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## Classic Messiah

Furman University

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Alice Lloyd College in Pippa Passes, Ky. ■ In September, **Michael T. McClamroch** became president and chief executive officer of the East Tennessee Foundation, a \$60 million foundation that serves 24 counties. He previously served as chair of the Knox County Republican party and practiced law with Egerton, McAfee, Armistead & Davis in Knoxville. ■ **H. B. Mertz** is president of Renaissance Glassworks in Pittsburgh, Pa. ■ **Diane Jamison Owens** of Rockville, Md., is senior property manager in commercial real estate with CarrAmerica. ■ **Robin Southard** works at North Charleston (S.C.) High School, where she is in charge of special education, the bookroom and the school's new tutorial program, among other administrative duties. ■ **MARRIAGE:** **Peter Chesney** and Jana Laird, December 30, 2000. They live in Marietta, Ga., and he is employed as an account manager with the McKesson Corporation. ■ **BIRTHS:** Thom and **Jill Rankin Koenigs**, a daughter, Mary Devall, July 30, Columbia, S.C. Jill is a data analyst with Colonial Life and Accident Insurance Company. ■ Ira and **Saxon Gibson Reasons**, a son, Riley James, October 8, Evansville, Ind. Saxon recently completed a doctorate in education at the University of South Carolina and now works as the programming manager of instructional technology services at the University of Southern Indiana. ■ Benjamin and **Bonnie Barwick Sloan**, a daughter, Genevieve Claire, February 15, 2001, Decatur, Ga. ■ **Ken and Stephanie Mangels '90 Watson**, a son, Nicholas, December 2000, Kennesaw, Ga. Stephanie has received her master's degree in social work from Virginia Commonwealth University.

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#### Next reunion in 2003

**Joseph and Renee Patrick '89 Halisky** live in Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Joseph is a major in the U.S. Army and currently attends the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. ■ **Alston Hamilton**, formerly a lawyer in the



Rarely has the stage of McAlister Auditorium been host to so much alumni talent at one time. Taking a break backstage during intermission of the Christmas Oratorio are internationally acclaimed artists, from left, Daniel Washington, Karen Parks, Elizabeth Bishop and Tony Stevenson.

## Classic Messiah Alumni soloists highlight Christmas Oratorio

Furman's biennial presentation of Handel's *Messiah* took on added luster November 30 when four acclaimed alumni joined the Furman Singers, Symphony Orchestra and Men's and Women's Chorales in performance under the baton of William Thomas, music department chair.

The return of soprano Karen Parks '83, mezzo-soprano Elizabeth Bishop '89, tenor Tony Stevenson '91 and baritone Daniel Washington '76, all of whom have performed nationally and internationally, was a special treat for the local community and a showcase for the type of talent Furman develops and nurtures.

As *The Greenville News* pointed out, the concert was "more than a mere performance. There was a sense of occasion in the air, with almost every seat in McAlister Auditorium occupied." With strong support from the student choir and orchestra, the alumni certainly came through, delivering Handel's theatrical solo arias and recitatives with exceptional virtuosity.

A quick update on the activities of each soloist, all of whom presented master classes during their time on campus:

■ Karen Parks has received international recognition for her vocal versatility. Her resumé runs the gamut from classical to contemporary, from Broadway to jazz. A recipient of a prestigious Fulbright Fellowship for study at Italy's famed La Scala, she has recently performed Verdi's *Requiem*, Dvorak's *Te Deum* and Mahler's *Second Symphony* with the Fort Wayne Philharmonic. Having recently made her debuts at Carnegie Hall (Weill Hall) and with the Boston Pops, conducted by Keith Lockhart '81, she can be seen as Leona in the upcoming film *Dakar*.

■ Hailed by *Opera News* for her "gorgeous voice," Elizabeth Bishop, a 1993 national winner

of the Metropolitan Opera Auditions for Young Singers, excels in opera and oratorio, in music ranging from Baroque to contemporary. The *San Francisco Chronicle* described her singing as "luminous . . . with utter panache." Her schedule for the 2001-2002 season includes the title role in *Carmen* and Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* with The Washington Opera, the Landlady in *Sly* with the Metropolitan Opera, and performances with the Dallas Opera, the Oklahoma City Philharmonic and the Indianapolis Symphony.

■ After being named a national winner in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions for Young Singers in 1992, Tony Stevenson was invited to join the Met's Young Artist Development Program. He has sung more than 25 roles at the Met since making his debut in 1993, and this season he has roles in *La Traviata*, *Le Nozze Di Figaro*, *Idomeneo*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Mamelles de Tiresias*, *Sly* and *War and Peace*. He has also performed in Japan, Germany, Israel and France. In 2001, he completed the requirements for his Bachelor of Music degree at Furman — and marched at graduation.

■ A member of the music faculty at the University of Michigan since 1999, Daniel Washington also serves as the university's assistant dean for minority services. He has performed throughout the United States and Europe, having sung opera, oratorio and recitals in such prestigious venues as the Royal Opera House Covent Garden (London), Opernhaus (Zurich), Staatsoper (Hamburg), Alte Oper Frankfurt, Theater des Westens (Berlin), Teatro la Fenice (Venice), and most frequently at the Stadttheater in Luzern. He maintained a private voice teaching studio in Luzern from 1995 to 1998.