



*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and he shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6*

*John the Baptist went into all the region around the Jordan,
Proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness
of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the
prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
Prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight."
Luke 3:3-4*

*Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped,
but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant,
being born in human likeness.
Philippians 2: 5-7*

*Say to those who are fearful of heart,
"Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God."
Isaiah 35:4*

*And the Word became flesh and lived among us.
And we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.
John 1:14*

Emmanuel

God With Us

OUR COMING SAVIOR IN GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL'S

Messiah

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025 AT 5 PM

National Presbyterian Church Festival Choir and Orchestra

MICHAEL DENHAM, MUSIC DIRECTOR AND CONDUCTOR

SHERI JACKSON, SOPRANO

TESS OTTINGER, SOPRANO

MELANIE ASHKAR, MEZZO-SOPRANO

LUKE SCHMIDT, TENOR

PAUL GROSVENOR, BARITONE

ETHAN ZORACK-GREENE, BASS-BARITONE

TODD FICKLEY, HARPSICHORD AND ORGAN

Sinfony

Comfort Ye, My People

Isaiah 40:1-4

Every Valley Shall Be Exalted

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

And the Glory of the Lord

Isaiah 40:5

"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."

Thus Saith the Lord

Haggai 2:6-7 & Malachi 3:1

Thus saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, "Yet once a little while, and I will shake the heav'ns 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, ev'n the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. "Behold, he shall come," saith the Lord of Hosts.

But Who May Abide

Malachi 3:2

But who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and who shall stand when he appeareth?

And He Shall Purify

Malachi 3:3

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

Behold, a Virgin Shall Conceive

Isaiah 7:14

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel:
God with us.

O Thou That Tellest Good Tidings

Isaiah 40:9

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!" O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.

For Behold, Darkness

Isaiah 60:2-3

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.

The People That Walked in Darkness

Isaiah 9:2

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.

For Unto Us a Child Is Born

Isaiah 9:6

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.

WELCOME AND EVENING PRAYER

Dr. Ray Hylton, Sr.

Pastoral Symphony (here an offering will be received)



There Were Shepherds

Luke 2:8

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

And Lo, the Angel of the Lord

Luke 2:9

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

Luke 2:10-11

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

Luke 2:13

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

Glory to God

Luke 2:14

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

Rejoice Greatly

Zechariah 9:9-10

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.

Then Shall the Eyes

Isaiah 35:5-6

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.

He Shall Feed His Flock

Isaiah 40:11

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, and 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 and 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 for your souls.

His Yoke Is Easy
His yoke is easy, and his burthen is light.

Matthew 11:30

Hallelujah Revelation 19:6, 16 & 11:15
Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever, King of kings and Lord of lords.

I Know that My Redeemer Liveth Job 19:25, 26; 1 Corinthians 15:20
I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And tho' worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep.

Since by Man Came Death 1 Corinthians 15:21
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.

The Trumpet Shall Sound 1 Corinthians 15:52-53
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. The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible.

O Death, Where Is Thy Sting? 1 Corinthians 15:54-56
Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. 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.

But Thanks Be to God 1 Corinthians 15:57
But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Worthy Is the Lamb Revelation 5:12-13
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, forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Dr. Hylton

Congregational Carol
JOY TO THE WORLD!

Congregation
Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth receive her King!
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing...
Joy to the world! the Savior reigns: Let us our songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy...

Choir Only
No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found...

Congregation
He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love...

Text by Isaac Watts, the father of English hymnody
Music adapted by Lowell Mason from two tunes of G. F. Handel here arranged by John Rutter

PROGRAM NOTES

It was not until a quarter century after Handel’s death that Messiah “began to occupy the position it still holds today: as a piece of music that seems full of meaning to people who treasure it and stealthily familiar to nearly everyone else.”¹ Having attended one of the performances that in the intervening years had swelled to gargantuan size, Abigail Adams, while living in London with her husband John, future second President of the United States, is said to have written, “I was at the piece call’d the Messiah, and tho a Guinea a ticket, I am sure I never spent one with more satisfaction....I was one continued shudder from the beginning to the end of the performance.”²

All these years later, during this Advent season, our congregation is focusing on our Lord as “Emmanuel”—an Old Testament Hebrew word that literally means “God with us,” In this, we do well to remember words of German pastor and martyr Dietrich Bonhöffer, a great twentieth-century Christian leader, who very near the end of World War II, went to the gallows at the hand of Hitler’s odious Nazi regime. Bonhöffer was a brilliant theologian who recognized that Christian faith does not rest merely in the abstract realm of ideas, but is rooted in the physical, historical, and concrete world around us. He paid the ultimate price under the implications of this truth, following Jesus to the end.

The heart of Bonhöffer’s theology was the mystery of the Incarnation, the Christian doctrine that Jesus Christ—the eternal second person of the Trinity—in fact became truly, fully human, and walked this earth among us. Bonhöffer wrote, “No priest, no theologian stood at the cradle in Bethlehem. And yet, all Christian theology has its origin in the wonder of all wonders that God became man.”

We move right to the heart of the matter when we insist on the radical reality of Emmanuel. “God with us” really is the wonder of it all, the marvelous mystery wherein meet, as the hymn writer has said, “our hopes and fears of all the years.”

Dr. Michael Denham

1 Charles King, “Every Valley: The Desperate Lives and Troubled Times That Made Handel’s Messiah (New York: Doubleday, 2024), 9.
2 Ibid., 9.

FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I Heather Ledoux Green, Concertmaster Eva Cappelletti Chao Karl Meyer Saskia Florence Steffany Shock	VIOLA Jennifer Ries Evelyn Harpham Chris Fyhr CELLO Christine Lightner David Cho BASS T. Alan Stewart	OBOE John Lathwell Elaine Baughman BASSOON Jonathan Zepp TRUMPET Gil Hoffer Matthew Misener TIMPANI Adam Green	HARPSICHORD AND ORGAN Todd Fickley REHEARSAL PIANISTS Todd Fickley and Jonathan Rajaseelan PERSONNEL Pamela Lassell
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FESTIVAL CHOIR

SOPRANO

Lynda Adamson
Hayley Ashbaugh
Gretchen W. Asmuth
Margery Benson
Sherry Brukbacher
Ela Caglayan
Deborah Cheung
Jan Childress
Becky Cznadel
Beatrice Dang
Amy Deora
Kia'Marie Fields
Diane Fresquez
Stephanie Gauzens

Susan Geary
Janet Gregory
Cheryl Hatch
Kristine Heine
Meimon Hsu
Kathy Hughes
Sheri Jackson
Joanna Lam
Karen Lautman
Deborah MacKay
Debora Madsen
Samantha McCaleb
Eve Moscicki
Yoonhee Mun

Holly Novak
Lisa Orr
Tess Ottinger
Helen Parshall
Leah Raymond
Amanda Steadman
Julia Stonner
Lisa Stucky
Elizabeth Villarreal
Tabitha Voth
Ruth Wielgosz

ALTO

Alison Adkins
Barbara Angier
Jen Barrett
Vanessa Bateman
Alix Beatty
Ana Biswas
Thea Bournazian
Katelynn Boyd-Thompson
Mary Ellen Cain
Joanna Chai
Catherine Clevenger
Jenny Coneff
Christine Feintheil
Alison Frisch
Carolyn Gasarch

Mihal Gross
Mckynzie Haizlip
Gerri Hall
Lila Hardy
Cindy Holman
Judith Hylton
Carol Jackson
Camilla Kerr
Donna Kirk
Maureen Kline
Katie Koza
Ruth Kurzbauer
Joan Lewis
Joanne Lin
Carmel Mahan

Joyce Martin
Denise Miller
Tehila Onyukwu
Gudrun Oppen
Sylvie Raich
Lydia Rice
Dottie Seep
Lori Spoor
Karin Strydom
Kathleen Tenvan
Marguerite Toscano
Heather Weaver
Julia Wolz
Martha Young Freedberg

TENOR

Bianca Benincasa
Edward Blanton
Robert Bruce
John Cox
Scott Dickson

Paul Hildreth
Forrest Jones
Gabriel Karawa
Dennis Michalak
James Mitchell

David Nickels
Azzael Okirie
Luke Schmidt
Malik Tate
Kenneth Weeman

BASS

Alex Bateman
Laing Bowles
Daniel Callis
Serge Duss
Konrad Filbeck
Ethan Greene
William Gregory
Paul Grosvenor

Michael Hamaide
Denny Hostetter
Bruce Kuester
Terry Lee
John Longstreth
Andrew Markle
James Martin
Mark Moverman

John Pierce
Price Roe
Allen Saunders
John Stewart
Peter Tam
Florian Wegelein
J. Mills Williams

PRODUCTION

LOGISTICS, PUBLICITY & PROGRAM

Caroline Etgen, Devin Wulff,
Dr. Michael Denham

SOUND & LIGHTING

Bill McNett



UPCOMING EVENTS

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2024
5 PM Worship
Family Nativity

8 & 10 PM Worship
Candlelight & Carols

Palm Sunday

March 29, 2026
5 PM Concert

Felix Mendelssohn
Hymn of Praise

NPC Festival Choir and Orchestra

For more information about the many events at National,
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