

Weekly Connector: Live Nativity Tonight!

December 8, 2017

Hello Church!

Tonight, Red Star Veterinary Clinic in East Canton will be holding their annual Live Nativity. We have had the pleasure of partnering with them for the last few years and I'm looking forward to singing carols and seeing the faces of kids of all ages as we all experience some of the joys associated with Christmas. One of the best parts for me? Wishing folks a very "Merry Christmas!" The Live Nativity starts at 5pm and goes to about 9pm. Red Star is located on the corner of US30 and Broadway just west of East Canton. I hope to see you there!



In 1741, Charles Jennens approached a renowned composer about possibly collaborating on an idea he had for a musical oratorio. This would be no common oratorio - that is, an often lengthy musical work using choirs, soloists, and an orchestra. This oratorio would tell the story of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The renowned composer? George Frideric Handel.

The oratorio? *Messiah*.

Jennens had already developed the libretto (or the words and the story) using verses from the Bible. Handel had the challenge to compose the music - and he took the work seriously. It is understood that in the course of about 24 days, later that summer, Handel completed the entire musical score: 20 choral numbers, more than 30 solos and instrumentals, with full orchestration. Truly, this was an incredible feat!

The first performance of *Messiah* was held in Dublin, Ireland on April 13, 1742 to raise money for a hospital. Although it was a great success as a fundraiser, it was also an Easter event (for it told the entire story of Jesus - His prophetic birth, along with His death and resurrection). It was several years before *Messiah* took its place as a Christmas Musical tradition.

It has been reported that after that first performance, Handel was congratulated by a member of the audience for producing such an excellent work of "entertainment".

"Entertainment!" He reportedly replied, "My purpose was not to entertain, but to teach them something."

In a time when access to a copy of the Bible was limited and many people were illiterate, the people heard sung the most important story of all time - the story of Jesus, the Messiah.

This is the real beauty of *Messiah*. Yes, the music soars, welling up within us at times conflicting feelings of joy, sorrow, and anticipation. The words, however, are the very words of God:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6



This Sunday, we will continue to look at this verse more closely as we uncover all that came with this child. Be sure to invite a friend and come learn "What's So Wonderful About a Counselor"?

Looking forward to seeing you soon!

I love you, Church!

Pastor greg

ps: you can read more about Handel and his *Messiah* in these locations:

<http://opera.stanford.edu/iu/libretti/messiah.htm>

http://www.anotherthink.com/contents/movies_books_music/20051218_handels_messiah_a_brief_history.html

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/the-glorious-history-of-handels-messiah-148168540/>