

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA
ORATORIO SINGERS

present



*The Seven Last
Words of Christ*

Music by

JOSEF HAYDN

English translation by

MARIA MASSEY

*A Sacred Cantata
for Solo Voices, Mixed Chorus, and Orchestra*

Market Square Presbyterian Church
20 South Second Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

November 17, 2013

3:00 p.m.

Central Pennsylvania Oratorio Singers

Eric R. Riley, Conductor

The Central Pennsylvania Oratorio Singers was organized to study and perform the major sacred masterworks for choir, soloists, and orchestra. This church-community organization is part of the outreach program of Market Square Presbyterian Church, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

New members are welcomed.
Interested singers should contact
Eric R. Riley at (717) 257-1270.

For further information about the Oratorio Singers,
please visit our website:
www.cposingers.com

OFFICERS & PRODUCTION STAFF

Terry Barber, President
Karen Smith, Vice President
Chris Lee, Membership Secretary
Lynn Knepp, Treasurer
Gail Witmer, Mailing Lists
Bob Rudi, Website Administrator
Lynn Knepp & Phyllis Smith, Ticket Sales
Many choir volunteers
Accompanist: Ellen Hunt

MARKET SQUARE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Thomas Sweet, Pastor
Rev. Kelly Wiant, Associate Pastor
Eric Riley, Organist / Director of Music
Cathy Becker, church liaison
Nancy Sheets, administrative assistant

From the Conductor



As a conductor, one of my real pleasures is discovering “new” music – new to me, that is. This is the case with Haydn’s *Seven Last Words*. Most of us will associate that title with a work by Theodore Dubois, which has been a staple of the oratorio literature for years. Haydn’s work, approximately a century earlier, began its life as an orchestral suite. A Spanish cardinal commissioned Haydn to compose a series of orchestral “meditations” to be used during services in Holy Week. Sometime later, Haydn produced a string quartet version that remains popular to this day. Later yet, Haydn encountered a performance in which a local musician had added vocal parts to his series of orchestral meditations. Haydn really liked the idea and hired a librettist with whom to collaborate on his own “oratorio” or “cantata” version, scored for orchestra, vocal soloists and chorus. The result was hailed by critics as one of Haydn’s best works, and Haydn himself agreed with this assessment. This was the last work Haydn conducted before his death in 1809.

I have chosen, in part, to present this work in translation from the original German because it lends a certain immediacy and power to the text and music, which is based on Jesus’ utterings from the cross, as related by the New Testament gospel writers. In addition to some moments of real drama (including a closing earthquake!), there is also much music that is disarmingly cheerful here – very much in the vein of his popular *Creation* oratorio. No doubt we have not only the 18th-century freedom from the weight of “original sin” expressed here, but also the freedom from sin and death that the Christ event represents for the Christian believer.

This oratorio version includes two purely instrumental movements, and each of seven choral movements are preceded by an unaccompanied choral presentation of the “word” on which the subsequent movement is based. The result of all of the above is a fresh and dramatic interpretation on the death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. We all have been moved by our study and work on this great oratorio – we wish the same for you, our loyal audience.

Eric R. Riley

Our Conductor



Eric R. Riley is Director of Music & Organist at Market Square Presbyterian Church in Harrisburg, PA, a position he assumed in November of 2007. He is also Artistic Director of the Wheatland Chorale, in Lancaster, PA. Previously, he held the post of Director of Music/Organist at First United Methodist Church, Cleveland, Ohio, for 14 years. Riley has held other church positions in Syracuse, NY, Nashville, TN, Richmond, VA and Canton, OH.

As a conductor, Eric Riley has led the Metropolitan Chorale of the Metropolitan School for the Arts in Syracuse, NY, been conductor of the Walsh University Chorale in North Canton, Ohio and was, for ten years, the Associate Artistic Director of Voices of Canton, Inc. (VOCI), formerly Canton Civic Opera, of Canton, Ohio. He has also been accompanist to the chorus, and harpsichordist, for the Canton Symphony Orchestra. He has studied conducting with G. Burton Harbison at Syracuse University, Larry Doebler at Ithaca College and Sandra Willetts at Scarritt Graduate School. He has also studied Renaissance choral style with Peter Phillips, conductor of the Tallis Scholars, and conducting with Vytautas Miskinis in Rimini, Italy. As a singer, Riley has studied voice at Ithaca College, Vocal Pedagogy at Westminster Choir College and was, for seven years, a professional tenor at Temple Adath Yeshurun in Syracuse, NY as well as a singer with the Syracuse Vocal Ensemble.

A frequent conductor and organist in Italy, Riley has recently returned from performances in Sicily with *Singers Company* of Akron, Ohio. In 2009 he performed for *Voci e Organi Dell’Appennino* in Bologna and for the prestigious International Organ festival in Ravenna, Italy. Last summer, he led the newly formed Market Square Singers to Italy for performances in Rome, Florence, Ravenna and Assisi. Riley holds the Master of Church Music degree in choral conducting and organ from Scarritt Graduate School (Vanderbilt University) in Nashville, TN and the Bachelor of Music degree in organ performance from Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY. Eric and his wife, Christine, live outside of Hummelstown, PA. Fluent in Italian, he enjoys studying Italian, French, German and Korean, as well as golf, tennis and frequent trips to visit two beautiful granddaughters in suburban New York City.

Our Soloists



Debra Hancock (soprano) is a graduate of Messiah College, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Music, with a concentration in vocal performance. She performed with many college music groups and has been a member of the Central Pennsylvania Oratorio Singers since its inception. Debra was the choir director at Baughman Memorial United Methodist Church in New Cumberland. Currently, she is a private voice and piano instructor and is active in the Aldersgate United Methodist Church music ministries.

Mike McKeever (tenor), originally from the Pittsburgh area, has been involved with solo singing and choral music in the Pittsburgh, Rochester and Philadelphia areas. He is a graduate of The Eastman School of Music and Reformed Theological Seminary. While serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators Mike was music director at Rain Forest International School in Yaounde, Cameroon, W. Africa. Locally he is a member of the Wheatland Chorale, and has sung with Musical Associates, a Lancaster ensemble under the direction of Emery DeWitt. He has studied voice with Lee Cass, Yi Kwai Sze, Seth McCoy and most recently with the late Thomas Houser. Mike is an active member at New City Fellowship in Lancaster, where he serves as music director. He is also the choir director at Zion Lutheran in Leola. He has served as an adjunct voice instructor, and vocal coach at Lancaster Bible College.

Sherry Powell (soprano) has studied with Mary Jelly Good, Nancy Tuttle and Kay Lorenz. She has sung with the Central Pennsylvania Oratorio Singers since its inception, and currently sings with the Bel Voce, the Penbrook Church of God choir, and the El Shaddai Singers. Former soloist at Salem United Church of Christ, Harrisburg, she sang with the Harrisburg Opera for six years and was a performing member of the Wednesday Club.

James Riggs (bass) has sung many bass-baritone roles in local and regional opera productions, including Don Alfonso (Cosi fan tutte), Dr. Dulcamara (Elixir of Love), Dr. Bartolo (Barber of Seville), Count Almaviva and Dr. Bartolo (Marriage of Figaro), and Leporello (Don Giovanni). He has studied voice with Marianne Casiello (former Curtis Institute faculty) and currently studies with Marvin Keenze (former Westminster Choir College faculty). He sings regularly with Bel Canto Lyric Opera Company of Philadelphia, and at Market Square Presbyterian in Harrisburg. Jim has struck out on his own as an opera producer and has mounted productions of Only a Miracle, a Christmas opera by Seymour Barab, and of Menotti's Amahl and the Night Visitors for area churches and theaters. As a composer, Jim was a finalist in the 2011 art song competition sponsored by the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Jim is also a licensed speech-language pathologist, and is employed fulltime as a therapy manager for Austill's Rehabilitation Services, Inc., Exton, PA.

Saralee Riggs (mezzo-soprano) fell under the spell of opera from the founding days of Lancaster Opera Workshop. She has performed many wonderful roles in opera and musical theater in the central PA area for Harrisburg Opera Association, Harrisburg Community Theater, Harrisburg Symphony, and Opera Lancaster. Her solo Oratorio work includes the Mozart Requiem, and a staged production of Elijah. Some of her favorite roles include Pamina (Magic Flute), Aldonza / Dulcinea (Man of La Mancha), Hansel (Hansel and Gretel), Lalume (Kismet), and the title role in Carmen. She solos regularly with Bel Canto Lyric Opera Company of Philadelphia. Saralee is a 2013 winner of the National Association of Teachers of Singing competition. Present and former Vocal Study/Coaching include: John Darrenkamp, Metropolitan Opera, New York City; Marianne Casiello, Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia; Oren Brown, New York City and currently, Marvin Keenze, Westminster Choir College (retired).

Christine Riley (alto) has worked as a Director of Music and vocal instructor since graduating from Westminster Choir College with a Bachelor of Music degree. While living in Ohio, she was the Director of the Canton Children's Chorus for 15 years and sang with Voices of Canton and Singers Company. In 2001 Christine performed in Corofest Umbria and soloed in the Ora Mystica series at the Spoleto Festival of Two Worlds in Italy. Christine has also sung with the James River Opera Company and the Richmond International Festival of Music in Virginia. While in upstate NY for 15 years, she sang with the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, Syracuse Vocal Ensemble, Syracuse Opera Company and the Artpark Opera Productions in Lewiston. Presently retired, Christine is active in the Market Square Church music program and sings in the Wheatland Chorale. She enjoys playing golf and tennis and growing organic vegetables in the summer.

John Sharpe (bass) has sung in operas, oratorios, and recitals, and has conducted choral groups and orchestras. He has performed more than sixty operatic roles. Along with opera and oratorio, he has performed several recitals, one in Carnegie Hall. John graduated from Georgetown College, Georgetown, Kentucky, and has a Masters of Music degree from Florida State University. He resides in Central Pennsylvania and serves as bass soloist for Pine Street Presbyterian Church, Harrisburg.

Program



PART ONE

Introduction

1. Father, Forgive Them

*Sherry Powell, soprano • Christine Riley, alto
Mike McKeever, tenor • John Sharpe, bass*

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Father in heaven! Oh, see us kneeling. Look down from Your throne.
Father, forgive us! Thy Son entreats Thee,
Oh, hear Him pleading and interceding that mercy be shown.

Ah, we are grievous sinners, and great is our guilt.

Forgiveness and grace to win us, our Saviour's blood was spilled.
Our Saviour's blood asks no revenge; it flows to cleanse us.

Father eternal! Let thy grace attend us. Let mercy be shown.
Thy Son redeemed us with His blood.
Thy Son's blood was spilled; let mercy be shown.

2. Verily, I Say Unto Thee

*Debra Hancock, soprano • Saralee Riggs, alto
Mike McKeever, tenor • James Riggs, bass*

Verily I say unto thee: this day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.

Thou art mercy, love, and pity; our Redeemer, Lamb of God!
Yonder thief appealed for help to Thee:
“When you come into Thy kingdom, Master, think of me.”
And you promised him so mildly: “Thou shalt be today in paradise with Me.”

Lord, our God, look on us.

By the cross where Thou hast suffered see our true repentance offered.
See, O Father, our repentance. Lord, our God, look on us!

Let us hear, when death shall call us, from Thy lips eternal solace;
Thy gentle words restore and comfort us:
“Today thou shalt be with Me in paradise.”

3. Woman, Behold Thy Son

*Sherry Powell, soprano • Christine Riley, alto
Mike McKeever, tenor • John Sharpe, bass*

Woman, behold thy Son; Son, behold thy mother.

Blessed mother, you stood sadly; crying, sighing, by the cross where thy dear
Jesus died;
Blessed mother, you stood sadly there beside His cross;
And you felt His death-wounds smarting in the bitter hour of parting;
Sorrowfully felt thy grief and loss.
You stood weeping, sighing there beside the cross.

Tho by sorrow bent and shaken,
thou has yet serenely taken for thy Son beloved John the true disciple;
and we, too, thy children are!

Blessed mother! O, thou comfort of the fallen, hear thy children, hear us
calling;
O, thou comfort of the fallen, save our souls in desperate plight.
Oh, lead us to the light.

When in death's embrace we languish and you hear our anxious crying,
And you see our mortal anguish; let not, mother, then the foe defeat us.
Send thy loving strength to meet us and save our souls in desperate plight.

When in death's embrace we languish, then prove thyself, our mother,
And commend us to thy Son, O mother!

4. My God, My God!

*Debra Hancock, soprano • Saralee Riggs, alto
Mike McKeever, tenor • James Riggs, bass*

Eli, Eli, lama asabthani! (My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!)

Why, O Father, did you forsake me?
Where is now the hand of God?
Who can fathom this deep mystery?
O God of power and might, O God of power all-seeing;
Thou hast called us into being, and by Thy love, O Lord, we have been saved.

O Lord, we worship Thee. We adore Thee truly.
For our sake you suffered cruelly; mockery, loneliness, and pain; fear and pain.

Where's the man who would desert Thee,
By his sins would want to hurt Thee?

Thou art gracious, though we grieve Thee!
No, we shall not ever leave Thee, in life and all eternity.



Intermission

PART TWO

Introduction

5. I Thirst

*Debra Hancock, soprano • Saralee Riggs, alto
Mike McKeever, tenor • James Riggs, bass*

Jesus calleth: I thirst!

Curb now your fury, stay your revenge.
Mankind, now let pity move your spirit. Mercy enter all your hearts.
Jesus calleth: "Oh, I thirst!"

They offer Him a bitter drink of vinegar and gall to quench His thirst.
Is there to cruelty no end? O, mankind; is there no end?
He can withstand no longer the pain that overpowers Him;
He can withstand no longer the pain, whose life itself was gentleness.

6. It Is Finished

Sherry Powell, soprano

It is finished.

Nailed upon the tree of torture, hangs my Jesus in the night;
And He calls aloud: "It is finished!"

Now the cross has lost its terror, now has evil lost its might;
O, you sinners, blindly living, woe betide you who from sin to graver sins are
driven.

Men, consider now!

Can you hope to be forgiven, when He comes in all His glory and in all His
might?

Save us, Jesus; save us from damnation.

Do not let us cry in vain.

Let Thy death be our salvation, spare our souls eternal pain.

May we rise to live forever in Thy heavenly domain.

7. Into Thy Hands

*Sherry Powell, soprano • Christine Riley, alto
Mike McKeever, tenor • John Sharpe, bass*

Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.

Into Thy hands, O Lord, my spirit I commend.
No further can His anguish rise; now He has drained the cup.
O Father, take My spirit; take my spirit in Thy hands.
I commend it to Thy hands.
And then He bows His head and dies.

From everlasting torment, His precious blood has saved us.
Because my Jesus loved us, He died a sinner's death.
You gave us life anew; what can we, O Lord, give you; what can we give?

Jesus, at Thy feet our grateful hearts we offer Thee.
We lie in deep humility.
Into Thy hands, O Lord, my spirit I commend;
O Lord, into Thy hands.

8. He Is No More (Il Terremoto – the earthquake)

He is no more, He is no more.
The very earth is loudly grieving!
Now tremble, Golgotha. Oh, tremble.
He died upon thy hill.

Sun, hide thy face, and light not this accursed day.
Break open, O land, be torn whereon the killers tarry.

Ye graves, give up your dead.
Arise, ye buried saints; the earth where ye have lain with sacred blood is stained.

FIN

Orchestra Personnel



FLUTE

Jana O. MacKay
Morgann Davis

CLARINET

Doris Hall-Gulati
Rob Shaubach

HORN

Kristen Albert
Anne Nye

VIOLIN I

Michael Jamanis, concert
master
Tara Kenkelen
Sally Hart

VIOLA

Rick Ney
John Hamilton

BASS

John Yerger

OBOE

Jeffrey O'Donnell
Lauren Fairfull

BASSOON

Robin Plant
Ralph Lehman

TROMBONE

Rick Staherski
Andrew Walls

VIOLIN II

Christopher Brooks
MaryLee Yerger

CELLO

Beth Lavender
Steve Lavender

KEYBOARD

Ellen Hunt

Chorus Personnel



SOPRANO

Jairee Counterman
Esther Dell
*Debra Hancock**
Cynthia Kelbaugh
Patrecia Langley
Margaret Mielke
Kathleen Miller
Sherry Powell
Lois Richwine
Carolyn Seifert
Katy Shupp
Karen Smith
Phyllis Smith
Lana Walmer

ALTO

C. Faith Baker
Allison Barber
*Priscilla Bashore**
Jen Cramer
Cheryl Hayward
Dottie Hotchkiss
Ellie Meadowcroft
Bernadette Obringer
Sara Riggs
Christine Riley
Susie Sauder
Loretta Smith
Marilyn Smith
Beth Stoner
Lois Van Orden
Kathy Venneri
Betsy Wendlek

TENOR

Terry Barber
Chris Faries
Chris Lee
Christie Kauffman
Lynn Knepp
Eldon Nafziger
Arlo Rader
*Tom Rhen**
Roger Sieber
Dean Van Orden

BASS

Tom Edmondson
Dr. George Faries
Lee Gayman
*Gordon Kauffman**
Richard Prether
Jim Riggs
Bob Rudi
Charlie Seifert
John Sharpe

Special Thanks



FOUNDERS

Donations of \$200

George and Christopher Faries
Lynn and Rose Knepp
Karl and Debra Hancock
Kathleen Venneri

BENEFACTORS

Donations of \$100

C. Faith Baker
Priscilla and Larry Bashore
Tom Edmondson
Dottie Hotchkiss
Christie and Gordon Kauffman
Chris and Gwen Lee
Sarah Rhen
Revs. James and Lois Richwine
Christine and Eric Riley
Bob and Bonnie Rudi
In memory of Janet Lorraine Shope
Marilyn L. Smith
Rev. and Mr. Dean Van Orden

**administrative section leader*

SPONSORS

Donations of \$75

Terry and Debra Barber

Dan and Cheryl Hayward

Kay Shupp and Terry Conner

PATRONS

Donations of \$50

Lynn Alt

Dr. and Mrs. Ronald R. Sider

Drs. Carolyn and Charles Seifert

Phyllis J. Smith

