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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **BACH AT NOON -ALLENTOWN SUMMER SERIES EXPANDED**

**The Bach Choir of Bethlehem is expanding its *Allentown Bach at Noon Series* to three concerts on second Tuesdays 12:10pm – 1:00pm – June 14, July 12, and August 9, 2016 at St. John's Lutheran Church 27 S. 5<sup>th</sup> St., Allentown.** Admission is FREE and there is no need for a reservation. A free-will offering will be received. *Doors open at 11:30am and people are encouraged to come early to be sure of a seat!* Parking is available in the parking deck at 6<sup>th</sup> and Walnut St. **For further information call The Bach Choir: 610-866-4382 Ext. 115 or Ext. 110 or visit the website [BACH.org](http://BACH.org).**

The inaugural Allentown Bach at Noon performances in June and July 2015 drew capacity crowds to St. John's Lutheran Church in downtown Allentown with audience members including downtown residents and business people as well as visitors from out of town. Leaders of the renaissance in Center City Allentown have responded enthusiastically to last year's concerts and to the planned expansion of the program. Bridget George, executive director noted that The Bach Choir is extremely grateful to the corporate sponsors who are helping make this gift to the community possible including the Rider-Pool Foundation, Air Products, City Center Investment Corp., Cross America Partners, Dunne Manning Inc., Alvin H. Butz, the Century Fund, and Norris McLaughlin & Marcus, P.A.

Each free 50 minute concert includes one choral and one instrumental work introduced by artistic director and conductor Greg Funfgeld with an engaging talk about the music to be performed.

### **ALLENTOWN BACH AT NOON SCHEDULE SUMMER 2016**

**Second Tuesdays 12:10pm – 1:00pm, St. John's Lutheran Church, 37 S. 5<sup>th</sup> St. Allentown**

#### **Tuesday June 14**

The festive opening concert features members of The Bach Choir performing with Philadelphia Brass, additional brass and percussion, and Tom Goeman, organist. The program opens with a chorale from Bach's Cantata 130 *Herr Gott, dich loben alle wir* (Lord God, we praise thee ev'ry one) followed by the one-movement Cantata 118, *O Jesu Christ, mein Lebens Licht*, (O Jesus Christ, my life and light.) Philadelphia Brass offers musical selections from Bach and Vivaldi and there is a reprise of the Motet BWV 230 – *Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden* (Praise the Lord, all ye nations) from the Family Concert-Youth Choirs Festival with singers from The Bach Choir again joined by singers from four youth choirs – The Bel Canto Children's Chorus of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem; Berks Youth Chorus; the Charter Arts Touring Choir; and the Nazareth Area High School Chorale. The program ends with the wonderful Vaughn Williams setting of the *Old Hundredth Psalm Tune*, which will raise the roof with brass, percussion, the beautiful St. John's organ, and audience members joining the choirs in singing this famous hymn.

#### **Tuesday, July 12**

The program features one of Bach's best beloved cantatas BWV 140 *Wachet Auf!* (Sleepers Wake) with members of The Bach Choir and Bach Festival Orchestra joined by soloists Rosa Lamoreaux, soprano and Steven Combs. Also featured is the virtuoso young pianist Kristina Moditch playing two preludes and fugues by Bach and the Pathetique Sonata of Ludwig van Beethoven.

## **Tuesday, August 9**

The summer series ends on a light hearted note with Bach's *Coffee Cantata* BWV 211 including soloists Leslie Johnson and Bran Ming Chu, and *The True Story of Cinderella*, written by Warren Martin (1916-1982, a Westminster Choir College graduate and faculty member for the annual May Day Celebration.

## **About The Bach Choir of Bethlehem**

The oldest American Bach Choir, The Bach Choir of Bethlehem gave the first complete American performances of Bach's *Mass in B Minor* in 1900 and *Christmas Oratorio* in 1901. Since its founding in 1898, the now-famous Choir has been attracting thousands of visitors from across the United States and beyond to the annual Bethlehem Bach Festival in Pennsylvania. Since 1983, under Greg Funfgeld's direction, the 100 dedicated volunteer singers of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, performing with the Bach Festival Orchestra and distinguished soloists, have received international acclaim. Venues have included the Herkulesaal at Munich's Royal Residence and the Thomaskirche, Bach's church in Leipzig, as part of the 1995 Germany tour; The Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall as part of The Choir's Centennial Celebration in 1998–2000; the BBC Proms in London's Royal Albert Hall as part of an eight-concert tour of the United Kingdom in 2003; and Severance Hall, Cleveland for the 75th anniversary of the Baldwin-Wallace Bach Festival in 2007. In September 2011, The Bach Choir represented the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in a 10th anniversary musical observance of 9/11 in New York City, giving concerts in Saint Paul's Chapel and Trinity Church, Wall Street. In 2013, The Choir performed Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at Strathmore in the Washington D.C. area, and in 2014, the new opera *Young Meister Bach* for the 250th anniversary of the German Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The Choir has released nine recordings on the Dorian and Analekta labels including most recently *Saint John Passion* (2012) and *A Child's Christmas in Bethlehem* (2013). The Choir has been featured on National Public Radio's *Performance Today* and *Prairie Home Companion*, Deutsche Radio, the BBC World Service, CBS Sunday Morning, and the Emmy award-winning PBS documentary on The Choir, *Make a Joyful Noise*. The Choir has been recognized for its outstanding educational outreach programs (*Bach at Noon*, *Bach to School*, and interdisciplinary Family Concerts) by annual awards from the National Endowment for the Arts (2011-2015). The J.S. Bach Foundation in Switzerland named The Bach Choir of Bethlehem as the first American recipient of its annual award to a single Bach organization, recognizing The Bach Choir's outstanding work in Bach performance and education for young people (2012). *Mr. Bach Comes to Call*, a film based on the acclaimed Classical Kids CD, was co-produced by The Bach Choir of Bethlehem and is distributed internationally by The Children's Group. In January 2016, The Bach Choir and Bel Canto Children's Chorus launched an historic alliance between the two organizations and Bel Canto moved its operational center to the Lehigh Valley with administrative and artistic support provided by The Bach Choir. Both organizations were looking to increase their impact in training the next generation of choral singers and encouraging a life-long commitment to the choral art.

**For more information visit The Bach Choir's web site – [BACH.org](http://BACH.org).**

**For tickets and further information: [BACH.org](http://BACH.org), 610-866-4382 Ext. 110 or 115**