

"I have attended the annual performance of Messiah by the Rockford Choral Union for nearly 30 years now. It is a majestic and breath taking event which I look forward to each year."

Barbara F.

"Thank you all for your marvelous rendition of Messiah, on the first performance of your 72nd year. I have sat in many audiences – in Boston, Maine, Seattle and Minnesota – and I must say, your concert was wonderful! The timing, the setting, the soloists, and of course, your grand chorus were the Best. And on such a beautiful clear day! A great start to the Christmas season."

Edward W.

"My mother, grandfather and I started singing with the Rockford Choral Union when I was just 11 years old. Experiencing this beautiful piece of music with my family and being surrounded by my community at such a young age nurtured my love of classical music.

I owe my knowledge and love of the piece entirely to my experience with RCU.

Because of the fine arts community in Rockford and RCU, I am following my dream of becoming a classical singer at Boston Conservatory."

Claudia Holen

Vocal Performance Boston Conservatory, Class of 2019

For more information, please visit our website and Facebook page.

Winner of 2007 RAMI Award

Featured in American Profile Magazine (Nov. 2011)

RCU Invited to Perform at Lincoln Center

Distinguished Concerts International (Summer 2014)

ROCKFORD CHORAL UNION

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ROCKFORD CHORAL UNION

Established in 1945 as
Rockford Lutheran Choral Union



presenting
George Frideric Handel's

Messiah
since 1945



About Us

The year 1945 marked the end of a horrible war and the beginning of the rebuilding of lives, homes and dreams for millions of Americans. The return to peacetime initiated the vision of several local Lutheran churches to gather singers together to prepare a presentation of Handel's *Messiah* as a gift to the community. This group became the Rockford Lutheran Choral Union, today known as the Rockford Choral Union.

Choir members wanted to present *Messiah* to the community to honor U.S. military service members and boost hometown morale. Today, U.S. military members continue to be honored and remembered during each free performance.

Today, musicians from over sixty area churches and schools from as far away as Janesville, Lena, Dixon, Rochelle, DeKalb, the Chicago suburbs, Belvidere, Roscoe, Beloit, Rockton and all across the Rockford area come to participate in this annual, choral event.

The years have come and gone, and every year around Thanksgiving, the glorious sound of this great work has continued uninterrupted. Until the pandemic of 2020, not even ice, snow, illnesses, and even a neighborhood fire could stop performances.

What motivates us? We all love to sing and present great music. We have a need to retell the story of Christ, the Messiah, the One who came to bring hope and peace to the world. *Messiah*, through scripture, tells the story of the life of Christ, from the cradle to the cross, and ultimately, the crown.

These gifts and donations enable us to continue the concerts free of charge

We rely on free-will donations, sponsorships, memorials, special gifts and many volunteers to fund and present our annual concerts. These gifts and donations enable us to continue the concerts free of charge and to provide a professional conductor, four internationally-known soloists, organist, harpsichordist, trumpet soloist and chamber orchestra to complement our great volunteer chorus.

Our 65th Anniversary DVD and CD of *Messiah* will vouch for the quality and professionalism of the concerts. You can view our 65th Presentation on our YouTube channel (Rockford Choral Union *Messiah*)

Feature articles about the Rockford Choral Union have appeared in local publications "Smart Living Weekly" and "Northwest Quarterly", and in 2011, we were featured in "American Profile," a national publication.

About The Music

Messiah was composed in London by George Frideric Handel during the summer of 1741 and premiered in Dublin, Ireland in April of 1742.

This oratorio - a musical composition that tells a sacred story with voices and orchestra - presents the story of the redemption of sinful mankind by Emmanuel, Jesus Christ. The complete libretto (*the text*) uses 79 Scripture verses from the Old and New Testaments.

