



ROCKFORD CHORAL UNION*

2022 Fall Newsletter

From Our President...

Warmest Greetings to the Members of the Rockford Choral Union,

As I write this introduction, I cannot help but reminisce about last year's performances of *MESSIAH* and the particularly strong message that it gave to both musicians and audience alike, particularly after nearly two years of not having the privilege of presenting it. In spite of wearing masks and keeping some distance from each other, the feeling both within the chorus and with many audience participants was that we were faithful in accomplishing our mission in presenting *MESSIAH*—God's message of His unconditional love and acceptance of us in spite of our shortcomings.

Last year, our first live-streamed concert was a success, and we received many positive comments from around the country. We will continue to live-stream our future concerts. It is with this anticipation that we are preparing to present the message of *MESSIAH* once again. It is incumbent for us as choristers and other participants to let our friends, relatives, etc., from around the world know how they, too, can be members of our audience.

However, we still have this albatross (called COVID-19) around our necks, with many of us getting the virus or knowing others who have had it. Its symptoms are not as dire as two years ago, but we still want to prioritize the health and safety of our attendees and musicians. Last year, the RCU Board of Directors implemented COVID-mitigating requirements for the musicians and attendees. We were informed by local health authorities that there was no uptick in COVID cases after our performances, so we achieved our goal of presenting *MESSIAH* safely to the community.

We will be featuring the same professional soloists as our 2021 performances. Our program last year was shortened in response to local and national COVID guidelines, but this year we will add more of the choruses and arias that our attendees enjoy.

We invite you to be a part of our presentation, whether as a singer, an usher, or a volunteer behind the scenes. Practices for singers begin October 16th at 2:00pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church on the corner of Third Avenue and South Sixth Street (920 Third Avenue).

Peace and health be with you. Dale Johnson, *Rockford Choral Union President*

We need your help!

Please help promote our *MESSIAH* performances through social media, your church, places of business, etc. Tell your friends!

From Our Conductor...

Greetings All!

It seems like it's been forever since we sang last year. It always does—so much has happened in the last ten months that it's been a blur! However, so much has been imprinted in my head from last November's performance. Lots of great musical things happened. Yes, we had to wear masks; yes, we had to stay socially distanced; yes, we had to rehearse in different locations. I remember telling you that the performance was going to be our best, and I personally think that it was! The choir came prepared, the soloists were in top form, and the orchestra sounded better than it ever had. I remember saying on Sunday how proud I was of all we had accomplished. I still am! The 75th Anniversary of the Rockford Choral Union's *MESSIAH* was one for the books.

How do we make this even better for our 76th? I am hoping to add more chorus numbers back in this year. The feeling I got from our choir last year was a "Can Do" attitude like I've never seen. The musical commitment I felt last year was exhilarating, and I would personally love to see that kind of commitment again this year! Community musicians and non-musicians came up to me to express how meaningful (and musical) the performances were. Our soloists have all told me how much they want to be involved. They have been psyched about singing again since early this spring. The orchestra, led by Rachel Handlin, will be even better. My biggest hope is that as a core group of singers, you will return and bring more singers to round out the sections. I have always wanted to present *MESSIAH* with a small group of 45+ singers, and I would love to double that number if we can this year.

What continues to drive me is not only the commitment from all involved, but the mission of this group: to bring the message of God and His Son, Jesus, to the people in our community. Through the Holy Spirit, Handel was inspired to tell the story through music that uplifts and inspires all that hear it. We are the fortunate ones who get to bring this message through song and music. I hope that I will see many of you when we start rehearsals soon. I look forward to working with you!

Sincerely, Mike Beert, *Conductor*



www.rockfordchoralunion.com
www.facebook.com/rockfordchoralunion

*Established in 1945 as Rockford Lutheran Choral Union

**Rockford Choral Union is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Sponsorship...

While an active, singing membership in the RCU is a wonderful way to support our productions of MESSIAH, becoming a sponsor as well will also help our productions financially. When your name is listed as a sponsor in the program, it gives evidence of support for others to see and will also encourage them to add **their** support.

No donation is too LARGE! Please consider the following:

- If you would like to be a sponsor, a gift of \$15 or more will allow us to list your name in the program. Make checks payable to the **Rockford Choral Union**. Be sure to note how you want your name listed. Your name can be listed as a Sponsor, as a Business, “In Honor Of,” or “In Memory Of” someone. We also have Special Donor listings for gifts of \$100 or more. The deadline for a gift to be received for listing in the program is Sunday, November 6, 2022. Bring your donation to a rehearsal or send it directly to Rockford Choral Union, P.O. Box 8412, Rockford, Illinois 61126.
- Buy online through **smile.amazon.com**, designate Rockford Choral Union as your preferred charity, and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to RCU.
- Contact Dale Johnson if you are a Thrivent policyholder. Thrivent has two charitable donation paths open to 501(c)(3) entities like RCU, and they can guide you through the process with your agent.
- Estate planning. Please make MESSIAH/RCU a part of your legacy with a bequest.
- If you are age 70-1/2 or older, consider making a Qualified Charitable Distribution with RCU as the recipient. Contact your financial adviser for more information.

Your funding helps RCU reach our financial goals. Thank you.

–Cyndee Lipps, Sponsorship

In Memoriam...

The 2022 MESSIAH concerts will be dedicated to the following RCU singers:
Gary Campbell, Gloria Kullberg and Carol Lind.

Rehearsal Aid: ChordPerfect!

Attention: RCU Singers! Struggling with melismas? Octave jumps? Just can't find that note? Help is available at ChordPerfect! Just go to <https://www.chordperfect.com/george-handel>, select “MESSIAH – 1741 HWV 56” and click on the link for your voice part. You can hear all four parts and the orchestration for each chorus, but your voice part is prominent.

From The Board

Change is an inevitable part of life, but the words, music, and message of MESSIAH are unchangeable. We are preparing to again join voices and music to perform MESSIAH at 3 p.m. on November 26 and 27, 2022, in the Sanctuary at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 920 3rd Avenue, Rockford.

The latest COVID variant is highly contagious. For your health and safety, following CDC guidelines, we recommend that all persons attending our MESSIAH concerts wear masks inside the church building (*masks will be available at the door*) and musicians will be encouraged to wear masks.

The Rockford Choral Union Board of Directors will be following local and national COVID prevention guidelines, and our recommendations may change in response to the current COVID situation. Please check our website (www.rockfordchoralunion.com) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/rockfordchoralunion) for any updates.

Dues are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students (18 and under)

Practice Schedule 2022

****October 16**Rehearsal 2–4 pm
****October 23**.....Rehearsal 2–4 pm
****October 30**Rehearsal 2–4 pm
November 6Rehearsal 2–4 pm

November 13Rehearsal 2–4 pm
November 20.....Rehearsal 2–4 pm
November 25..... *Final Rehearsal*..... 7 pm
November 26..... *1st Performance* 3 pm
November 27.....*2nd Performance* 3 pm