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Published: Dec. 27, 2021 at 3:27 PM CST

Lake Charles, LA (KPLC) - The First United Methodist Church's choir worked with composer Joel Raney for their annual Christmas cantata, a gift they give to their congregation.

"Everyone has different gifts to bring. One of those gifts can be music," Interim Music Director MaryKate Core said.

"Peace," the heartbeat this world yearns for.

"The past two years have been rough on everybody, and I think we all need a little patience, we need a little peace in our hearts and I think this cantata really spoke to that for all of us," Core

Core said when she and choir director Emmie Gonsoulin decided which piece to take on, they both agreed the written cantata *Peace* by Joel Raney was something more than just a performance for the First United Methodist Church Chancel Choir.

"This one just kind of fit our collective mood right now, you know," Gonsoulin said. "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me, you know. So, it was a good one for this year."

The 19-piece orchestra, in addition to the choir, had been working on bringing that "peace" for over four months.

"Yeah, it's a lot of hard work but a lot of fun that we have here and a lot of people that really want to do it," Gonsoulin said.

As Gonsoulin explained, it's more than just music.

"It kind of connects it in a different way," Gonsoulin said. "It just brings it all together a little bit deeper."

"We take it piece by piece...more than the notes and the rhythms and the dynamics and all the musical things. We really do hone in on the message," Core said.

A message by song, of God's word and praises of worship.

"That's what we can do, and that's how we continue spreading the mission," Core said.

The Chancel Choir at First United Methodist is open for anyone to join, and meetings are held on Tuesday nights at 6 o'clock in the choir room.

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