

Bach Choir of Bethlehem cancels annual Bach Festival due to coronavirus pandemic

By [Craig Larimer](#)

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The Bach Choir performs at Packer Memorial Church at Bethlehem Bach Festival.(BACH CHOIR/CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

All performances of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem's annual Bach Festival have been canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic, organizers announced Friday. The festival, a Bethlehem spring tradition, produces two weekends of a Bach concerts. The Bach Choir is completing its 122nd season and typically presents more than 40 concerts and educational programs for an audience of more than 22,000 from across the country and around the world.

This would have been the 113th season of the Bach Festival — performances were planned between May 8 and 17.

“As we have all experienced, music is a transformative experience. The bonds it creates, the memories it evokes, the traditions it builds: each one remarkable and treasured,” festival organizers noted in a news release. “While we are unable to share these experiences with our festival audience this season, we look forward to the days when we will once again forge connections through music and embark on those beautiful journeys together.”

Bach Choir of Bethlehem Conductor Greg Funfgeld added, “Preparation for this festival has been going on for a couple of years. While it is incredibly sad to cancel these much-anticipated concerts, the safety of all our musicians and devoted audience members is our primary concern. How blessed we have been over so many years to share such glorious music and to enjoy the incredible community of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem and its worldwide extended family. This is a temporary interruption, and Bach At Noon and all of our concerts will resume as soon as it is wise to do so.”

The Choir is planning to reschedule some canceled concerts by adding them to next season’s dates including:

- **Handel’s Messiah, Part Two** and additional repertoire will be performed at the Spring Concert on Sunday, March 21, 2021.
- **The Chaconne Project**, featuring music of young composers — based on Bach’s Chaconne. This will feature The Choir’s 2020 artist-in-residence, guitarist Eliot Fisk, and will be scheduled as a Bach at Noon Concert.
- **Young American Singers** Competition Finals — the date is to be determined.

Organizers say ticket purchasers may choose to donate the value of their ticket(s) as a tax-deductible contribution and a portion will help The Choir support to members of The Bach Festival Orchestra for their loss of income. Customers may also request a voucher good for future Bach Choir Concerts in the upcoming season.

For more info, contact Renée James, marketing director, 610-866-4382, ext.

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