

First Congregational Church UCC
38 South Winooski Avenue.
Burlington, VT
www.firstchurchburlington.org
info@firstchurchburlington.org
802-862-5010



The Christmas Oratorio (Oratorio De Noël) Sunday December 11, 2022 - 10 a.m.

The entire community is invited to gather on Sunday December 11 at 10am when Camille Saint-Saëns' beautiful Christmas Oratorio will be featured at First Congregational Church UCC of Burlington.

First Congregational Church Director of Music [Amy Shortt](#) will conduct the Christmas Oratorio. Ms. Shortt, who also serves the University of Vermont as [University Organist and Affiliate Artist](#), moved to Vermont from North Carolina last winter to lead the music program at First Church.

The Christmas Oratorio will be highlighted by the First Church Sanctuary Choir and many gifted guest musicians (soloists and instrumentalists playing the harp, organ, violin, viola, and cello) from the music faculty of East Carolina University, the University of Vermont, and from the wider community of Vermont professional musicians as they come together to offer the Christmas Oratorio.

Composed by Camille Saint-Saëns as the *Oratorio de Noel* in a burst of creativity in the two weeks before Christmas in 1858, the Christmas Oratorio is a pastoral work, devotional and contemplative, evoking a world of innocence in telling of Christ's birth. The Christmas Oratorio uses the choir and soloists as characters and recitative (a form of song speech used to move along the plot) and aria.

Asked about the Christmas Oratorio, Amy Shortt says, *"I encourage you to allow this work to become a personal, intimate experience for you. As you listen, reflect upon what the texts are saying to you. What is your reaction to Christ's journey? Is it, like the shepherds, full of fear and doubt, or like Mary, full of patience and confidence, hope and praise? How can Christ's birth turn the questions and anxieties in our world today into a peaceful assurance that he hears our cries and what can we give in return?"*

All are invited to gather on Sunday December 11 at 10am at [First Congregational Church UCC of Burlington](#) to hear both an inspiring message for Advent from Lead Minister, [the Rev. Elissa Johnk](#) and what Amy Shortt describes as the "rustic charm" of Camille Saint-Saëns' Christmas Oratorio offered by the First Congregational Church Sanctuary Choir along with gifts of many guest musicians - soloists, strings, the harp and organ!

Camille Saint-Saëns

Christmas Oratorio (Oratorio De Noël)

Sunday December 11, 2022 - 10 a.m.

First Congregational Church Sanctuary Choir
Amy Shortt, Director of Music

East Carolina University Music Faculty Soloists:

Nicole Franklin, soprano
Jami Rhodes, mezzo-soprano
Lily Merchant, alto (student @ UVM)
James Taylor, tenor
John Kramar, baritone

Vermont Musicians:

Jane Kittredge, violin
Laura Markowitz, violin
Ana Ruesink, viola
John Dunlop, cello

Rebecca Kauffman, harp
Lennie Collins, continuo



38 South Winooski Avenue
Burlington, Vermont 05401
(802) 862 5010
www.firstchurchburlington.org