

Handel

in concert & theology

Friday, November 6, 2026 — 7:00 pm

The Church of St. John the Divine — Houston, TX



Handel

in Concert and Theology

Presented by The Rev. Dr. Michael Lloyd
Principal of Wycliffe Hall, University of Oxford
The St. John the Divine Chorale and Soloists
Steven A. Newberry, Director of Music

Substitution

Chorus Surely He Hath Borne Our Griefs *Isaiah 53:4a, 5*
from *Messiah*

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.
He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was bruised for our iniquities.
The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

Hymn Sinners, Obey the Gospel Word *Charles Wesley*



The Creative Giving-Up of Rights

Aria Can I See My Infant Gor'd *based on 1 Kings 3:26*
from *Solomon*

Withhold the executing hand,
Reverse, O King, thy stern command.

Can I see my infant gor'd
With the fierce, relentless sword?
Can I see him yield his breath,
Smiling at the hand of death?
And behold the purple tides
Gushing down his tender sides?
Rather be my hopes beguiled;
Take him all, but spare my child.

Blair McLaughlin, soprano

Directs Us to the Overlooked

Aria He Was Despised *Isaiah 53:3 and Isaiah 50:6*
from *Messiah*

He was despised and rejected of men.
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

He gave his back to the smiters
and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.
He hid not his face from shame and spitting.

Caroline Lee, mezzo-soprano

Refuses to Impose

Chorus Worthy Is the Lamb *Revelation 5:12-13*
from *Messiah*

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain
to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength,
and honor, and glory, and blessing.

Blessing and honor, glory and power,
be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne,
And unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

The Chorale of St. John the Divine

Ecumenical

Solo Gloria in excelsis Deo
from *Gloria*

Gloria in excelsis Deo
Glory to God in the highest

Emily Perry, soprano

Hymn 481 Rejoice, the Lord is King! *Charles Wesley*



Biographies

The Rev. Dr. Michael Lloyd is Principal of Wycliffe Hall, a theological college within the University of Oxford. Wycliffe Hall serves as an evangelical center for the study of Christian theology, an Anglican seminary for the formation of Christian ministers, and an international center for postgraduate theological study and research.

Dr. Lloyd is the author of *Café Theology*, an engaging and accessible exploration of the Christian faith, as well as co-author of *Image Bearers*, a study of human identity and vocation, and *God, Struggle and Suffering in the Evolution of Life*, which examines the relationship between Christian theology and evolutionary science. A respected theologian, teacher, and speaker, he is widely recognized for making complex theological ideas accessible to contemporary audiences.

A lifelong enthusiast of the arts, Dr. Lloyd has attended stage productions of all of Shakespeare's plays and is now working his way through Handel's operas. He has a particular love of drama in all its forms, from grand productions to puppetry, and an enduring, if somewhat inexplicable, affection for the game of cricket.

Caroline Lee, mezzo-soprano, is recognized for her "unique and rich" sound and her ability to bring depth and vitality to every role she performs. An award-winning vocalist, she earned Bachelor of Music degrees in Vocal Performance and Music Education from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a Master of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Baylor University.

Her operatic repertoire includes Kate (*The Pirates of Penzance*), Sandman (*Hansel and Gretel*), Truman Capote (*The Scarlet Professor*), Mother/ Squirrel (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*), Dritte Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*), Ma Moss (*The Tender Land*), Zita (*Gianni Schicchi*), Lady Jane (*Patience*), Gaston (*Monsieur et Madame Denis*), Amastre (*Serse*), La Maestra delle Novizie (*Suor Angelica*), the Sorceress (*Dido and Aeneas*), and the gender-bent role of Dr. Molly Testa (*Don Pasquale*).

Equally at home as a soloist and ensemble musician, Lee is passionate about oratorio and choral repertoire. She is a frequent featured soloist with Vox Seraphim, with recent performances including Handel's *Messiah* (2023), *Dixit Dominus* (2024), Vivaldi's *Gloria* (2024), and Bach's *Magnificat* (2026). Additional solo appearances include Lili Boulanger's *Hymne au Soleil* at the Southwest ACDA Conference (2022) and Debussy's *Trois Chansons* (2018). As an ensemble singer, she has performed Bach's *Mass in B Minor* under Simon Carrington, the *St. Matthew Passion* with Andrew Megill, and the *Christmas Cantata* with Houston's Mercury Chamber Orchestra.

Blair McLaughlin, soprano, is a distinguished soloist and chamber musician based in Houston. A frequent collaborator with many of the region's leading ensembles, she has appeared as Galatea in *Acis and Galatea* with Ars Lyrica Houston during the inaugural Texas Early Music Festival and has been featured as a soloist for the organization's annual

New Year's Eve Gala. Additional engagements include appearances as a featured soloist with Cantare Houston. She is also a proud member of the award-winning Houston Grand Opera Chorus, where she made her debut in productions of Verdi's *Aida* and Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*.

On the concert stage, Ms. McLaughlin has performed a broad range of repertoire, from the Baroque brilliance of Handel's *Messiah* to the Romantic grandeur of Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. Her affinity for choral-orchestral music is further reflected in solo performances of the requiems of Mozart, Fauré, Rutter, and Dan Forrest. Her operatic credits include leading roles in *La Bohème*, *Suor Angelica*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *The Crucible*, and *Così fan tutte*.

An accomplished recitalist and devoted advocate for art song, Ms. McLaughlin recently received acclaim for her nuanced performance of Aaron Copland's *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson* as part of the Phil Kramer Recital Series. She serves as Soprano Section Leader at The Church of St. John the Divine and is a member of the administrative staff at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. Ms. McLaughlin continues her vocal studies with soprano Anne Heath-Welch.

Emily Perry, soprano, is praised for her shimmering, flexible voice and dynamic, engaging performances. A native of Brookings, South Dakota, she earned degrees in Voice Performance and Music Education from Baylor University and South Dakota State University and now resides in Houston.

Ms. Perry is an active member of Houston's vibrant choral community, performing with several of the city's premier professional ensembles, including the Houston Chamber Choir, Cor Mundi Chamber Choir, Bach Choir of Houston, Harmonia Stellarum, and the VOCES8 U.S. Scholars. Her collaborative work extends beyond Houston with appearances alongside Transept in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Vox Seraphim in Waco, Texas.

While at Baylor University, she performed a variety of leading and ensemble operatic roles, including Duchess Carolina in *Luisa Fernanda*, Wilhelmina in *Listen, Wilhelmina!*, Eleanora in *Prima la musica e poi le parole*, and Lady Ella in *Patience* with Baylor Opera Theatre. Additional operatic credits include Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi*, and Ida in *Die Fledermaus*.

Ms. Perry recently completed her first season with the SJD Chorale and serves as Administrative Assistant in the Music and Worship Office.

Dr. Yuri McCoy is organist at South Main Baptist Church and a graduate of the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, where he studied with renowned organist Ken Cowan. Hailed by *Gramophone* magazine as an artist of "rare virtuosity," Dr. McCoy has distinguished himself through imaginative programming and a commitment to exploring lesser-known corners of the keyboard repertoire. Whether performing Ligeti's *Études* on piano or presenting his acclaimed transcription of Varèse's monumental *Amériques* for organ, percussion, and assistant, he delights in introducing audiences to bold and unexpected musical experiences.

An active chamber musician, Dr. McCoy frequently performs in a variety of duo settings, including organ with Bryan Anderson, organ and piano with Dr. Yvonne Chen, and organ and percussion with Dr. Brady Spitz. These collaborations often feature newly composed or newly arranged works, showcasing instrumental combinations rarely encountered in concert. He is also a frequent collaborator with many of Houston's leading ensembles, including Cor Mundi, the TMC Orchestra, Kinetic Ensemble, and the Houston Chamber Choir.

In 2021, Dr. McCoy released his debut solo recording, *Symphonic Roar: An Odyssey of Sound from the Paris Conservatoire*, on the Acis label. The album received international praise, with OrgelNieuws commending its "beautiful narrative" and *BBC Music Magazine* celebrating its "bonkers" arrangement of Varèse's *Amériques*, calling it "quite the ride." His performances and recordings have been featured nationally on NPR's *Pipedreams and With Heart and Voice*. Beyond the concert hall, Dr. McCoy maintains an engaging YouTube presence, where his videos blend music with humor, creativity, and inventive filmmaking techniques ranging from claymation to slapstick comedy.

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