Waukesha Choral Union welcomes you to our annual free concert featuring community singers, a full orchestra, and outstanding soloists. We are proud to present Handel's “Messiah” under the direction of Michael Chapel. This concert is sponsored in part by the Fred and Joann Portz Foundation. These generous Waukesha residents believed classic, live music should be accessible and enjoyed by all. We are honored to carry on this tradition on behalf of the Portz family.

“Messiah” is one of the best known and most frequently performed choral works in western music today. No doubt you will recognize the rousing Hallelujah chorus, but did you know that Handel wrote the entire oratorio in just 24 days? The beginning section of the work is a prophecy of the birth of Jesus Christ, part two exults His sacrifice for mankind, and the final section celebrates His resurrection.

We hope you enjoy our performance of Handel’s “Messiah” this afternoon and will continue your support of the Waukesha Choral Union. Our final concert of this season, “Girl’s Night Out”, will be presented Saturday, May 5 at Humphrey Chapel/Art Center on the Carroll University campus. For more information or to support our mission with a donation, please visit our website www.choralunion.org

Thank you for your attendance today and your continued, enthusiastic support.

Wendy Stippich

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The Waukesha Choral Union can trace its roots as Waukesha's premier choral society back to 1949 at Carroll University. Over the years, under various names and outstanding artistic directors, WCU has developed a reputation for excellent choral music performances in SE Wisconsin. Adhering to our educational mission, we have collaborated with Carroll University choirs, with music groups from Waukesha South, Waukesha North, Kettle Moraine, Muskego, Hartford Union, and New Berlin Eisenhower High Schools, and with the Waukesha Children's and the Lake Country Children's Choirs. We’re proud to have shared the stage with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, the Milwaukee Choristers, Jubilate Chorale, and Bel Canto Chorus. In 2016 we achieved our dream of singing the National Anthem at Miller Park. Our potential is endless!

MISSION

The Waukesha Choral Union will challenge, enrich, and engage its singing members, audiences, and community through the pursuit of excellence and a variety of programming. The WCU mission includes expansion of the effectiveness of its educational efforts throughout Waukesha County through collaboration with schools, area performing artists, and community arts organizations.

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Waukesha Choral Union offers significant opportunities for leader involvement and development! Board of Director and Committee participation is fun, challenging, and rewarding. We also welcome to the Board those non-singers with organizational, business and/or non-profit skills to share. Speak with any Member about being part of the future of Waukesha Choral Union!

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ABOUT THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Michael Chapel is the choir specialist at Brown Deer Middle/High School, where he directs nine different ensembles including: three middle school choirs, five high school choirs, and a hand bell ensemble. He is also the musical theatre director, and is the fine arts event scheduling and performance facilities coordinator for the School District of Brown Deer. Mr. Chapel is currently the Choir Coordinator for the Wisconsin School Music Association (WSMA) Middle Level Honors Project, and is active as an adjudicator for solo/ensemble festivals and honors auditions sponsored by the WSMA. Additionally, he is in his 20th year as the choir director and lead service accompanist at Parkside Community UCC (formerly St. Peter’s) in Saukville, WI.

Mr. Chapel is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music and a Master’s Degree in Music Education – with an emphasis on choral conducting.

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome to the Waukesha Choral Union’s presentation of Handel’s Messiah. We are pleased to continue our tradition of bringing this free performance to our community, a tradition that dates back more than 30 years.

Messiah premiered in Dublin, Ireland in April of 1742, where it was enthusiastically received. It remains as Handel’s best known work; however, that was not the case until the last few years of his life, when it became a part of his charitable concert series – with proceeds benefiting an organization for underprivileged children.

At that time in his life, Handel had suffered several bouts of serious illness (speculation is either strokes, or lead poisoning to his central nervous system – or both). Yet, he was composing large scale works at a prolific pace. Messiah was composed in August and September of 1741 - in only 24 days. And after writing out the “Hallelujah” chorus, Handel is reported to have exclaimed to his servant with tears in his eyes:

“I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great God Himself seated on His throne, with his Company of Angels.”

We are indebted to the many generous benefactors in our community for their support for today’s performance; we would be unable to present this concert without their contributions.

Thank you so much for your continued patronage and support of the Arts in our Community!

Michael Chapel
Our Favorite Things: Messiah

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WAUKESHA CHORAL UNION
presents:

**Messiah**

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Tanya Kruse, Soprano | Allison Hull, Mezzo-Soprano
Alex Gmeinder, Tenor | Thomas Weis, Bass

Waukesha Choral Union and Community Members
Michael Chapel, Artistic Director

**Part I**

* Sinfonia [Overture]
* **Comfort ye my people** – Recit. (Tenor)
* **Ev’ry valley shall be exalted** – Air (Tenor)
* **And the glory of the Lord** – Chorus
* **Thus saith the Lord** – Recit. (Bass)
* **But who may abide the day of his coming?** – Air (Alto)
* **Behold, a virgin shall conceive** – Recit. (Alto)
* **O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion** – Air (Alto) and Chorus
* **For behold, darkness shall cover the earth** – Recit. (Bass)
* **The people that walked in darkness** – Air (Bass)
* **For unto us a child is born** – Chorus
* **Pifa** [“Pastoral Symphony”]
* **There were shepherds abiding in the field / And lo,**
  the angel of the Lord came upon them – Recit. (Soprano)
* **And the angel said unto them /**
* **And suddenly there was with the angel** – Recit. (Soprano)
* **Glory to God** – Chorus
* **Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion** – Air (Soprano)
* **Then shall the eyes of the blind** – Recit. (Alto)
* **He shall feed his flock** – Air (Alto and Soprano)

**INTERMISSION**

**Part II**

* **Behold the Lamb of God** – Chorus
* **He was despised** – Air (Alto)
* **Surely he hath borne our griefs** – Chorus
* **Thy rebuke hath broken his heart** – Recit. (Tenor)
* **Behold, and see if there be any sorrow** – Air (Tenor)
* **Lift up your heads, O ye gates** – Chorus
* **How beautiful are the feet** – Air (Soprano)
* **Why do the nations so furiously rage together?** – Air (Bass)
* **He that dwelleth in heaven** – Recit. (Tenor)
* **Thou shalt break them** – Air (Tenor)
* **Hallelujah** – Chorus
**Part III**

- *I know that my redeemer liveth* – Air (Soprano)
- *Since by man came death* – Chorus
- *Behold, I tell you a mystery* – Recit. (Bass)
- *The trumpet shall sound* – Air (Bass)
- *Then shall be brought to pass* – Recit. (Alto)
- *O death, where is thy sting?* – Duet (Alto and Tenor)
- *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain / Amen* – Chorus

**TANYA KRUSE, SOPRANO**

Tanya Kruse’s critics have praised her “vocal heft, dark luster, and bold phrasing” and claimed she has an “impressive soprano voice that literally soars”. Comfortable in oratorio, art song, and opera, Kruse has played La Contessa (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) with much critical acclaim, Cio-Cio San (*Madama Butterfly*) in which “Kruse’s acting was so right as to be invisible. Her singing combined unreserved commitment with complete technical control”, Rusalka (*Rusalka*), Fiordiligi (*Così fan tutte*), and Angelica (*Suor Angelica*), among others.

Recently, she has moved into dramatic soprano repertoire. She is a past winner of the Wisconsin District Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions and formerly served as a co-director for the MONC Auditions in Wisconsin. Kruse has appeared as soloist in Rossini’s *Petite Messe Solonelle*, Barber’s *Prayers of Kierkegaard*, Verdi’s *Requiem*, Strauss’s *Vier letzte Lieder*, Mozart’s *Coronation Mass* and *Solemn Vespers*, Vaughan-Williams’ *Dona Nobis Pacem*, Villa-Lobos’ *Bachianas Brasileras* No. 5, and more. Kruse has been a featured soloist with Skylight Opera Theatre, Bel Canto Chorus with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Florentine Opera’s featured *Gathering on the Green* concert, Wisconsin Philharmonic, Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, and Milwaukee Opera Theatre.

Kruse and Elena Abend released a CD on Albany Records titled, “Over the Fence: Songs of Elsa Respighi, Lori Laitman, and Modesta Bor,” which contains two world premiere recordings. This coming April, Kruse and pianist Janna Ernst will perform a recital of Wagner, Verdi, and Barber songs and arias.

Dr. Kruse, Associate Professor of Voice and Opera and Voice Area Head, has been on the voice faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee since 2003. She is known internationally as a voice pedagogue, giving master classes and presenting research throughout the US, in Oslo, Norway, and will be an Artist Teacher this summer at the La Musica Lirica International Opera Festival in Italy. For more information, please visit www.tanyakruse.net.
**ALLISON HULL, MEZZO-SOPRANO**

Allison Hull holds degrees in Vocal Performance from Lawrence University and The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She has served as a young artist for the Skylight, Glimmerglass Opera, and Seattle Opera, where she gave a notable performance as Cherubino in *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Ms. Hull has won awards from the Metropolitan Opera Auditions including District Winner and Third Place at Regionals. She is on the voice faculty at UW-Parkside, Carthage College, and the Florentine Opera’s Young singing Actor Intensive. Ms. Hull recently appeared as Jane in *Thank you, Next*, Alto Soloist in *Songs from the Uproar*, Historian in *Clara* and Alto Soloist in *The Poe Requiem*.

Recent and upcoming engagements include Mahler’s *Songs for a Wayfarer*, Meij’s *Symphony No. 4*, *Sweeney Todd* with Skylight Music Theatre, Pitti-sing in Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado*, and Ljubica in the Milwaukee premiere of Ana Sokolovic’s *SVADBA*.

**ALEX GMEINDER, TENOR**

American Tenor, Alex Gmeinder, has been praised for his “powerful tenor voice” (Madison Isthmus).

Mr. Gmeinder recently completed work with the Aspen Music Festival in Colorado where he debuted the role of Trajan in Rufus Wainwright’s new opera, *Hadrian*. In addition to singing that role he also participated in the many concerts and the ensemble for Verdi’s *La Traviata* and Mozart’s *La Clemenza di Tito*. In 2014, Alex joined Sarasota Opera as an Apprentice Artist where he performed numerous donor and outreach concerts as well as played an active part of the ensemble for the main stage operas. During the summer of 2013, Alex spent five weeks in Novafeltria, Italy at La Musica Lirica where he studied with Rossini Festival coaches from Pesaro, Italy. While in Italy he performed the roles of Arturo (Lucia di Lammermoor) and Edoardo Milfort (La Cambiale di Matrimonio). He sang Don Ottavio (Don Giovanni), Giasone (Medea), and Fritz Kobus (L’amico Fritz) at UW-Madison during 2011-2013. Additional opera roles include King Ouf the 1st (L’etoile), Candide (Candide), Eisentstein (Die Fledermaus), Vašek (The Bartered Bride), and Reverend Parris (The Crucible).


Mr. Gmeinder will return to Aspen Music Festival in 2018 as well as sing various concerts in the Midwest. A native of Hartland, WI, Mr. Gmeinder holds degrees from Lawrence University Conservatory (B.M.) and University of Wisconsin-Madison (M.M.) He currently studies with Julia Faulkner of the Lyric Opera of Chicago.
THOMAS J. WEIS, BASS

Showing his vocal versatility, Dr. Thomas J. Weis has appeared as leading man in *Kiss Me Kate* and *The Music Man* with The Heartland Festival in Platteville, Wisconsin, Grandpa Moss in Skylight Opera Theater’s production of *The Tender Land*, which aired on Wisconsin PBS in January 2003, and as Bass Soloist in Handel’s *Messiah* with the Milwaukee Symphony. Thomas has performed leading and secondary roles with a wealth of operatic, oratorio and symphonic, and musical theatre companies in the Midwest and across the country. Thomas has sung as Bass Soloist in Bach’s *Magnificat*, Haydn’s *The Creation*, Verdi’s *Requiem*, Mozart’s *Requiem*, Dvorak’s *Stabat Mater*, Brahms’ *Requiem*, and more.

Rena Archwemety Beyer from The Capital Times, in a classical review of Dvorak’s *Stabat Mater* wrote, “Weis gave a moving bass solo in ‘Fac ut ardeat cor meum’. From his strong entrance with the brass section to the emotion he conveyed, his interpretation of the text was outstanding”.

Mr. Weis embodied the title role of Figaro in the University of Wisconsin-Madison Opera program’s *Le Nozze di Figaro* of W.A. Mozart. In the Opera Review for the Wisconsin State Journal, Jay Rath stated “As Figaro, Thomas Weis has a voice that is warm and mellow but with an edge like good black coffee”.

Thomas has been an active voice teacher and performer at Carroll University in Waukesha, Wisconsin for the past seventeen years, offering recitals, master classes, and numerous faculty collaborations. Dr. Weis is a member of NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing), and serves on the Wisconsin NATS board. Dr. Weis has recently accepted the added role of vocal coordinator and was the director of the Carroll University Men’s Chorus, which he founded the fall semester of 2014.

Thomas obtained a Doctorate of Musical Arts - Vocal Performance degree and an Opera Production minor from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where he studied with Paul Rowe, William Farlow, and a plethora of internationally acclaimed faculty. His Masters of Music degree in Vocal Performance was earned from the University of Arizona under the tutelage of Dr. Lawrence Day, an early student of Berton Coffin. Undergraduate work was completed at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, where Thomas also auditioned and performed as an apprentice actor in the renowned Wisconsin Shakespeare Festival.

“Only if freedom can be induced through the use of a vocalise does that vocalise have merit”.

~ Richard Miller
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* Denotes Section Leader

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### Messiah Community Singers

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Julie Weber  
Mary Ann Worgull-Pivotton

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Wendy Mueller  
Sally Schwarz  

**TENOR**  
Armand Carpentier

**BASS**  
Ron Bohrer  
Herman Grimm  
Mike Kee  
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### Messiah Orchestra

**VIOLIN I**  
Andrea Buchta  
+ Roberta Carpenter  
Jennifer D’Alessio  
Sara Kurek

**CELLO**  
Brian Grimm  
** Marie Sinco Warren

**BASS**  
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18 Waukesha Choral Union
OUR FAVORITE THINGS: Messiah

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Contact our Membership Chair: 262-238-3454 or membership@choralunion.org to arrange your audition.

Next auditions will be held in August 2018, more information to come.

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