



G.F. HANDEL'S Messiah

Presented by
the Northside Church
Music Ministry

Messiah

G. F. HANDEL'S

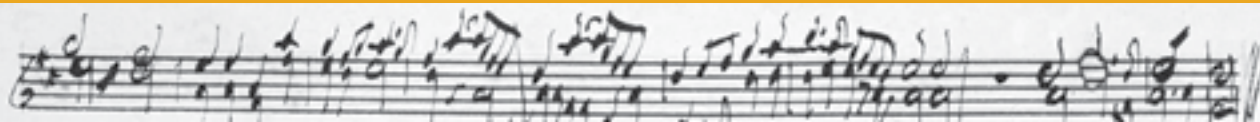
A Sacred Oratorio, 1742
Libretto by Charles Jennens

Part The First and Hallelujah Chorus

presented on
December 14, 2025

by
The Northside Festival Choir & Festival Orchestra
Nathan Schreer, *Conductor*
Joshua McClure, *Organist*
Rev. Dr. Bill Burch, *Senior Pastor*

featuring soloists
Talise Trevigne, *Soprano*; Aubrey Odle, *Mezzo-soprano*
Austin Cripe, *Tenor*; Lawson Anderson, *Bass-baritone*



† Please rise in body or spirit when you see this symbol, and join in singing or reading aloud text in **bold**.
So that utmost glory may be given to God, it is kindly requested that applause be held until the conclusion of the Hallelujah Chorus.

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God

In honor of my wife and the mother of my children, Donna Cox Brooks; given by Gene Brooks.

More Than Music: The Message of Messiah

Each year, Handel's *Messiah* is performed countless times across the country, drawing thousands of people into its music and message. Few works of art in history have enjoyed such enduring popularity. For nearly three centuries, audiences have returned to this oratorio again and again, and many have tried to explain why. Some point to the beauty of Handel's music, others to the strength of the biblical text compiled by Charles Jennens. But perhaps the deeper reason is that this work tells the story of Christ in a way that resonates with every heart.

Handel himself understood this deeper purpose. When asked if he thought he had entertained his audiences, Handel responded, "My lord, I should be sorry if I only entertained them; I wish to make them better." That vision captures the essence of *Messiah*. It was never intended as background music or mere spectacle, but as a work of devotion. Through it, Handel sought not only to move listeners with his music, but to lead them closer to God.

Part the First, which we hear this morning, unfolds the beginning of Christ's story through five scenes. It begins with God's promise of comfort and glory, spoken through the prophet Isaiah. The second scene reminds us that the Lord's arrival brings judgment and purification, calling God's people to holiness. From there we hear the prophecies of a Child who will be Immanuel, "God with us," bringing light into the world. The next scene shifts to fulfillment: the angels announcing the birth of Christ to the shepherds, and Heaven itself erupting in praise. Finally, the Messiah is revealed in His ministry—healing the broken, shepherding His flock, and offering rest to the weary.

Together these five scenes are more than a sequence of arias and choruses. They form a drama of salvation history, beginning with expectation, moving through prophecy and fulfillment, and ending with Christ's compassionate ministry. In music and text, Handel invites us to hear the greatest story ever told, not only as history but also as a living message that speaks to us today.

As you listen, may you hear not only the genius of Handel's music, but also the power of the message it carries. This is the story of Christ, the promised Savior, whose coming brings comfort, joy, peace, and hope. And may we, as Handel intended, leave not only entertained, but better for having encountered this story anew.



Nathan Schreer
Director of Music

Messiah

THE CHIMING OF THE HOUR

Joshua McClure

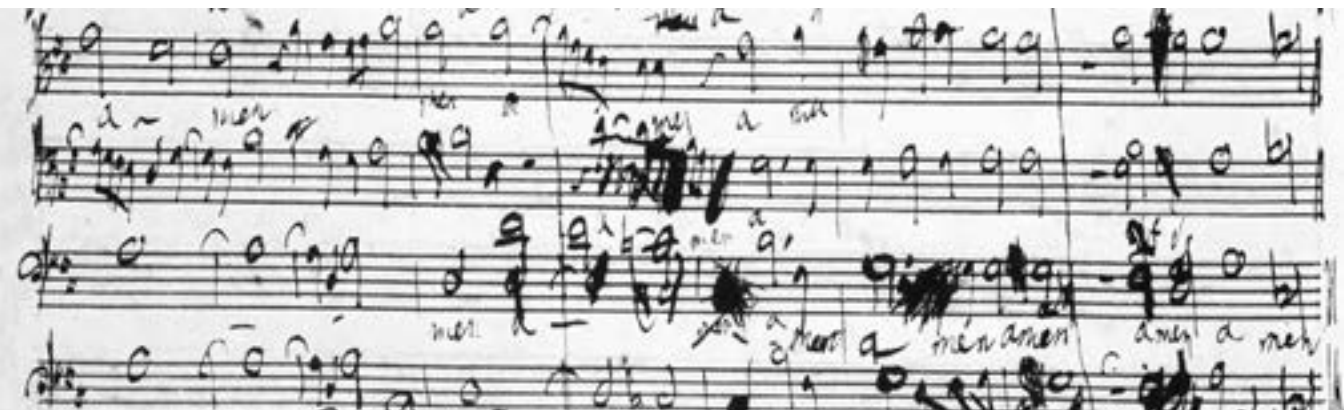
THE WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

Dr. Bill Burch

OVERTURE

This type of overture would have been instantly recognizable to Handel's listeners. The opening section embodies the pomp and splendor accorded to royalty, while the quicker fugal section is reminiscent of a dance, echoing the courtly practice of a stately procession followed by celebration. Yet Handel closes in a minor key, leaving a sense of tension. The overture suggests the arrival of a king, but the kind of king and what his arrival portends has not yet been revealed.

1 *Orchestra*: Synfony



SCENE I

A Promise of Hope

The opening scene features prophecies from Isaiah. They speak of a salvation, a comfort that God will bring to His people, but what exactly that comfort is we do not yet know. Handel's music begins in a major key, with the orchestra gently supporting the tenor's words "Comfort ye." The chorus brings the scene to its height with "And the glory of the Lord," a vision of what will happen when God's promise is revealed, and His word firmly established.

2 *Arioso*: Comfort ye, 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.
Isaiah 40:1–2

Accompagnato

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 40:3

3 *Air*: Every valley shall be exalted | *Tenor*

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill made low;
The crooked straight and the rough places plain.
Isaiah 40:4

4 *Chorus*: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed

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

Prepare ye the
of the Lord;
way

SCENE II

The Lord Who Purifies and Refines

Texts from Haggai and Malachi remind us that with God's comfort comes judgment. His coming will shake heaven and earth, a truth Handel underscores as the bass line trembles on the word "shake." Yet God's judgment is not for destruction, but for renewal. His purpose is to refine and purify, preparing His people for lives of holiness. The choir's voices join fully together in the final chorus only on the words "an offering in righteousness," a musical image of a people made whole, ready to stand before God.

5 *Accompagnato*: 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,
All nations I'll shake; 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

6 *Air*: But who may abide the day of His coming | *Bass*

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

7 *Chorus*: And He shall purify the sons of Levi

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

Malachi 3:3

Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Isaiah 40:3

SCENE III

The Prophesied Messiah

Having announced coming and judgment, Isaiah foresees the birth of a child who will embody God's presence with His people—Immanuel, “God with us.” We hear the prophesy of the virgin birth sung almost without accompaniment. The joyful news bursts forth as the soloist and choir celebrate “good tidings to Zion.” This is the Promised One who will bring light to those walking in darkness, and the choir builds to a climax as He is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

Recitativo: Behold, a virgin shall conceive | *Mezzo-soprano*

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,
And shall call His name Emmanuel, “God with us.”

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23

8 **Air and Chorus:** O Thou that tellest good tidings to Zion | *Mezzo-soprano*

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

9 **Accompagnato:** 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.

Isaiah 60:2–3

10 **Air:** The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light | *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

11 **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 Counsellor,
The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!

Isaiah 9:6

SCENE IV

The Messiah's Birth

Luke's Gospel tells of shepherds keeping watch when angels break forth with the good news of Christ's birth in Bethlehem. Handel sets the scene with the "Pifa," a lilting pastoral symphony whose melodies evoke shepherds' pipes. The story is told simply, until the multitude of the heavenly host appears. Their song becomes the chorus, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth," as the promise of Isaiah becomes reality in the Child born that night.

THE OFFERTORY & PASTORAL PRAYER

Rev. Catherine Boothe Olson

12 Orchestra: Pifa

Recitativo: There were shepherds abiding in the field | *Soprano*

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

Luke 2:8

13 Accompagnato: And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them | *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

Recitativo: And the angel said unto them | *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

14 Accompagnato: And suddenly there was with the angel | *Soprano*

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,

Praising God, and saying...

Luke 2:13

15 Chorus: Glory to God in the highest

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

Luke 2:14

SCENE V

The Shepherd-King's Ministry

The final scene of Part the First turns to the Messiah's ministry. We hear the rejoicing that announces Zion's long-awaited King, who comes both as a gentle shepherd caring for His flock and as a righteous King bringing peace to the nations. The final Air returns to the same pastoral warmth of the "Pifa", as the soprano extends Christ's invitation to "Come unto Him" and receive true rest. The closes with the chorus "His yoke is easy," whose lively, buoyant lines capture the gladness of following He who offers rest, healing, and joy to all who follow Him.

16 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.
Zechariah 9:9–10

Recitativo: Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened | *Mezzo-soprano*
Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing.
Isaiah 35:5–6

17 Air: He shall feed His flock like a shepherd | *Mezzo-soprano & 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.
Isaiah 40:11

Come unto Him, all ye that labor, come unto Him all ye 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

18 Chorus: His yoke is easy

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

† THE HYMN OF ADVENT | Joy to the World | *setting by John Rutter*

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her King; let
 2. Joy to the world, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs em - ploy; while
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the ground; he
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions prove the

ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and
 fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains re -
 comes to make his bless - ings flow far and
 glo - ries of his right - eous - ness, and

heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture sing, and
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
 as the curse is found, far as the curse is found, far
 won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his love, and

heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing,
 re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 as, far as the curse is found.
 won - ders, won - ders of his love.

† THE BENEDICTION

8:30AM | Rev. Boothe Olson

11:15AM | Dr. Burch

Hallelujah!

Though the “Hallelujah” Chorus comes from the end of Part II of Messiah, it has long been tradition to close concerts with this triumphant declaration. For centuries, audiences have risen to their feet during this chorus, a custom often traced to King George II, who is said to have stood in awe at its first London performance. Whether in reverence, joy, or simple tradition, standing for the “Hallelujah” Chorus has become a way for listeners to join in the acclaim of Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Chorus: Hallelujah!

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 forever and ever.

Revelation 11:15

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

Revelation 19:16



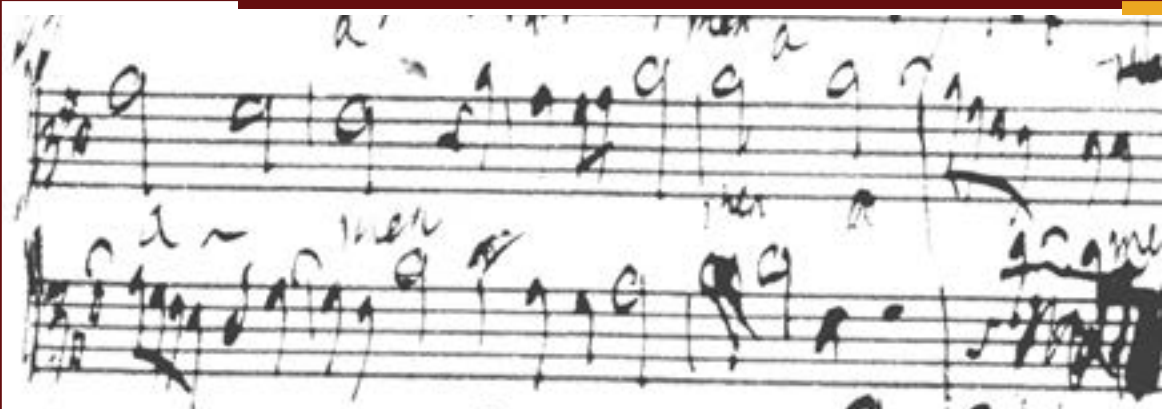
Talise Trevigne, *Soprano*

Recent successes include the role of Violetta La Traviata in highly acclaimed performances at Calgary Opera and at Opera de Montreal. Returning to Canada, she made a debut as Countess Le Nozze di Figaro at Calgary Opera and joined Cincinnati Opera for Mimi La Boheme while establishing the role of Patience in their world premiere, *Castor and Patience*, voted by the New York Times Best Opera of 2022.



Aubrey Odle, *Mezzo-soprano*

Mezzo-soprano Aubrey Odle, winner of the 2024 Sullivan Foundation Award and recently named 2nd Place Winner in the 2025 Butler International Vocal Competition, continues to expand her career in opera and concert. She made her mainstage debut with The Santa Fe Opera as Siegrune in *Die Walküre* and covered Mrs. Grose in *The Turn of the Screw*. A former Studio Artist with The Atlanta Opera, Odle appeared in *Macbeth*, *Rigoletto*, and *Die Zauberflöte*. Other credits include Des Moines Metro Opera, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Knoxville Opera, and Utah Lyric Opera.





Austin Cripe, Tenor

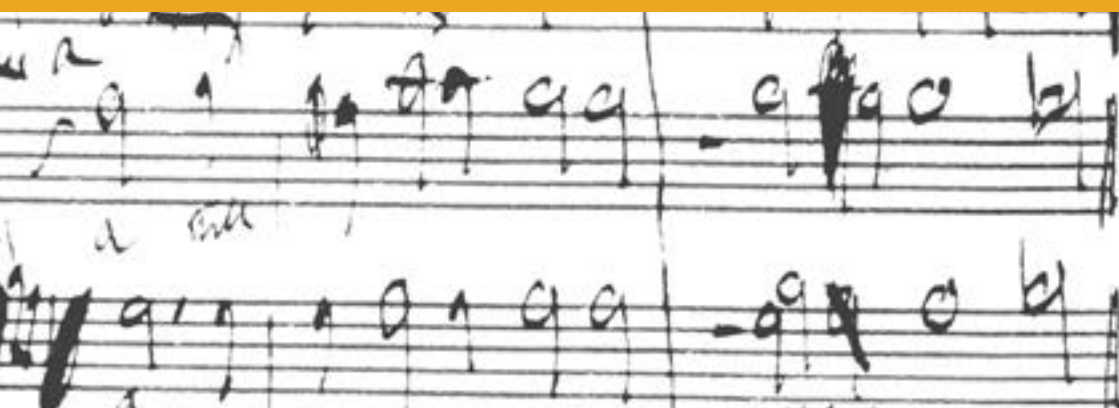
Tenor Austin Cripe holds a Master's degree from Florida State University. He has performed with Florida State Opera in roles such as Bénédict in *Béatrice et Bénédict*, the title role in *Candide*, Gastone in *La Traviata*, King Kaspar in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, and The Ballad Singer in *Of Mice and Men*. In 2017, he debuted with Red River Lyric Opera as Oronte in *Alcina*. In 2018, he debuted with Savannah Voice Festival as the Witch in *Hansel and Gretel*. He has also performed as the Tenor Soloist in Bach's *Johannes-Passion*.

Austin is excited to perform *The Messiah* tenor solos again at Northside Church, where he has been a member of the Chancel Choir for the past four years.



Lawson Anderson, Bass-baritone

Lawson Anderson, Bass-baritone Lawson is a native of Atlanta, a member of Northside Church, and a graduate of Westminster. He graduated with majors in music and economics from the University of Virginia; with an MBA from Columbia Business School; and began his career in management consulting. After receiving top prizes at the George London, Gerda Lissner, Giulio Gari, Anita Cerquetti, Met National Council, and Opera Index Competitions, Lawson began his career in music. An acclaimed interpreter of Mozart, Britten, Wagner, and Strauss, Lawson was a soloist at the Semperoper Dresden for five seasons and is now a freelance singer at the Bayreuther Festspiele and other theaters across Europe. Lawson is honored to return home for this special Messiah performance.



The Festival Choir

Paul Anderson
Will Anderson
Cathy Baxter
Andrew Baxter
Taylor-Kate Bishop
Brennen Blotter
Yvette Brewer
Dorothy Candler
Drema Canterbury
Austin Cripe
Susan Davis
Jim Drinkard
Elizabeth Edwards
Carol Eubanks
Ethan Godfrey
Walter Gomel
Millie Gomel
Katie Goodwin
Kristen Gray
Kelly Grba
Thomas Guffin
Sarah Gunhouse
Leah Hannon
Jenny Harris
Andréa Hatcher
Diane Hautt
Aimee Henderson
Jackie Hendrix
Kyle Hildebrand

Greg Hucks
Michelle Jarrell
Michelle Johnson
Trevor Kytola
Nicole Lewis
Brad Marsh
Josiah Martin
Marcy Meredith
Carolyn Mielke
Bill Motley
John Newsome
Matthew Neylon
Sandy Ramsey
Herman Ramsey
Joey Ripley
Natalie Rogers
Riley Schreer
Steven Smith
Paula Snelling
Kati Stewart
Alex Thompson
Pat Thomson
Tiffany Uzoiye
Michael Vincent
Michael Vavases
Caroline Warren
Rob Wellon
Ellie Ziglar

NORTHSIDE CHURCH MUSIC MINISTRY STAFF

Nathan Schreer
Director of Music

Joshua McClure
Director of Worship & Organist

Tiffany Uzoiye
Administrative Assistant

Alex Thompson
Music Associate

Ellen LeSaicherre
Children's Music Assistant

Natalie Rogers
Children's Music Assistant

Liana Perlman
Children's Music Assistant



The Festival Orchestra

VIOLIN I

Adelaide Federici
Sally Gardner-Wilson
Shawn Pagliarini

VIOLIN II

Jessica Stinson
Alison James
Kevin Chaney

VIOLA

Sarah Chastain
Robin Fay-Massie

CELLO

Barney Culver
Alana Bennett

BASS

Maurice Belle

OBOE

Christina Gavin
Sasha Shatalova-Prior

BASSOON

John Grove

TRUMPET

Michael Tiscione
Brandon Craswell

TIMPANI

Lisa Morris

HARPSICHORD & ORGAN

Joshua McClure

We are grateful to the Northside Church Music Fund donors!

*Your generous support helps us bring these festival worship services to our congregation.
If you would like to support the music program, please consider giving to the Northside Music
Fund as we continue this meaningful ministry.*

*Special thanks to our Facilities, Production, and Creative Services teams—
your hard work makes so much possible. We appreciate you and your service to Christ!*

Celebrating a Tradition of Music and Worship

Festival Choir at Northside began in the late 1980s as a simple but powerful idea: to create an open door for anyone who wanted to sing. In those early years, Mike Moffitt recognized that the church was filled with people who loved music and wanted to participate in worship, but who could not commit to weekly rehearsals. Festival Choir became a way to gather those singers, youth and adults, longtime members and newcomers, for a few focused rehearsals leading up to one major service each semester. What began as a modest choir accompanied by a small string quartet has grown into a full musical experience, bringing together singers and instrumentalists as the music ministry expanded and church members generously supported the vision. Over the years traditions and structures have ebbed and flowed. The group was originally known as the Northside Singers until 2010, when it officially became the Festival Choir. While the Festival of Carols has been a longstanding Advent tradition, the spring service changed shape from year to year as the ministry evolved. Yet through of these changes, one purpose remained constant: Festival Choir was meant to be a place where every voice had a home. The ministry has always sought to balance challenge and accessibility, and beauty with hospitality, drawing together singers of all abilities to prepare an offering of worship for the church.

Today, that legacy continues. Festival Choir invites anyone who longs to sing, whether seasoned or brand new, to step into the choir loft, experience the joy of leading worship, and to find their place within Northside's music ministry. If you are interested in joining this long-running musical tradition, we would love to hear from you. Any choir member would be happy to answer your questions and get you connected to the Music Ministry. Come lend your voice, grow in faith, and join us as we continue offering our best to God in worship.



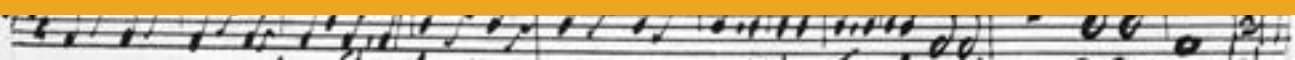
Mr. Mike Moffitt, choir director,
and Jo Anderson, organist, in 1987

1980s: Mr. Mike starts the Northside Festival Choir program under the name "The Adult Choirs of Northside".

December 11, 1988:
Northside's first documented performance of Handel's Messiah, Part I

December 15, 1996:
First time the annual Christmas Service was renamed "Festival of Carols"

December 14, 1997:
Festival Choir grows to 50 members.





Original Chancel Choir
in the Sanctuary, 1980s



Festival of Carols, 2012



Festival of Carols, 2024

November 12, 2000:
“In Music We Praise
Him”, a special Festival
Choir performance
celebrating Northside’s
50th Anniversary

December 16, 2001:
Festival Choir grows
to 60 members.

**December
12, 2010:**
Festival Choi
grows to 70
members.

March 27, 2011:
The choir's name
changed from “The
Adult Choirs of
Northside” to the
“Festival Choir”



Christmas Eve Worship

Wednesday, December 24

Join us on Christmas Eve at Northside for a variety of services to fit you and your family's needs.

Family Services

10:00AM, 12:00, and 2:00PM | Sanctuary

Contemporary Service

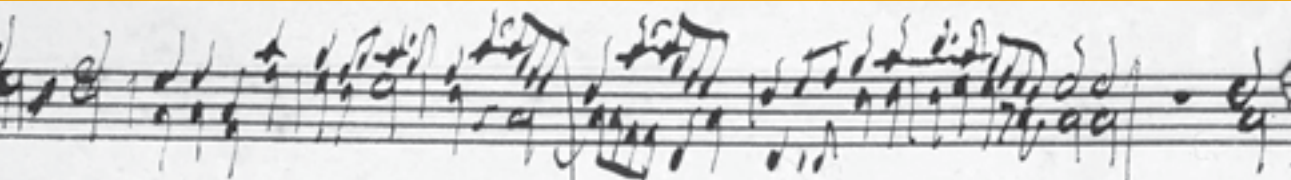
4:00PM | Watson Faith & Arts Center

Traditional Service

6:00PM | Sanctuary

Enjoy the fun and joy that animals bring to children and adults alike from 9:30AM to 4:30PM.

For more information, visit www.NorthsideUMC.org/Christmas.



CLERGY

Dr. Bill Burch, *Senior Pastor* • Rev. Catherine Boothe Olson, *Associate Pastor*
Rev. Angela House, *Associate Pastor*

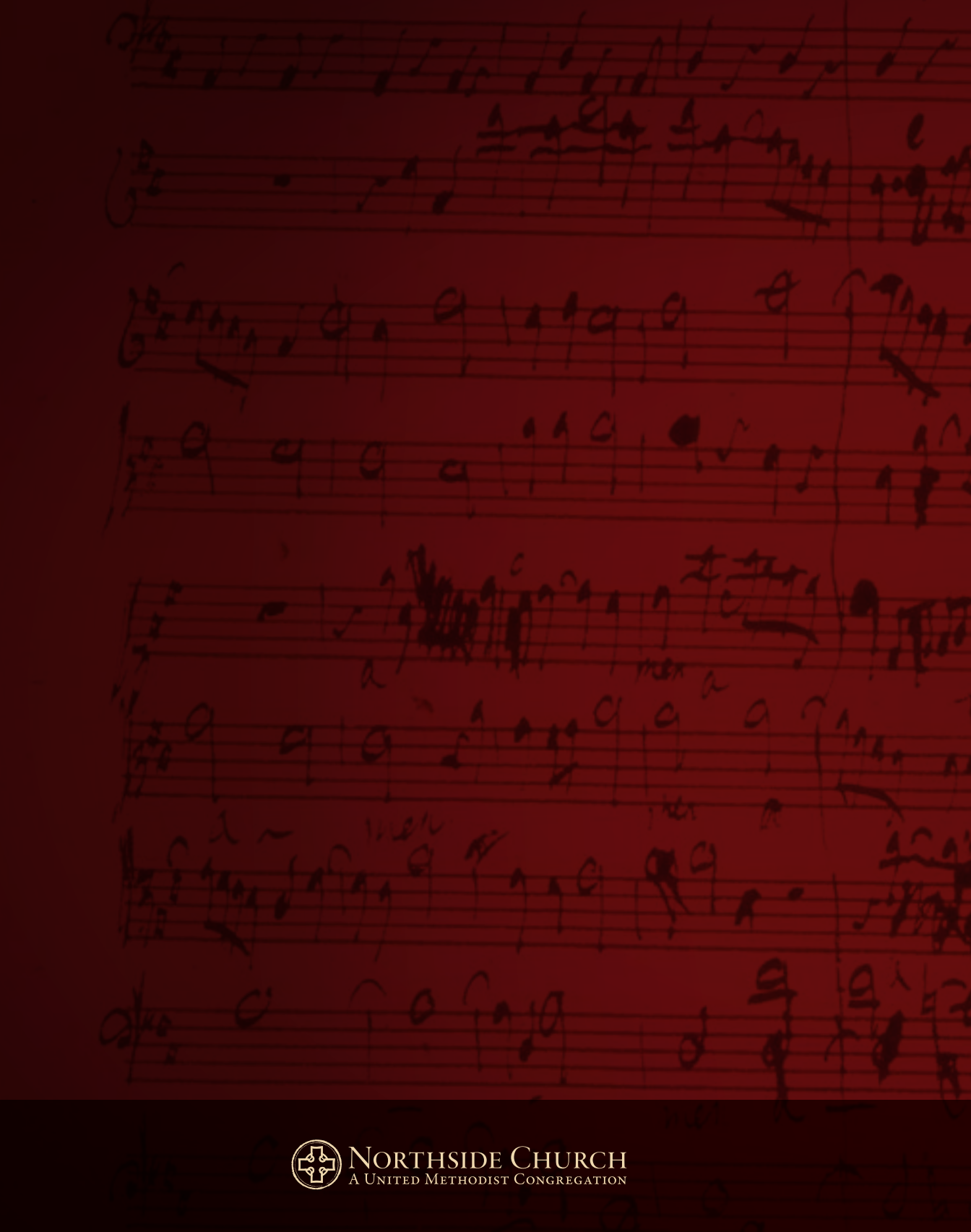
AFFILIATED CLERGY

Dr. G. Gil Watson, *Pastor Emeritus* • Dr. Ann Brightwell McCord, *Retired*
Rev. Nancy Yarnell, *Retired* • Rev. Douglas Herlong • Rev. Jennifer Hansen

TRADITIONAL MUSIC MINISTRY

Joshua McClure, *Director of Worship & Organist* • Nathan Schreer, *Director of Music*

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NORTHSIDE CHURCH
A UNITED METHODIST CONGREGATION

Finest of all
all the best