

The Kings Brass at Federated Church (Dec. 22)

By Kevin McLaughlin



The King's Brass celebrated Christmas in bright and merry fashion with their trademark — pop-tinged arrangements of Christmas carols, hymns, and sing-alongs — on Sunday, December 22, as part of the Federated Church Performing Arts Series in Chagrin Falls.

The ensemble has been led for 47 years by Tim Zimmerman, who was a genial host and fine trumpeter. The well-blended group of nine musicians — Tim Zimmerman, Gregory Alley, Anthony Sanders (trumpet), Kyle Davidson, Kolbe Schnoebelen (trombone), Nate Petersen (bass trombone), Jacob Fulkerson (tuba), Colton Morris (percussion), and Rebecca Edmiston (piano/organ) — acquitted themselves well under Zimmerman's leadership.

The arrangements, most of them by Zimmerman himself, suffered a little from sameness, but nevertheless supplied plenty of Holiday zip and opportunities for the brass to shine. Some highlights were the triumphant arrangement of Benedetto Marcello's *Psalm 19*, which served as a grand opening procession, "For Unto Us a Child is Born," from Handel's *Messiah*, featuring fancy piccolo trumpet work, lovely flugelhorn solos in "What Child Is This," and the antiphonal brass who played from the balcony in the back of the auditorium during "Angels We Have Heard on High."

The already Holiday-primed audience warmed to the group's onstage flair and fine musicianship. To every player's credit, each selection was memorized, including the choreography — an amalgam of Lawrence Welk-ian line dancing and vaudevillian shtick.

Keyboardist Rebecca Edmiston contributed her excellent skill on the electric and acoustic piano and church organ — the Marcello entry anthem was especially fine.

Spoken introductions, prominently by Zimmerman, helped personalize the band and gave a narrative line to the religiously-focused program. By turns, players delivered biblical text between nativity carols, giving a homespun, church revival quality to the performance.

The audience, who joined in on “The First Noel,” “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” and “Silent Night, Holy Night,” went home happy after the encore — Leroy Anderson’s *Sleigh Ride*.

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