

COMMENTS & PRAYER REQUESTS

Please indicate the degree of confidentiality you desire:

- ☐ For the Pastor only
- ☐ For the Prayer Team members
- ☐ May be shared with the congregation
- ☐ Please have someone contact me

CONNECT

- ☐ I’m interested in joining a Life Group
- ☐ I’m interested in membership
- ☐ I’m interested in baptism / profession of faith
- ☐ I need to update my contact info (use reverse side)
- ☐ Sign me up for RRC email
- ☐ Other:

This week’s poll (just for fun)

- ☐ Movies
- ☐ TV
- ☐ Podcasts

Last week’s winner: Night Owl

NOTES FOR THE FRONT OFFICE

(doodles accepted)

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

In the wake his recent conversion to Christianity, Kanye West, last Sunday, presented his “Nebuchadnezzar” opera and took a beating from critics for what they said was really an oratorio. Almost three centuries ago, George Frederick Handel, in 1741, was struggling because London audiences were losing their taste for his operas and so he made the shift to oratorio in Dublin and composed, in just 3 weeks, and presented “Messiah” to enthusiastic crowds.

An oratorio is an extended musical setting of a sacred text made up of dramatic, narrative, and contemplative elements. And like Kanye, audiences struggled with the presentation of a sacred story in a secular venue. But unlike Kanye, whose “oratorio” will likely soon be forgotten, “Messiah” is yet today probably the most-performed and most-beloved piece of music ever written.

Unlike most oratorios, “Messiah” has no plot or characters as such, only Bible verses telling of the mysterious divine events. Charles Jennens’ careful compilation of the texts (60% from the Old Testament) are perhaps more responsible for the enduring power of “Messiah” than the music itself. And this is why we will focus on some of these key texts. The music and texts form a narrative that portray God’s salvation through Jesus.

“Messiah” was not written for church worship; Handel’s creative life was in public performance. But Handel famously said, “I should be sorry if I only entertained them, I wish to make them better.” Jennens, as he compiled the texts, was also clearly motivated with a desire to hold up Jesus as the Messiah (Anointed One) for the increasing numbers of skeptics and scoffers in his day. Legend has it that Handel said after finishing the Hallelujah chorus that “I did think I did see all heaven before me, and the great God himself!”

Part I celebrates the birth of Christ, in prophecy, fulfillment, and thanksgiving. Part II tells of Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection and their significance. Part III is an affirmation of faith, based primarily upon events chronicled in the Book of Revelation, building into majestic praise. Over these next five Advent services (including Christmas Eve), we will focus on the texts from the five scenes of Part I and seek to become “better” by seeing the glory of God and his salvation in new ways.

Questions for family/small group discussions

Isaiah 40:1-5 – Comfort For My People

1. When you consider Jesus’ perspective in Matthew 9:36, what do you think he sees in the crowds of people gathered at a Meijer or Woodland or Rivertown Malls? What is God’s heart for the crowds? How does that contrast to what you typically see or think about when you are in the midst of the holiday crowds?

2. What does Isaiah 38 and 39 reveal about Hezekiah’s heart and source of security? How might your heart be revealed through Hezekiah? What do you perhaps most look to as an alternative source of security and confidence? What does 2 Kings 25 reveal about how God views misplaced trust?

Continued inside under the calendar...



Sunday, December 1, 2019 - 1st Sunday of Advent

WORSHIP SERVICE @ 10:00 a.m.

Prelude

Born to Die

Call to Worship

Joy to the World
Come Thou Long Expected
Come and Stand Amazed You People
What Child is This

Offering

O Come All Ye Faithful

Prayer & Message

“Comfort For My People”
Isaiah 40:1-5 (p. 599)
Rev. Tim Meendering

Communion

My One Comfort

Closing Blessing

Today, we begin an Advent series of five sermons based on the texts of Handel’s *Messiah*. We will learn to appreciate this oratorio but more importantly, we will be challenged, comforted, and changed by the powerful excerpts from God’s Word as they point to the coming Messiah. Our focus today will be on comfort for God’s people as it is featured in the first scene of the first part. See additional details on *Messiah* on the back of the bulletin.

Note: There is no KidLife Worship or Sunday School today. Nursery is available for kids K and under.

*** If you have children, they are welcome to remain with you throughout the service, or you can choose from different options:*

KidLife Worship (3 years - 3rd grade) - Check-in desk is in the Fellowship Hall, Room 100 (directly below the sanctuary). Kids may start service there, or go after our opening music in the sanctuary.
KidLife Nursery (0-3 years) - Room 241 (upper level of gym).
Parent-Infant Room - available near the back of the sanctuary for fussy children and nursing mothers.
Children’s bulletins and crayons are available near the lobby stairs.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Dec. 1	Dec. 2	Dec. 3	Dec. 4	Dec. 5	Dec. 6	Dec. 7
worship communion	Don't forget to pick up a tag for the Tree of Hope - items are due next week	men's prayer breakfast 7-8am, fellowship hall women's bible study 9:30-11am, room 212 <i>nehemiah</i>	adult fellowship noon family dinner 6pm kidlife club 6:30pm middle school yg 6:30pm adult classes 6:45pm <i>fireside, how people change rm 250, you'll get through this</i>	Lunch will be provided. Program by Al Valk to follow: Erie Canal Expedition.	REAL men 7am @ arnie's restaurant	single women's lunch 1pm @ Timbers Inn RSVP with Carol Knox 866-4845
Dec. 8	Dec. 9	Dec. 10	Dec. 11	Dec. 12	Dec. 13	Dec. 14
worship sunday school congregational mtg. 5pm high school youth group 6:30-8pm, adults invited tree of hope items due	Potluck: Main course (pulled pork) will be provided.	men's prayer breakfast 7-8am, fellowship hall women's bible study 9:30-11am, room 212 <i>nehemiah</i>	family dinner 6pm kidlife club 6:30pm middle school yg 6:30pm adult classes 6:45pm <i>fireside, how people change rm 250, you'll get through this</i>			
Dec. 15		Dec. 17	Dec. 18	Dec. 19	Dec. 20	Dec. 21
worship sunday school high school youth group 6:30-8pm	Care Groups 1/2: salads Care Groups 3/4: sides Care Groups 5/6: desserts	men's prayer breakfast 7-8am, fellowship hall women's bible study 9:30-11am, room 212 <i>nehemiah</i>	family dinner 6pm kidlife club Christmas program 6:45pm middle school yg 6:30pm		REAL men 7am @ arnie's restaurant rockford Christmas celebration 7-9pm	

More information on these activities can be found in our weekly **eBeacon** (printouts are available in the lobby and the back of the sanctuary). If you haven't singed up to receive this weekly email, contact the front office at connect@rockfordrc.org and ask to be put on the list.

QUICK INFO

Rockford Reformed Church
4890 11 Mile Road NE, Rockford, MI 49341
616-866-2308 • Office Hours: Mon-Thur 9am–2:30pm
RockfordRC.org • connect@rockfordrc.org

Online bulletin & sign-in: rockfordrc.org/sunday
Online giving: link is on our home page - rockfordrc.org
KidLife email check-in: rrc.check.in@gmail.com

Last week's attendance: 285
Last week's offering: \$12,968

ONLINE BULLETIN




ONLINE GIVING



...continued from the back

3. What does Isaiah 40:1-5 reveal about God's heart for his people as they struggle under the burden of sin, guilt, and deep anxiety? On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the worst, how would you rate your daily level of anxiety and worry and why? What do you most worry or get restless about?
4. How did John the Baptist fulfill Isaiah's prophecy in 40:3 (see John 1:21-23, Luke 3:3-8) and prepare the way for the Lord?
5. What does it mean to repent (See Luke 1:16-17)? What place does repentance have for your heart and life? What do you most confess and repent of? As you think about what you should repent of, ask a spouse, friend or family member, what is the one thing you can on me for—or not count on me for?
6. When you read Isaiah 40:5 and 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, how is God's glory revealed through Jesus and through us? What does this text in Corinthians say about what is foundational for our being deeply comforted so that we comfort others? How can you begin to see people as Jesus sees them and this week, take up a ministry of comfort—beginning with one person?

CONNECTION CARD

 **FOLD** and **TEAR** at perforation. Place in the offering plate or in a connection card drop box located at each sanctuary exit.

HELLO! We're glad you could join us today! Please sign in and let us know who is here (even if they are somewhere else in the building).

☐ Just checking in! **Name(s):**

NEW? First of all, welcome! Please tell us a little more about yourself, and make sure to get a welcome bag from the lobby before you leave today. If you need a little added encouragement to leave your information with us, here you go: for every first-time sign-in (with contact info), we donate \$5 to North Kent Connect! Also, the more we know, the better we can help get you connected.

Name: _____

Address: _____

His Phone: _____

Her Phone: _____

His Email: _____

Her Email: _____

Age group: ☐ teens ☐ 20s ☐ 30s ☐ 40s ☐ 50s ☐ 60+

Kids at home (name, birthdate, grade, m/f)

What brings you here today? _____