

Lyricist for *Messiah* remains enigmatic figure

Every season, a friend and I attend one of the St. Louis Symphony's performances of Handel's *Messiah*. Unable to attend this year, I instead listened to a good recording of Handel's masterpiece while following the libretto.

Messiah would be magnificent even if the words were incomprehensible. But hearing it would scarcely be the same experience without the grandeur of the text, which is drawn almost entirely from the King James Bible. This is full-throated, straight stuff, full of power and glory, utterly lacking in timidity.

The master weaver who stitched together the tapestry of verses that comprises the text to *Messiah* was an eccentric named Charles



Jennens. For the general reader, he can be an elusive figure, but I have tried to assemble a rough portrait of the man who gave us the words to *Messiah*.

He was from the midlands, Leicestershire, the only son of a rich landowner. He was a bachelor, an Oxford man and overweight. And he appears to have lived indulgently, flaunting his wealth. He liked to ride to town in a magnificent coach drawn by four plumed horses. He had a notable library and wrote poetry in Latin. And

he collected art. Jennens also was a dissenter from the Church of England. He was a man of strong and often intemperate views, vain enough to rewrite Shakespeare.

His renditions of *Hamlet*, *Lear* and *Othello* were widely, and no doubt justly, ridiculed.

He was full of advice to George Frideric Handel and would turn on the latter when his opinions went unheeded. (Mr. Handel's head is more full of maggots than ever," he wrote to a friend.) Before the celebrated performance of *Messiah* at London's Foundling Hospital, Jennens agitated for changes in the Hallelujah Chorus. "There are some passages unworthy of you," he told Handel.

See "Messiah," page 5A

ASH WEDNESDAY FAMILY SERVICE



During the Ash Wednesday Family Service, children made prayer chains and wrote Lenten promises for themselves or their families.

Reflections: Growing into a deeper understanding of Lent's purpose



The Rev. J. Richard "Dick" Wilson shares this perspective on Lent.

As I was growing up, my home church did not observe Lent. The congregation was not liturgical, so it was not until I entered college

that I began to understand Lent, the church year, liturgical colors and meanings.

As I think back to that time, I realize we did observe Lent without knowing it or calling it such. In January we had "mission study" month, February had "spiritual gifts" month and March

was "preparing for membership" month.

As a child I participated in those. Then, when the March after I turned 8 arrived and the pastor announced, "Anyone 8-years-old and older who wants to join the church on Palm Sunday

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Annual UMW House and Table Tour

4A



Support those in need

4A

IN WORSHIP MARCH 22, 2009

Traditional, 8:45 and 11 a.m.
"Moses, Jesus, and the Rattlesnake Roundup"; John 3:14-17
the Rev. Leighton Bearden

The Bridge, 11 a.m.
"I Am the Living Water"
John 7:37-39
Jeff McCormick, preaching

IN WORSHIP MARCH 29, 2009

Traditional, 8:45 and 11 a.m.
"Debugging Is Not Enough - the Operating System Has Got to Go"
John 12:20-33
the Rev. Leighton Bearden

The Bridge, 11 a.m.
"I Am the Door"
John 10:7-10
Jeff McCormick, preaching

Project Transformation seeks summer interns

Project Transformation is accepting college intern applications for summer 2009. This program is for college students who have completed at least their freshman year of college and are seeking a summer of hands-on ministry working with children and youth from low-income neighborhoods.

PT provides day camps for 900 underserved children and youth in urban United Methodist churches, and partners with more than 70 United Methodist congregations. Interns live in Christian community at SMU with their peers while exploring various opportunities in ministry and service.

The summer internship pays \$2,900 and offers room, board and a \$1,250 educational voucher at the completion of service. One-year internships are also available. For more information and applications, contact PT at www.project-transformation.org or 214.946.3600.



Supporting those in need through NDSM

In a tough economy, the number of individuals seeking help from North Dallas Shared Ministries is only growing – and volunteer hours are sorely needed.

University Park UMC fulfills a covenant relationship with NDSM, a Dallas-area interfaith charity that helps people with food, medical care, and job and financial counseling, among other services.

The nonprofit agency was founded in 1983 by five congregations to provide emergency assistance to those seeking help in Dallas. UPUMC member Bob Munroe explained that many people seek churches' help when they're going through a hard time, and church employees don't have the resources to weed out real needs from scams.

NDSM can verify need. And an important part of its philosophy is to "help those who help themselves," that is, individuals must demonstrate that, although they may not be able to make ends meet at the moment, they are trying to the best of their ability to manage on their own.

"There is no script," Bob explains. Individuals are provided help particular to their situations, whether the need be for clothes, food, utilities, rent or health care. Lack of health insurance is a common concern, even for those who are employed.

"You see the working poor, people who make \$25,000 a year and have two kids. They don't have health insurance," Bob said. NDSM provides a medical clinic, dental clinic and an adult eye exam/eyeglass program (now sponsored

See "NDSM," on page 5

Tickets available for House and Table Tour

Once again the UPUMC United Methodist Women are hosting our House and Table Tour. This year's tour will be one of our best. The tour will be held on Wednesday, April 29, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Chairman Sandy Ladewig and her administrative assistant Zazelle Wingo have chosen three homes of gracious living for us to tour.

The first home, described as a "timeless treasure," is located at 6247 Desco. Next we have a "charming chateau" at 3012 Hanover, and finally, you will bask in "Mediterranean warmth" at 2908 Purdue.

This year we welcome back Ye Merrie Olde Players for entertainment as we enjoy refreshments at 3012 Hanover.

Tickets are still only \$10 and will be available from circles, the Welcome Center desk, or by mail to House and Table Tour, c/o Lu Turner, 6255 W. Northwest Hwy #105, Dallas, Texas 75225. The mail-in deadline is April 20. Tickets at the door will be \$12.

This is the largest fundraiser UMW has each year and proceeds go to support the local missions of the UMW. We need your support in this effort, so make your plans early and invite your friends to this wonderful annual event. It promises to be a great time, as always.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER ACTIVITIES AND WORSHIP

April 5, Palm/Passion Sunday

8:45 and 11 a.m., Traditional worship services, Sanctuary
The Rev. Leighton Bearden, preaching
"The Three Processions of Holy Week," Mark 11:1-11
There will be no communion at this service. Music by the Aldersgate Chorale at 8:45 and by the Chancel Choir and Combined Children's Choirs at 11.

9:45 a.m., Palm Sunday Parade, Front Lawn
Children age 3 through fifth grade are invited to participate in a reenactment, led by the youth department, of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Teachers will take the children back to their Sunday school classrooms by 10:45 a.m. for parents to pick them up.

11 a.m. The Bridge worship service, Fellowship Hall
The Rev. Rebecca Frank, preaching
"The Best of the Worst of Us, and the Worst of the Best of Us"
Mark 11:1-11 and Mark 15:1-39

7:30 p.m., Handel's *Messiah* (Parts II and III), Sanctuary
The world's best-known masterpiece of sacred music will be presented by the Chancel Choir, soloists, and a professional orchestra.

April 9, Maundy Thursday

7 p.m., Holy Communion service, Sanctuary
The Rev. Leighton Bearden, preaching
Ceremony of Stripping of the Altar and music by the Chancel Choir.

April 10, Good Friday

7 p.m., Good Friday Service, Sanctuary
A dramatic service with scripture, music, contemporary readings and visuals of masterpieces of Christian art.

April 12, Easter Sunday

7 a.m., Easter Sunrise Service, Front Lawn (Caruth Blvd.)
The Rev. Rebecca Frank, preaching
"And... Now What?" Mark 16:1-8
Celebrate the risen Christ as the sun dawns on a new day. Acoustical music by The Bridge Band.

8:30, 9:45 and 11 a.m., Traditional Easter worship, Sanctuary
The Rev. Leighton Bearden, preaching
"A Bounty Hunter Tells the Easter Story"
1 Corinthians 15:1-11 and John 20:1-18
Music will be by the Aldersgate Chorale at 8:30 and the Chancel Choir at 9:45 and 11. All services will include brass and organ.

9:45 a.m., Children's Easter Celebration, Fellowship Hall
Families with children in fifth grade and under are invited to meet in Fellowship Hall at 9:45 a.m. for a special family-focused program led by the Rev. Rachel Baughman. Following the program parents and their children will adjourn to the Colgate lawn for a butterfly release and egg hunt. The lawn will be divided into grade areas and children will collect eggs of each "color of Easter."

9:45 a.m., Youth Easter Brunch, Youth Center
All sixth- through 12th-graders are invited to join us for this time of food, fun and fellowship. Contact Kathy Champion at kchampion@upumc.org to sign up to bring a dish.

11 a.m., The Bridge Easter worship service, Fellowship Hall
The Rev. Rebecca Frank, preaching
"Easter Verbs," Mark 16:1-12

Messiah

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Handel refused, and his judgment was vindicated, not only by history but more immediately by the king of England. The story goes that the king leaped to his feet when he heard the chorus, thus starting a tradition that lasts to this day. And yet, difficult and impudent as Jennens was, his talent and taste were deeply respected by Handel. It is his letters to Jennens that make up the largest existing set of Handel's correspondence.

All in all, Jennens collaborated with Handel for four works, including the great oratorios *Saul* and *Belshazzar*. But his masterpiece, and Handel's, was *Messiah*. A malicious contemporary dismissed his contribution as "only a selection from Scripture verses."

That it is, but what a selection and how expertly crafted! In choruses and arias, 60 portions of the Bible are employed to tell a story of mankind's redemption, prophesied in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament. Isaiah alone contributes about a quarter of these.

The weaving is absolutely seamless. The lovely soprano aria, "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth," begins in the depths and misery of Job and after this declaration of faith by that good persecuted man moves straightway to I Corinthians, where it concludes with the affirm-

ing: "For now is Christ risen from the dead."

The oratorio's most famous event, the great Hallelujah Chorus, provides a good example of Jennens' impeccable touch. It is assembled from three separate verses from Revelation, beginning in Chapter 19 (Alleluja: for the God omnipotent reigneth). From here, it reverses to Chapter 11 (and he shall reign for ever and ever) before surging triumphantly back to 19, (King of Kings and Lord of Lords). Yet, we hear in its whole progression consistency and perfect artistic logic.

Charles Jennens died in 1773, outliving Handel by 14 years. He reportedly left substantial sums for the education of poor children, for the welfare of the widows of clergymen and for the improvement of six hospitals in London.

As to what became of these bequests, we can only speculate. But of his greatest legacy, there is no question whatsoever. For that is the sublime text to *Messiah*, and it belongs and shall belong, for ever and ever, to everyone who loves music.

(Excerpted from an article by William F. Woo, former editor of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.)

Messiah, Parts II-III, will be performed at UPUMC on Palm Sunday evening, April 5, at 7:30 p.m. by our Chancel Choir, soloists (including British counter-tenor Ryland Angel) and professional orchestra.

NDSM

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by the Oak Cliff Lions Club as longtime provider Dr. Jeffrey Halpin has closed his office).

Volunteers are urgently needed in the following areas:

- Day and evening medical clinics: physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners and nurses. The women's clinic is in particular need of providers to do breast and Pap exams. To learn more, call Nancy Volk at 972.620.8696, ext. 226 or clinicaldirector@ndsm.org.
- English as a second language instructors: No experience or Spanish proficiency is needed to volunteer with ESL classes. For more information, contact Sara Harvey at sjharvey@flash.net.
- Eye exam/eyeglass program: Opticians, optometrists and vision technicians are needed to staff the vision testing bus. Please contact Lorraine Gurun at Gurun@sbcglobal.net.
- Dental clinic: Dental hygienists Bob is UPUMC's representative to NDSM's governing board, which fulfills part of the promise that UPUMC made to the charity many years ago. The covenant agreement involves four aspects of support: volunteers, food, finance and governance. In 2008, the church donated 50 bags of food through food drives, and its volunteers contributed about 360 hours.

The church earmarks part of its Mission and Outreach budget to provide financial support to NDSM, making us one of 46 churches that together give NDSM about \$460,000 each year – less than a quarter of the charity's \$2.3 million annual budget. The rest of the money comes from a variety of corporate and civic donations.

So where does all that money go? Not to overhead. NDSM has one employee – the director who has been there since the beginning. The charity also received a grant to pay for a part-time doctor in its medical clinic. Otherwise, all the workers at NDSM are just like Bob – volunteers.

And those volunteers accomplish a lot. During 2008, NDSM will serve approximately 50,000 clients and patients. Each day, the Emergency Aid Center processes between 40 to 55 applications for individuals and families requesting assistance. Each Friday, an additional 250 to 275 sen-

Enjoy an evening of music and laughter in support of North Dallas Shared Ministries by attending its 7th annual fundraiser, featuring a lasagna dinner and concert, on Thursday, May 7, at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church.

The concert features an eclectic repertoire of acoustic blues, country, folk, bluegrass and pop performed by The Fabulous CatDaddies, and an appearance by Dr. Dennis Swanberg (also known as "The Swan") who combines comedy with a soul-building message.

Dinner is at 6 p.m. and the concert is at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$30 for both, or \$20 for the concert only.

Those who can't attend may still make a donation on behalf of UPUMC, said UPUMC member Bob Munroe. Checks may be given to Bob (reach him at 214.987.0759 or munroe.bob@sbcglobal.net) or mailed by May 1 to: NDSM May 7 Concert/Dinner, 2875 Merrell Road, Dallas, Texas 75229-4702.

iors receive a bag of groceries without waiting or completing an application.

Besides being a member of the governing board, Bob provides financial and job counseling with NDSM. Last year, UPUMC had fewer than five people who regularly volunteered with the charity, including Bob himself. He is pleased to have recently put a new member in touch with NDSM as a volunteer, and only wants to do more to make congregants aware of the good works carried out every day because of our support of NDSM.

"UPUMC supports it well, but the need is going up," Bob says. "You see lots of caring people at this church, with lots of wonderful gifts to give. I love to take people on a tour and help them get involved."

If you would like to know more about NDSM, visit www.ndsm.org or contact Bob at munroe.bob@sbcglobal.net or 214.987.0759.

Lenten reflections

Continued from page 1

should come to the pastor's class the next four Sunday afternoons in the Sanctuary," I was nearly the first one in line. I sat with all my friends on the front pew and took everything in. I affirmed that I believed all those Sunday School stories in the Bible; that I understood how the Methodist church worked; that I knew Jesus was my Lord and Savior; and with John Wesley as my hero, I

would support the church with my prayers, presence, gifts and service.

Now 54 years later, I realize that Lent did have an impact on me. I still teach those stories in the Bible, I think I understand how the United Methodist church works, I know that Jesus is still my Lord and Savior and I continue to support the church with my prayers, presence, gifts and service.

But Lent has become more for

me as an adult. Lent is a time when we look upon our "way of disciplined grace," as Richard Foster puts it in his book *Celebration of Discipline*. Grace is ours freely from God, but not cheap. We must take up a consciously chosen course of action as individuals and a faith community to express the spiritual gifts of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Lent is our annual evaluation of how we are doing with those spiritual gifts, and our time of starting anew where we are lacking. It is a time when we prepare to renew our covenant to be an Easter people, sharing the good news.

Dick Wilson is the minister of Adult Spiritual Formation with University Park UMC.

UPUMC NEWS AND NOTES

Weekday School Monthly Mission

During March the UPUMC Weekday School will collect gently used children's tennis shoes and athletic shoes for the Crossroads Community Center. Bring those "outgrown" shoes to the collection area outside the school office any time during March.

Two yoga classes begin in March

Register in the Welcome Center or online at www.upumc.org/cooper. The schedule for the classes are:

- Yoga Session 3 begins Monday, March 23
- Yoga Session 4 begins Friday, March 27

Want to know more about Exodus?

Join us for a study of Exodus to explore how God's salvation 4,000 years ago relates to our salvation today, or does it? We will meet for eight weeks beginning Wednesday, April 1, 9:30-11:30 a.m. This study is based on the Disciple 2 curriculum.

UMW'S annual caladium sale

Please help support UMW missions while ordering beautiful caladiums for your yard. Many varieties are available and order forms are located in the Welcome Center. The deadline to order is April 3. Call Lynn Erickson at 214.824.6648 with any questions.



Wednesday UPLift Dinners

Come join your UPUMC family in Fellowship Hall for a great meal, fellowship and conversation before attending handbell or choir practice or going to your Cooper School class. Lenten Kids' Nights is from 5-6 p.m. for ages 2 through 6th grade. Dinner is served from 6-7 p.m. in the kitchen and Youth Bible Study is held from 7-8 p.m. in the Youth Center.

Welcoming visitors on Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to offer a warm, inviting welcome to the many newcomers likely to be visiting our church. Here are few ways to put our best foot forward:

- Parking: Because of limited space, it can make a big difference if members who are comfortable doing so park farther away from church entrances, and take advantage of opportunities to carpool.
- Reaching out: Say "hello" and make the acquaintance of someone new. You can't go wrong with a smile and a bit of conversation. And if someone looks out of place or unsure, go ahead and ask them if you can help.
- Exiting services: For better flow, please leave the sanctuary via the transepts.

Easter is such a joyous celebration in the life of the church. Let's do what we can to share the love and joy of the day with all who enter into our midst.

On the road again

Larry and Carol Ann Ravert have finalized the next group of travel ministry trips.

Upcoming trips include:

- Thursday, April 16 – travel to Fort Worth via train and visit the mint
- Wednesday, May 13 – spend a day at the Dallas Arboretum
- Wednesday-Friday, June 24-26 – "Texas" musical at Palo Duro Canyon and more
- Tuesday, Aug. 18 – mystery trip with special guide
- Monday-Friday, Nov. 2-5 – Christmas in Branson
- Saturday, Dec. 5 – day trip for a Norwegian Christmas in Clifton

You can find complete information in the Welcome Center.

Mark your calendar for concert

The spring event presented by our Spiritual Arts Series will be a concert by Leslie Blum on Sunday, April 19, at 7 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Invite your friends for what will truly be a delightful evening of entertainment.

Sign up for UPUMC Life e-newsletter

Have an e-mail address? Want to stay on top of church happenings? Subscribe to the weekly e-mail newsletter, UPUMC Life. Contact Carolyn Washburn at cwashburn@upumc.org to be added to the distribution list.

Ads and family updates wanted

UPUMC has contracted Guide Book Publishing to publish a guide book and directory for our congregation that will be updated and delivered to your homes annually. This book will provide an overview of the mission, programs and people of the church.

Since the guide is being provided at no cost to the church, local businesses are being solicited to advertise in the book. If you own or manage a business and would like to get on the list to be contacted about advertising in our directory, please call Carolyn Washburn at 469.916.9611.

To ensure we have your most up-to-date information for the guide book, please contact Wynn Moore at 214.368.1435, ext. 104 with any changes to your membership record.

Families needed to host students

Welcome a high school exchange student from Europe, Latin America, or Asia into your household for five or ten months. As a Center for Cultural Interchange host family, you can join us in building bridges of friendship around the world. Visit the CCI website, cci-exchange.com, or call Chris Long at 972.754.1036 or email Chris14888@aol.com.

DNOW WAS AWESOME!



Youth members and their friends experienced a wonderful weekend of fellowship, team building and game playing during Disciple NOW 2009. Pictured left are: Alexa Messman, Emily Champion and Katie Beiler. Pictured above are Dalton Brantley, John Jenkins and Lee Wiley.

PRAYERS

(Names will remain on the prayer list for two weeks. To extend, call 214.368.1435, ext. 104.)

Hospital

Julia Fraze

Deaths

- Winnie Blance McCallum, mother of Dick McCallum, on March 5. Services were March 8.
- Rhett Miller, Jr., father of Rhett Miller, on March 3 in Tallahassee, FL.

Prayer Requests

Evelyn Herzinger; Ruth Bain; Bob Shaw; Wanda Knight and Ann Weaver, sisters of Blue Harris and aunts of Paige Flink; Jarvis, nephew of Constance Harp; Doug Yancey Hale, son of Jo Hale; Ella and Tony Luna, friends of Ann Petty; Bill Byxbee, father of John Byxbee; Tessie Flanagan, mother of Ricky Flanagan and Sandra Flanagan; Cindy Hill, mother of Tiffany Luedtke; Eva Guest, niece, and Marsha Tanner, friend, of Linda Durbin; Terry Goolsby, friend of Marilyn McKnight; Jeremiah, friend of Mary Hosch