



Messiah

George Frideric Handel

Augustana College

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Augustana Oratorio Society and Chamber Orchestra
Jon Hurty, *conductor*

Michelle Areyzaga | *soprano*

Steven Soph | *tenor*

Jonathan Woody | *bass baritone*

Jessye Wright | *mezzo soprano*

Sunday, February 22, 2026 | 3 p.m.

Centennial Hall
Augustana College
Rock Island, Illinois

*This performance is presented through generous support from
Kim and Donna Brunner.*



THE TEXT

[Please hold applause until the end of the first half of the program.]

PART I | *The prophecy and its fulfillment*

SINFONIA

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 40:1-3*

ARIA (tenor)

Every valley shall be exalted, and every 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 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. *Haggai 2:6, 7; Malachi 3:1*

ARIA (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*

ARIA (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! Arise, shine for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. *Isaiah 40:9, 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*

ARIA (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

RECITATIVE (soprano)

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. *Luke 2:8*

RECITATIVE (soprano)

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 to 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 Saviour, 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 2:14*

CHORUS

Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth, good will toward men. *Luke 2:14*

ARIA (soprano)

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King cometh unto thee! He is the righteous Saviour, and He shall speak peace unto the heathen. *Zechariah 9:9, 10*

CHORUS

His yoke is easy, and His burthen is light. *Matthew 11:30*

Intermission

PART II | *The passion*

CHORUS

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. *John 1:29*

ARIA (alto)

He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. *Isaiah 53:3*

CHORUS

Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows! He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisements 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)

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. *Psalm 69:20*

ARIA (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*

ARIA (tenor)

But Thou did'st not leave His soul in Hell; nor did'st 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*

ARIA (bass)

Why do the nations so furiously rage together, 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

RECITATIVE (tenor)

He that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh them to scorn: the Lord shall
have them in derision. *Psalm 2:4*

ARIA (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. The kingdom
of this world is 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! *Revelation 19:6, 11:15, 19:16*

PART III | *The triumph*

ARIA (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. For now is Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep. *Job 19:25, 26; 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*

ARIA (bass)

The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. *1 Corinthians 15:52, 53*

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, forever and ever. Amen. *Revelation 5:12, 9, 13*

THE ARTISTS

JON HURTY



Jon Hurty is the director of choral activities and Henry Veld Professor of Music at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois. He directs the Augustana Choir, the Augustana Chamber Singers, serves as the conductor of the Augustana Oratorio Society and teaches conducting. He is also the conductor and artistic director of Augustana Choral Artists. Before coming to Rock Island he was director of choral activities at Concordia University in Irvine, California.

Active as a guest conductor and clinician throughout the United States and abroad, he has served in this capacity in All State, State and Regional festivals of the American Choral Directors Association, the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, National Association for Music Education, and many colleges and high schools. Other professional activities have included conducting the Tian Kong Choir and serving as guest professor at Huazhong Normal University in Wuhan, China, as well as guest conducting on the Quad City Symphony Orchestra subscription series. He has conducted his choirs in concerts throughout the United States as well as Austria, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Norway, Spain and Sweden.

He completed his undergraduate degree in vocal performance at Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas, where he graduated summa cum laude, his master's degree in choral conducting at California State University, Northridge, and his doctorate in choral conducting and literature at the University of Illinois. He has studied conducting with John Alexander, Don Moses, Chet Alwes and Ann Howard Jones. Throughout his career, Hurty has had an interest in developing and refining his skills as a conductor and has studied conducting in workshops with Paul Christiansen, Robert Shaw and Helmut Rilling, as well as singing under many conductors including Christopher Hogwood, Sir Charles Groves and Roger Wagner.

MICHELLE AREYZAGA | Soprano



Praised as a “consummate vocal actress,” Michelle Areyzaga is held in high regard throughout the United States and beyond for her “appealing, expressive soprano” (New York Times). She has recorded for Naxos, Proteus, 4Tay Records and the Cedille labels.

Performances include the Chicago Symphony, as well as with the symphony orchestras of Cleveland, Minnesota, Colorado, Phoenix, Richmond, North Carolina, Wichita, Fort Wayne, South Dakota, Hartford, San Antonio, Toledo and Rochester. She has appeared in festivals of Buffalo, Ravinia, Oregon Bach, Blossom, Tucson Desert Song and Grant Park. Overseas, Areyzaga has performed with the Orquesta Sinfónica de México, Orquesta Filarmónica de Montevideo, Uruguay’s Orquesta Sinfónica del Sodre, Costa Rica’s National Symphony Orchestra, and London’s Royal Academy of Music. Areyzaga also has sung leading roles with New York City Opera and Chicago Opera Theater. Other roles have included Micaela, Cio-Cio-San, Susanna, Musetta, Pamina and Cunegonde.

STEVEN SOPH | Tenor



A “superb vocal soloist” (The Washington Post) with “impressive clarity and color” (The New York Times), tenor Steven Soph performs concert repertoire spanning works by Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Haydn and Mozart, to celebrated new works by Stacy Garrop, Ted Hearne, David Lang,

Caroline Shaw, Christopher Theofanidis and Judith Weir. Upcoming solo engagements include Handel’s Messiah with Philadelphia’s Tempesta di Mare, Seattle’s Music at Epiphany and Kansas City’s Spire; Christopher Theofanidis’ Siddhartha with the Yale Philharmonia; Bach’s B minor Mass with the Austin Philharmonie; Evangelist in Bach’s St. Matthew Passion with the Elmhurst Symphony; Bach’s Magnificat with the Bach Society of St. Louis and Vox Seraphim (Waco, TX); and Mendelssohn’s Elijah on the Highlander Concert Series (Dallas). Soph recently appeared in Handel’s Saul with the Handel + Haydn Society (Boston), Beethoven’s Missa Solemnis with the Handel Choir of Baltimore, Mozart’s Requiem with the Bach Society of Winter Park, Mendelssohn’s Elijah with the Master Chorale of South Florida, and Britten’s War Requiem at the University of Iowa.

JONATHAN WOODY | Bass Baritone



Jonathan Woody, bass baritone is a highly sought-after performer and composer. He has been featured with historically-informed orchestras such as Apollo's Fire, Boston Early Music Festival, Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Bach Collegium San Diego and Portland Baroque Orchestra, earning praise as "charismatic," "riveting," and "wonderfully dramatic." Jonathan will perform Handel's Messiah at Carnegie Hall in 2026. Also an avid performer of new music, Jonathan has premiered works including Ellen Reid's *p r i s m* (2019 Pulitzer Prize winner), Ted Hearne's *The Source*, Missy Mazzoli's *Breaking the Waves* (NYC premiere) and Du Yun's *Angel's Bone* (2017 Pulitzer Prize winner). He has appeared with Staunton Music Festival, Aldeburgh Festival, Portland Bach Festival, Carmel Bach Festival, Oregon Bach Festival, Opera Lafayette, Opera Idaho, Gotham Chamber Opera and Beth Morrison Projects. Jonathan has recorded with the Choir of Trinity Wall Street (*Musica Omnia*), Boston Early Music Festival (*RadioBremen*) and New York Polyphony (*BIS Records*)

JESSYE WRIGHT | Mezzo Soprano



Jessye Wright, mezzo soprano, was named one of the "Upwardly Musical Artists on the Move" in *Symphony Magazine's Guide to Emerging Artists*. Wright made her Lyric Opera of Chicago debut in *Carousel* (Principal and Nettie Fowler understudy). She performed Mozart's *Requiem* with National Chorale in Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall; *Hansel* in *Hansel and Gretel* with Chattanooga Symphony and Opera; and Mozart's *Vesperae solennes Confessore* with Chicago's Music of the Baroque. Wright sang Handel's *Messiah* at Carnegie Hall with MidAmerica Productions; the title role in *Carmen* at Ravinia Music Festival (Opera Theater North); and Pitti-Sing in *Mikado* with Nashville Opera. Abroad, she performed Meg Page in *Falstaff* with New York Opera Society in Castres, France, and also was a soloist in the International Advent Singing Festival in Vienna. A past national semi-finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Council Auditions, Wright won second place in the International Classical Singer Competition.

HANDEL ORATORIO SOCIETY

Jon Hurty, *conductor*

Sheila Doak, *accompanist*

SOPRANO

Norallene Able

Danielle Allaway★

Adele Bartlein

Aubry Butler

Natalie Caughlin★

Kathy Clader

Maya Cronfel★

Angela Dearking

Vicki Deusinger

Hannah

Dochterman★

Gail Dover

Georgi Feigley★

Kat Figaro

Katie Griswold†

Karen Hagerty

Brittany Hall

Mylene Hanzelka

Haleigh Jacocks†

Cheri Janiczek

Chloe Knobloch★

Renee Long

Jessie Madden

Alison McCrary

Maggie Meyers★

Kristan Mitchell†

Eleanor O'Neill

Kerri Peterson†

Emma Poppy

Brooke Randazzo

Julia Remour★

Elisabeth Ruggiero★

Kristin Rundle★

Susan Runyon

Annika Sevig★

Emily Shenk-DeMay†

Lily Slater★

Rikka Stewart

Courtney Thames

Miranda Tyda★

Jenn Van

Speybroeck†

Courtney Wachal

Cindy Weinberger

Kathryn Wherry

Anna Winn†

Liz Wurster★

ALTO

Carol Bentsen

Ellie Betzle

Carla Chapman

Haley Chellberg

Ella Conrad★

Zelda Cowell

Amy Croft†

Giovanna Davila†

Anne Earel†

Andrea Edelen

Carole Fenney

Gwen Foulkes

Jenny Freeman

Grace Fuechtmann★

Kayley Guinto★

Barbara Guss

Sosi Hagopian

Anita Hdouck†

Margaret Horn

Sylvia Hughes★

Madeline

Hutchinson

Kimberlee Isaacson

Jenna Jenke★

Judy Johansen

Olivia Jones★

Kathryn Kramer

Barbara Kuttler†

Joey Loven★

Abby Malina★

Amber Mraz†

Maddy Overstreet★

Haven Perdomo★

Natalie Platt★

Casper Rakickas

Jan Riccio

Sandy Ridolfi

Bev Rosenbohm

Ellen Ryan

Genevieve Ryan★

Sally Schulz

Kim Schwarzkopf

Tamara Sneddon†

Michelle Steen

Jensen Stoneking★

Debra Swift

Rachel

Thomaschefskey

Kelly Thompson†

Margaret Thompson†

Hedda Ungerstedt★

Dana Wojciechowski

Jillian Younger

Lesley Zwicky

TENOR

V Bechtel★
 Brent Behrens†
 Keaton Connell†
 Avery Denius★
 Jim Earel†
 Thom Elliott
 Daryl Empen
 Kallik Ewen★
 Jon Hansen★
 Isaiah James★
 Ryan Jones†
 Aiden Koehne★
 Mark Meyer
 Lex Mikulski
 Jack Moore★
 Michael Njus★
 Christopher Pace★
 Aaron Randolph★
 Lucas Rettig★
 Christine Rugh
 Matthew Schulz
 Ryan Sondgeroth★
 Terry Stratton
 Sidney Underwood★
 Karin Witherow

BASS

Julian Anderson★
 David Baxter†
 Tyler Beckman★
 George Behnke†
 Perry Bentsen
 Kal Boswell★
 Spiro Bruskas
 Donald Buss
 Brandon Connell†
 Bailey Connors†
 Carter Denton★
 Patrick Downing†
 Dan Drescher
 Zachary
 Emrich-Muise★
 Andrew Endress★
 Gregory Etzel†
 Luke Exner★
 Gregory Graf
 Logan Hall
 Brennan Hampton★
 Jerry Hansen
 Richard Hanzelka
 Mick Harper
 Maxfield Huang★
 Jerry Johansen

George Kalemkarian

Dan Kraus
 Hector Lareau
 Don Madson
 Leo Marin★
 Issac McConnell
 Kaden Micklos★
 Ardie Miller
 Reid Miller★
 Percy Morgan★
 Carroll Morrow
 Gregory O'Neill
 Richard O'Neill
 Jon Palomaki
 Dave Pederson
 Brendan Poirier★
 Owen Risch
 Tony Schiltz
 Chris Schwartz†
 Hunter Smith
 George Swift
 Jerry VanScoy
 Rece Vining†

★ Augustana Choir

† Augustana

Choral Artists

**AUGUSTANA ORATORIO
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**

VIOLIN I

Hisham Bravo Groover,
concertmaster

Dortha DeWit

Andrew Gentsch

Charlene King

Michele Ottesen

Susan Stone

VIOLIN II

Jeffrey Phillips, *principal*

Eugenio Alfaro

Kim Busic

Stephanie Dotzel

Paula Hartmann

Kris Kendall

VIOLA

Deborah Dakin, *principal*

Gae Ellyn Gentsch

Kylie Little

CELLO

Dong Yeol Hong, *principal*

Madeline Kusar

Jim Reck

BASS

Mike White, *principal*

Richard Wagor

OBOE

Paul Chinen, *principal*

Barb Reck

BASSOON

Matthew Kowalczyk

TRUMPET

Scott Marino, *principal*

Margaret Ellis

TIMPANI

Tony Oliver

CHORUS ORGAN

Michael Elsbernd

**CONTINUO ORGAN
AND HARPSICHORD**

Christopher Nelson

THE BEGINNINGS OF MESSIAH AT AUGUSTANA COLLEGE

In 1879, Olof Olsson heard a performance of G.F. Handel's Messiah in London and at that moment determined to form an oratorio society in Rock Island that would perform the same work. A little more than a year later, in 1881, a small oratorio society made up of faculty, students and community members sang portions of Messiah, thereby launching a tradition that continues to this day.



The first concert of the Handel Oratorio Society takes place during Holy Week, April 11, 1881. (Augustana Special Collections)

Absolutely no photography—flash or non-flash and including cell phones—will be allowed during the performance. The photographing or sound recording of this performance or the possession of any photography or recording device is prohibited.



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