



The Messenger

Messenger Project Newsletter

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Messenger Notes



(L-R) Bobbi Maul, Mike Webb, Chris Doperalski, Steve Quinn, Joie and Lionel De Leon, Christine Heacox, Roger Swibold and Nick Meola at rehearsal.

The **Community Bible Church Choir** will premiere *You Are Worthy (Rev 5:9)* on Sunday, September 12th, with **Nick Meola** and **Lionel De Leon** on bass, **Steve Quinn** and **Mike Webb** on tenor, **Christine Heacox** and **Joie De Leon** on alto, **Bobbi Maul** and **Chris Doperalski** on soprano and **Roger Swibold** on piano. Bobbi Maul will direct from the choir. Roger Swibold is the choir director and Nick Meola is the sound engineer. Music is by Lionel De Leon, choir arrangement by Lionel and Joie De Leon. Lyrics are from the NIV Bible. Copies of the score are available at messengerproject.com.

Messenger tentatively will be performing *Emmanuel* for Community Bible Church's Christmas program on the evening of December 12th.

A Message From Joie De Leon

The first time I heard a Messenger CD, I became an ardent fan. And the more I heard, the more I was amazed at the gifted renditions of Scripture resonating from the discs. The rest of course, is history. I fell in love with Lionel, married him and more recently was voted in, both as a band member and a board member. It is a joy and a privilege to be a part of this project.

-Joie De Leon



Constantine the Great



Constantine I the Great (c. 280-337 A.D.) was the first Roman emperor to accept and profess Christianity. He initiated the evolution of the Roman empire into a Christian state, which paved the way for a distinctively Christian culture that has lasted to this day. Constantine devoted his life and his office to the spreading of Christianity.

Constantine became emperor in 312 A.D. In 313, Constantine and Licinius issued the Edict of Milan, which reads (in part):

When I, Constantine Augustus, as well as I, Licinius Augustus, fortunately met near Mediolanurn (Milan), and were considering everything that pertained to the public welfare and security, we thought, among other things which we saw would be for the good of many, those regulations pertaining to the reverence of the Divinity ought certainly to be made first, so that we might grant to the Christians and others full authority to observe that religion which each preferred...any one of these who wishes to observe Christian religion may do so freely and openly, without molestation.. we have also conceded to other religions the right of open and free observance of their worship for the sake of the peace of our times, that each one may have the free opportunity to worship as he pleases; this regulation is made we that we may not seem to detract from any dignity or any religion..

Throughout his life, Constantine credited his success to his conversion of Christianity and the support of the Christian God. Constantine felt it was his personal duty to remove error and propagate the true religion. He called together the Council of Nicea on the 20th anniversary of his reign. This council was where the Nicene Creed was spawned and Christian dogma began (in an effort to fight heresies that were rising up among the Churches, specifically over the divinity of Christ).

Constantine's mother, Helena, visited the Holy Land and located the spot where Jesus was crucified. Constantine built a basilica over the Holy Sepulchre. Constantine also built churches throughout his territory. The city of Constantinople was a predominantly Christian city (whose dedication was a Christian service).

Constantine's rise to power is closely associated with his conversion to Christianity. After his victory over Licinius in 324 A.D., Constantine wrote that he had come from the farthest shores of Britian as God's chosen instrument for the suppression of impiety (irreverence to God).

Eusebius of Caesarea was a bishop, historian and a friend of Constantine. Eusebius recorded Constantine's personal story of his miraculous conversion to Christianity. Like all emperors of his day, Constantine sought Divine assistance before battle. But rather than pray to a multitude of gods, he chose to pray to the God of his father. While in fervent prayer, he saw a miraculous sign in the sky. It was a cross of light above the sun with the inscription "conquer by this." That night in his dreams, Jesus Christ appeared to him with the same sign and commanded him to make a likeness of it as a safeguard against all his enemies.

The "sign" Constantine saw was the first two letters of Christ (*Christos* in Greek) using the Greek letter X (chi, the "ch" sound) intersected with the Greek letter P (ro, the "r" sound). It's called "chi-ro" and is also known as the labarum, or Constantine's cross.

Constantine considered himself the thirteenth Apostle, and in a way, he was. Constantine was baptized shortly before his death. When he died, he was buried at Constantinople in the Church of the Apostles, (whose memorials flank his tomb on both sides). He was a man who changed the world through God's will.