as the popularity of Italian opera waned and he faced competition from warring operatic establishments, Handel was forced to change tack. While his 42 operas fell into obscurity after his death until relatively recently, the series of oratorios he produced in the last 20 years of his life—*Messiah* chief among them—would become his enduring legacy.

Of course, Handel did not create the English oratorio from nothing but integrated elements from Italian *opera seria*, German Passion oratorios, and English masques and choral anthems. While in Italy as a young man, he wrote two Italian oratorios, but these were stylistically very similar to opera in their heavy reliance on arias and recitatives rather than choruses. Handel wrote his first English oratorio, *Esther*, in 1718, though it was not performed publicly until an unauthorized performance in 1732, which prompted Handel to expand and rework the piece in retaliation. The work's Biblical subject matter made staging it illegal, so it was presented in concert instead. Thus, the English oratorio as we know it today was born.

Although Handel still hammered at the door of Italian opera for the next 10 years, he increasingly turned his attention to writing sacred oratorios and secular musical dramas, which were proving more commercially successful. The acclaim he received for the *Coronation Anthems* (1727) spurred him to elevate the role of the chorus in his subsequent oratorios and create some of his most inventive and powerful vocal writing. That is nowhere more apparent than in *Messiah*, which contains an almost equal number of arias and choruses. Handel also treats the arias and

recitatives more flexibly, sometimes forgoing traditional da capo form and merging them with the following choruses (e.g., “O thou that tellest good tidings of Zion”).

In 1741, Handel was commissioned to compose *Messiah* and several other works for a series of charity concerts in Dublin. Premiering on April 13, 1742, at Neale's Musick Hall, *Messiah* was an instant success, drawing an audience of 700 to a venue designed for only 600. Attendees were advised to leave their swords and hoop skirts at home to accommodate the anticipated crowd. *Messiah* was met with a mixed reception in London, however. Unlike other sacred oratorios—which were merely based on Biblical stories and contained characters and a narrator—*Messiah*'s text was taken directly and exclusively from Scripture and the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. Thus, some believed it sacrilegious to perform the work in a theater. Donating the proceeds to charity helped temper these misgivings. Eventually, audiences could no longer deny the piece's enduring message of hope and glorious music, and *Messiah* became the cherished annual tradition it is today.

*Katherine Buzard*



# PERFORMERS



**DANA MARSH**

Dana Marsh's musical education began as a boy chorister at St. Thomas Choir School (New York) and at Salisbury Cathedral (UK). He received his undergraduate degree from the Eastman School of Music, with later master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Oxford.

Acclaimed by *The Washington Post* as "a superb choral conductor, energetic and precise," Marsh has enjoyed guest-conducting collaborations with the Choirs of Trinity Wall Street and St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, the orchestras of Trinity Baroque and New York Baroque Incorporated, Bach Collegium San Diego, Cappella Romana, Studio de musique ancienne de Montréal, Lamèque International Baroque Music Festival, Magnificat (U.K.), Musica Angelica Baroque Orchestra, and the Portland Baroque Orchestra, among others.

While completing his doctoral research at Oxford, Marsh performed regularly as a principal singer with the Choir of New College, participating in international tours and recordings with the Academy of Ancient Music, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and the European Union Baroque Orchestra. He recorded 15 discs with New College Choir, one of which won the Gramophone award for Early Music in 2008.

Known to DC audiences, Marsh is artistic director of the critically acclaimed Washington Bach Consort and serves as Professor of Music and Director of the Historical Performance Institute at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.





**LAURA CHOI STUART**

Hailed as “a lyric soprano of ravishing quality” by the *Boston Globe*, Laura Choi Stuart appears this season as a soloist in Handel’s *Messiah*, as well as in Bach’s *St. John Passion* and *B Minor Mass*, Brahms’ *Requiem*, and Kaija Saariaho’s *Quatre Instants*. An album of Art Songs of Charles Ives, Reynaldo Hahn and William Bolcom with pianist Tanya Blaich will release in early 2026.

Recent season highlights include Mozart *Requiem* with Washington Bach Consort, Beethoven *Missa Solemnis* with Handel Choir of Baltimore, *Elijah* with Baltimore Choral Arts, *Dona Nobis Pacem* with Washington Master Chorale, Poulenc *Gloria*, Mendelssohn *Lobgesang*, Mozart *Requiem*, Bach *Christmas Oratorio* and the Monteverdi *Vespers*, as well as regular appearances with Washington Bach Consort, Bach Vocal Artists of Winter Park, and Seraphic Fire.

Laura was honored for art song performance at the National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Awards and the Art Song Discovery Series for the Vocal Arts Society.

Laura is a passionate teacher, and serves as Head of Vocal Studies at Washington National Cathedral, and as a visiting clinician at Bridgewater University, Towson University, the Maryland AGO, and many choirs in the DC region. She shares clear (fun) voice education for choral singers at [TheWeeklyWarmUp.com](http://TheWeeklyWarmUp.com).

She received her training at The Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program for Singers, Opera North, and Berkshire Opera, as well as The New England Conservatory (Presidential Scholar) and Dartmouth College (Summa Cum Laude).



**ZOIE REAMS**

Hailed by *Opera News* for her “velvety mezzo,” Zoie Reams is a graduate of the prestigious Houston Grand Opera Butler Studio. She earned her Bachelor of Music at Lawrence University, and a Master of Music from Louisiana State University.

Ms. Reams returns to Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2024-2025, opening the season as Maddalena in *Rigoletto* and later appearing as Mother in Tesori/Thompson’s *Blue*. With the LA Phil, she appears as part of Solange Knowles’ *Eldorado Ballroom*, singing Julia Perry’s *Stabat Mater*. Additional engagements include returns to Washington National Cathedral for Handel’s *Messiah*, and joining The Metropolitan Opera roster to cover Charmian in John Adams’ *Antony and Cleopatra*.

On the concert stage, she has sung Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9* with the National Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner’s *Te Deum* with the Houston Symphony Orchestra, Tippett’s *A Child of Our Time* with the New York Choral Society at Carnegie Hall, and Handel’s *Messiah* with both the Las Vegas Philharmonic and the combined choirs of Auburn University and the New Choral Society of Scarsdale, New York.

Operatic highlights of previous seasons include her debut at the Salzburg Festival in Sergei Prokofiev’s *The Gambler* as Doubtful Old Lady in the summer of 2024; her anticipated house debut at The Metropolitan Opera as Lily in James Robinson’s acclaimed production of *Porgy and Bess* in 2021; a house debut at Lyric Opera of Chicago as Flora in *La traviata*; and performances at Houston Grand Opera as the title role in Damien Sneed’s *Marian Song*.



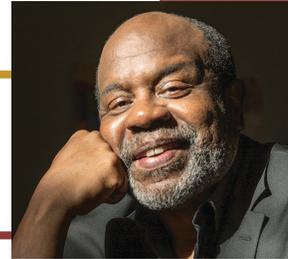
**ANDREW BROWN**

Lauded by The Washington Post for his “pure” and “poignant” voice, Andrew Bearden Brown is a tenor equally at home on operatic and concert stages. He is thrilled to return to Washington National Cathedral, where he received his early music education as a boy chorister, including his first-ever Handel’s *Messiah* at the age of twelve. At the Cathedral he also sang for services of national importance, including the state funerals of Ronald Reagan, Gerald Ford, John McCain, Colin Powell, Madeleine Albright, and Jimmy Carter. Later he obtained his bachelor’s degree in Urban Studies from Brown University, a master’s degree in Vocal Performance from the Royal College of Music in London, and a Performance Diploma from Boston University.

As an oratorio soloist, Andrew regularly performs the works of Bach (*St. John Passion*, *St. Matthew Passion*, *Mass in B Minor*, *Christmas Oratorio*), Handel (*Messiah*), Haydn (*Creation*), and Mendelssohn (*Elijah*), having soloed with groups such as Academy of Ancient Music, Voces8, Tempesta di Mare, the Washington National Cathedral Choir, and Boston Schola Cantorum.

Recent operatic appearances include *Le nozze di Figaro* (Don Curzio) at The Santa Fe Opera and *Der Kaiser von Atlantis* (Soldat) with Louisville Orchestra.

Upcoming performances in the spring include a title role debut in Elgar’s *The Dream of Gerontius* with Rhode Island’s Chorus of Westerly, Evangelist in the Bach *St. John Passion* with Providence Baroque, and *Considering Matthew Shepard* with Musica Atlantica in Savannah.



**KEVIN DEAS**

Kevin Deas has gained international renown as one of America’s leading bass-baritones. He is perhaps most acclaimed for his signature portrayal of the title role in *Porgy and Bess*, having performed it with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Pacific Symphony, as well as the most illustrious orchestras on the North American continent, and at the Ravinia, Vail, and Saratoga festivals.

Kevin Deas’ 2025-26 season includes performances of Handel’s *Messiah* with the New York Philharmonic and Seattle Symphony, Mozart’s *Requiem* with Apollo’s Fire. Other notable performances include an appearance as Dick Halloran in *The Shining* with Nashville Opera. Recent highlights include performances with Oregon Symphony and New Jersey Symphony.

A proponent of contemporary music, Kevin Deas has performed Menotti’s *Amahl* and the *Night Visitors* at Italy’s Spoleto Festival, Derek Bermel’s *The Good Life* with the Pittsburgh Symphony, and Hannibal Lokumbe’s *Dear Mrs. Parks* with the Detroit Symphony. He also enjoyed a twenty-year collaboration with the late jazz legend Dave Brubeck.

Kevin Deas has recorded Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger* (Decca/London) with the Chicago Symphony under Sir Georg Solti and Varèse’s *Ecuatorial* with the ASKO Ensemble under Riccardo Chailly. Other releases include Bach’s *Mass in B Minor* and Handel’s *Acis and Galatea* (Vox Classics); Dave Brubeck’s *To Hope!* with the Cathedral Choral Society (Telarc); Haydn’s *Die Schöpfung* with the Virginia Symphony and Boston Baroque (Linn Records); and Dvorák in America (Naxos).

**DANIEL LEE**

Period violinist Daniel Lee leads an interdisciplinary career as a performer, scholar, preacher, and teacher. Praised for his “fleet-fingered, passionate... soulful performance” (*The New York Times*), he is the founding director of the Sebastians, an award-winning period ensemble based in New York City. He frequently performs as a soloist and leader with Early Music Missouri, the Kansas City Baroque Consortium, the Providence Baroque Orchestra, and the Washington National Cathedral Baroque Orchestra. In previous seasons, he has appeared as a soloist and leader with such ensembles as Early Music New York, the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, Juilliard415, New York Baroque Incorporated, Trinity (Wall Street) Baroque Orchestra, and the Yale Schola Cantorum.

He plays on modern replicas of Cremonese violins by luthier Karl Dennis and a rare 1770 Florentine violin in its original setup by Giovanni Battista Gabrielli. In addition to historical violins, he also performs on the violino piccolo and violoncello da spalla.

An ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA), he has served churches and organizations in Connecticut, Missouri, and New York. He strives to explore the intersection of arts and spirituality, where creativity can inspire harmony in human society. He currently teaches early music at Yale University.

## ORCHESTRA

### VIOLIN I

Daniel Lee\*+  
Edmond Chan  
Mandy Wolman  
Natalie Kress  
Rebecca Nelson  
Francis Liu

### VIOLIN II

Nicholas DiEugenio\*  
Kako Boga  
Risa Browder  
Freya Creech  
Leslie Nero

### VIOLA

Kyle Miller\*  
Caitlin Cribbs  
Daniel Elyar  
Derek Smith

### CELLO

Ezra Seltzer\*  
Sarah Stone  
Lourdes de la Pena

### BASS

Jessica Powell Eig

### OBOE

Meg Owens  
Dan Bates

### BASSOON

Kelsey Schilling

### TRUMPET

Josh Cohen  
Dillon Parker

### TIMPANI

Michelle Humphreys

### HARPSICHORD

Arthur Haas

### ORGAN

Stephen Gamboa

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+ concertmaster

\* principal

# CHOIR

## ALTO

Roger Isaacs  
 Kristen Dubenion-Smith  
 Caroline Nielson  
 Kaylee Parker  
 Zoe McCray  
 Louisa Waycott

## TENOR

Ben Hawker  
 Jonathan Hoffman  
 Aaron Cates  
 Andrew Sauvageau  
 David Pelino  
 John Mullan

## BASS

Jason Widney  
 Gilbert Spencer  
 Joseph Hubbard  
 Ross Tamaccio  
 Thomas Rust  
 Timothy Callahan

## CHORISTERS

Josh Bell  
 Bella Deocares-Brandenburg  
 Stella Dilorio  
 Charlie Eastwick  
 Charlize Hill  
 Christina Hou  
 Kat Kang  
 Benjamin Liu  
 Annie McBrady  
 Julia Mumford  
 Sarah Oler  
 Madisyn Payne  
 Charles Poynor  
 Adam Rawi  
 Tom Roscoe  
 Robert Ryan  
 Audrey Weeks

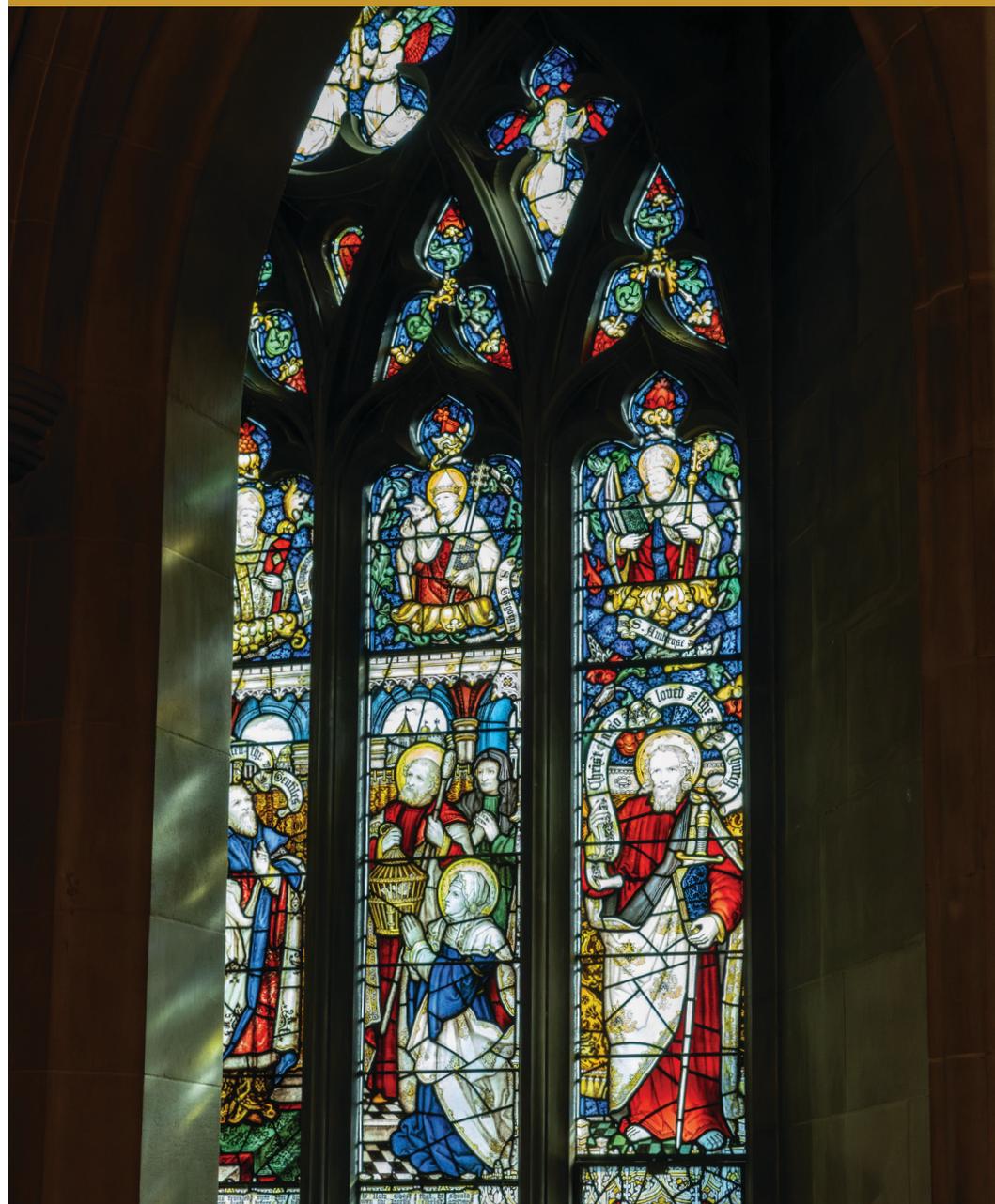
## CHORAL SCHOLARS

Lincoln Eyer  
 Alex Mathai

## CHORAL APPRENTICES

Jerald Campana  
 Dhillon Cannavo  
 Nikhil Cannavo  
 Duran Tazewell  
 David Van der Merwe

# LIBRETTO



## PART THE FIRST

### OVERTURE (ORCHESTRA)

#### RECITATIVE (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.

**Isaiah 40:4**

#### AIR (TENOR)

Ev'ry valley shall be exalted, and ev'ry mountain and hill made low; the crooked straight and the rough places plain.

**Isaiah 40:4**

### CHORUS

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.

**Isaiah 40:5**

#### RECITATIVE (BASS)

Thus saith the Lord, 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.

**Haggai 2:6-7**

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.

**Malachi 3:1**

#### AIR (ALTO)

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth?

For He is like a refiner's fire.

**Malachi 3:2**

### CHORUS

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

**Malachi 3:3**

#### RECITATIVE (ALTO)

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

**Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23**

#### AIR (ALTO) AND CHORUS

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!

**Isaiah 40:9**

Arise, shine, for thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

**Isaiah 60:1**

#### RECITATIVE (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.

**Isaiah 60:2-3**

#### AIR (BASS)

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.

**Isaiah 9:2**

#### CHORUS

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.

**Isaiah 9:6**

#### PASTORAL SYMPHONY (ORCHESTRA)

#### RECITATIVE (SOPRANO)

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night.

**Luke 2:8**

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.

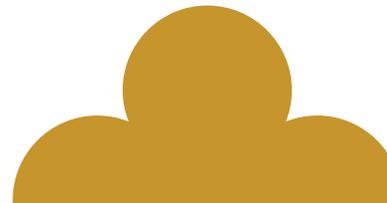
**Luke 2:9**

#### RECITATIVE (SOPRANO)

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.

**Luke 2:10-11**



**RECITATIVE (SOPRANO)**

And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying:

**Luke 2:13**

**CHORUS**

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

**Luke 2:14**

**AIR (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.

**Zechariah 9:9-10**

**RECITATIVE (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.

**Isaiah 35:5-6**

**AIR (SOPRANO AND ALTO)**

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.

**Isaiah 40:11**

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.

**Matthew 11:28-29**

**CHORUS**

His yoke is easy and his burthen is light.

**Matthew 11:30**

**PART THE SECOND****CHORUS**

Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.

**John 1:29**

**AIR (ALTO)**

He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

**Isaiah 53:3**

He gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: he hid not his face from shame and spitting.

**Isaiah 50:6**

**CHORUS**

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows! He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him.

**Isaiah 53:4-5**

**CHORUS**

And with his stripes we are healed.

**Isaiah 53:5**

**CHORUS**

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

**Isaiah 53:6**

**RECITATIVE (TENOR)**

All they that see him laugh him to scorn; they shoot out their lips, and shake their heads, saying:

**Psalms 22:7**

**CHORUS**

He trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, if he delight in him.

**Psalms 22:8**

**RECITATIVE (TENOR)**

Thy rebuke hath broken his heart: he is full of heaviness.

He looked for some to have pity on him, but there was no man, neither found he any to comfort him.

**Psalms 69:20**

**AIR (TENOR)**

Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow.

**Lamentations 1:12**

**RECITATIVE (TENOR)**

He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of thy people was He stricken.

**Isaiah 53:8**

A twenty-minute  
intermission follows  
Part The First.

**AIR (TENOR)**

But thou didst not leave his soul in hell; nor didst thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.

**Psalm 16:10**

**CHORUS**

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle,

The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

**Psalm 24:7-10**

**AIR (SOPRANO)**

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

**Romans 10:15**

**CHORUS**

Their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words unto the ends of the world.

**Romans 10:18**

**AIR (BASS)**

Why do the nations so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth rise up, and the rulers take counsel

together against the Lord, and against his Anointed.

**Psalm 2:1-2**

**CHORUS**

Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their yokes from us.

**Psalm 2:3**

**RECITATIVE (TENOR)**

He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Lord shall have them in derision.

**Psalm 2:4**

**AIR (TENOR)**

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

**Psalm 2:9**

**CHORUS**

Hallelujah: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

**Revelation 19:6**

The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever.

**Revelation 11:15**

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

**Revelation 19:16**

**A twenty-minute intermission follows Part The Second.**

## PART THE THIRD

**AIR (SOPRANO)**

I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.

**Job 19:25-26**

For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep.

**1 Corinthians 15:20**

**CHORUS**

Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

**1 Corinthians 15:21-22**

**RECITATIVE (BASS)**

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-52**

**AIR (BASS)**

The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

**1 Corinthians 15:52**

**RECITATIVE (ALTO)**

Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory.

**1 Corinthians 15:54**

**DUET (ALTO, TENOR)**

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

**1 Corinthians 15:55-56**

**CHORUS**

But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 Corinthians 15:57**

**AIR (SOPRANO)**

If God is for us, who can be against us?

**Romans 8:31**

Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?

It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?

It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who makes intercession for us.

**Romans 8:33-34**

**CHORUS**

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 honour, and glory,  
and blessing.

Blessing and honour, glory and  
power, be unto Him that sitteth  
upon the throne, and unto the  
Lamb, for ever and ever.

Amen.

**Revelations 5:12-14**



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