

# WELCOME TO THE 9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL YOUNG ARTISTS VOCAL COMPETITION

Saturday, October 24, 2020 \*

***PLEASE NOTE: Because of the uncertainty of our situation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are making plans for our competition, but will follow any health guidelines needed in October, including cancellation if necessary.***

The **Young Artists Vocal Competition** is sponsored by the Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus and is designed to encourage young singers of classical music through scholarships and the opportunity to perform solos as part of our 2020 live streamed hybrid Christmas performances of Handel's *Messiah*, thus helping to continue an outstanding choral tradition on the Mississippi Gulf Coast started 68 years ago by Dr. Glenn Draper. If you are a young singer, age 15 – 25 , we encourage you to participate in the competition.

The YAVC competition will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, October 24, 2020 in Ocean Springs, MS, at First Presbyterian Church (921 Ocean Avenue). Masks will be required except when singing. Social distancing is also necessary. Contestants will have the opportunity to vocalize and also rehearse with our talented accompanist, Guy Bowering, prior to the competition. There will be NO AUDIENCE allowed this year during the competition.

Dr. Paul McGahie, director of the Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus, will preside over the judging, awarding of scholarships and selection of the soloists for the Christmas 2020 *Messiah* performances. Judges for the event will provide written critiques of each performance. Contestants will participate in an interview with the judges prior to the audition. Top winning soloists will be selected to perform their solo with the orchestra on Saturday, December 5. (Rehearsal is Sunday, November 29).

If you are a voice teacher, music director, or know of outstanding young singers, please encourage them to participate in the Young Artists Vocal Competition. If you are a school counselor or involved in college financial aid, we hope you will share information about this scholarship opportunity with talented vocalists who are interested in vocal scholarships.

The YAVC is open to young singers, ages 15 – 25, who live along the Mississippi Gulf Coast in one of the southern six counties. The participant can be a resident of the area, working in the area, a student in the area, or someone who grew up in the area but is in school elsewhere. Also, any young person who has sung with the Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus in the past is eligible to participate in the YAVC, regardless of residency.

Due to COVID-19, the Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus board is making special arrangements for this season.

- First, plans are being formulated for a live-stream hybrid performance of *Messiah*. The performance will include live-streamed solos with orchestra, including the top winning soloists from the YAVC.
- Second, there will be no in-person rehearsals for the chorus. YAVC participants will instead be asked to join the chorus in a “virtual choir”. We plan to have some choruses presented virtually, each singer being responsible to learn and record their own part. See the Virtual Choir section of our website for more information and instructions.
- Third, some of the performance will consist of archival footage of previous performances of the Gulf Coast Messiah Chorus. More details will be available as decisions are made.

• Please join us in promoting this 68th season on the Mississippi Gulf Coast of Handel's glorious oratorio, *Messiah*! See the [messiahchorus.org](http://messiahchorus.org) website for updates.

*\* Due to COVID-19 virus precautions, the above information contains the plans of the GCMC as of September, 2020. Thanks for understanding this season is still a “work in progress”!*