

BAKER MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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PRESS RELEASE FROM BAKER MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

DATE: JANUARY 30, 2025

MOZART REQUIEM
“A Classic Concert For A Classic Building”
Sunday, March 16, 2025, 3 pm

The Chancel Choir of Baker Memorial United Methodist Church under the direction of Jeff Hunt with special guests the Metropolis Orchestra will perform the classic work “Mozart’s Requiem” at 3 pm, Sunday, March 16, 2025. The performance features local soloists: soprano Laura Johnson, alto Margaret Fox, tenor Bryan Kunstman, and bass Jess Koehn. The concert will serve as a kick-off fundraiser for a much-needed boiler for the beautiful classic building.

Suggested donation is \$20 per person. Donations can be made on the day of the concert or online at bakermemorialchurch.org. The concert will be performed in the gothic-designed sanctuary known for its wonderful acoustics and beautiful stained glass windows. It will be followed by a reception with refreshments and light desserts. The church is located at 307 Cedar Avenue with street and lot parking available.

“One of the most compelling aspects of W.A Mozart’s Requiem is the mystery surrounding its origin and completion,” notes Jeff Hunt, the Director of Music Ministries at Baker Memorial Church. Begun in either the spring or summer of 1791, the requiem would be written piece by piece alongside other works including two operas, a concerto and more which was true to Mozart’s compositional practice.

Upon his death in December of 1791, Mozart’s widow recruited student composer Franz Xaver Süssmayr to complete the masterful work. Hunt wonders “Had Mozart shared his vision for the Requiem in whole and even shared musical concepts with his student? We will never really know. My experience of preparing or conducting the Requiem nearly 10 times and conducting all of Mozart’s fifty seven sacred pieces tells me that I hear Mozart’s voice in all of the movements in this masterpiece.”

Located in the heart of St. Charles, the congregation welcomes residents of the entire Fox Valley to the performance and boiler fundraiser. Installed in the church basement, the 70 year old boiler

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SERVING CHRIST HERE, NEAR, & FAR AWAY

originally built by the Kewanee Boiler Corporation of Kewanee, IL, is “being held together by glue and prayer,” says the Rev. David Aslesen, the church’s pastor. Built in the early 1950’s through the philanthropy of Colonel Edward Baker, the church building serves as the meeting place and performance space for many community organizations and civic groups like St. Charles Singers, Illinois Brass Band, Chamber Music on the Fox, St. Charles North High School, Thompson Middle School, Pottawattamie Garden Club, Kiwanis, PEO and more.

Spots are limited. \$20 suggested donation per person as given through the church’s website or same day general admission is greatly appreciated. “The concert’s goal is \$10,000 for our new boiler fund,” quoting Aslesen, “which will provide warmth and comfort throughout the church building for generations to come.” Individual and organizational sponsorships of the concert are being accepted through March 9. For sponsorship information, donations and other information about the church go to www.bakermemorialchurch.org.