

REFLECTIONS FROM BRIDGET GEORGE

As She Edits Her Last Issue of *Bach Choir News* (1997–2021)



The golden eve is all astir,
And tides of sunset flood on us
– Incredible, miraculous –
We look with adoration on
Beauty coming, beauty gone,
That waits not any looking on.

– from James Stephens
“Theme and Variations”

Dear Friends:

People often talk about wanting to fade into the sunset when they retire, but James Stephens’ poem goes on to talk about all that is streaming, teeming, and dreaming in the sunset and makes me think of how you, my Bach Choir Family, will still be with me, and I with you, in the “Beauty coming, beauty gone.”

The Bach Choir journey has been a huge and transformative part of my life and here are just a few highlights that attempt to paint a picture of the treasured relationships that mean so much to me.

It all begins with Choir rehearsals: Greg allows me the precious privilege of singing with The Choir at Monday night rehearsals and I have missed only a handful of rehearsals in my 24-year tenure. This experience informs and inspires all the rest of my work! I wrote in 2007 about how under Greg’s leadership, “the joy of music-making fills the room and measure by measure Bach becomes our soul’s teacher.” None of this has changed, even with the anguish for me and all my Choir singer colleagues while the discipline and revelation of these collective Monday nights has been absent during the pandemic.

The unforgettable UK Tour: In 2003, we embarked on a triumphant UK Tour, including performances for Kings College

Cambridge, Usher Hall Edinburgh, and the BBC Proms at London’s Royal Albert Hall. As part of leading this tour, I was in charge of the Orchestra and Soloists Bus. Through all the gorgeous, fun, and “nightmare” moments of traveling with six buses of choir, orchestra, soloists and tagalongs around England and Scotland, I forged wonderful friend-

ships that have continued through all the subsequent musical adventures we have been part of together.

Heckewelder House: I have worked under three board presidents during my tenure – Jack Jordan, David Beckwith, and Hal Black, and with two former presidents as board members – Tom Church and Jan Bonge. One of the events that most impressed upon me the brilliant efficacy of our leadership triad (board president, artistic director, and executive director) was the speed with which we jumped on the opportunity to move to the beautiful 1810 Heckewelder House in 2011. This was during dear David Beckwith’s presidency, but the whole board and staff played crucial roles in making our first public home a reality. Now the house hums not only with all the staff activity but with bountiful music in the parlor. During the pandemic, even the charming garden and great upper porch have hosted outside rehearsals of small groups of Bach Choir singers and our Bel Canto Youth Chorus. I love to look out at the Central Moravian Church steeple half a block away, home to the very beginnings of The Bach Choir in 1898. And I love to hear Heckewelder House sing!!



Bach at Noon: One of my greatest enjoyments is our *Bach at Noon* Concert series in Bethlehem and Allentown, which has helped new audiences to discover Bach’s music and our loyal followers to appreciate Greg’s introductions, insights, and masterful programming. I think I am the only person besides Greg who has attended every single *Bach at Noon* (although our amazing friend Jim Barnes has come very close!) This has included live attendance at all the recording sessions for our virtual *Bach at Noon* Concerts during the pandemic. The amazing expansion of our audience through these virtual offerings is made possible through the great generosity of our Guarantors as well as other donors and sponsors. How thankful we are to these dear friends! (Please turn to page 3.)

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Dear Friends:



IN THIS EDITION OF BACH CHOIR NEWS, you can read about our “modified” Festival, held on one weekend in May this year. I hope you will join us for all of the events – four truly wonderful opportunities to hear music you love and learn more about J.S. Bach, a composer you cherish.

So many of our Guarantors, audience members, and singers in The Choir have expressed their sadness at not hearing or singing the *Mass* during the pandemic. This got me thinking about the live-streamed concert we will offer on Saturday evening, May 15. The four Cantatas to be performed include music you will recognize, music you know and love – music that Bach used in his monumental *Mass in B Minor*. As he was assembling the *Mass*, Bach returned to works he had written much earlier in his life – including Cantatas 12, 120, 171, and 191. The chorus in Cantata 12 would become the “Crucifixus” in the *Mass*; the chorus in Cantata 120 became the “Et Expecto”; the chorus in Cantata 171 became the “Patrem Omnipotentem;” and the three movements of Cantata 191 all found a new home in the “Gloria” from the *Mass*. All of these transformations worked out brilliantly. Plan now to read Katherine Kaiser’s illuminating notes in the Festival Program and online to learn more. In addition to these beloved choruses, there are stunning arias to be sung by our star-studded quartet of singers – soprano Sherezade Panthaki; mezzo-soprano Meg Bragle; tenor Lawrence Jones; and bass-baritone Dashon Burton. It’s a musical feast, a banquet of delights – don’t miss it!

To prepare for this concert, I am offering more than 55 one-hour rehearsals with up to 10 singers at a time – socially distanced and masked. The singers and I are LOVING this time – it’s fabulous

to be singing TOGETHER again. The music is challenging, thrilling, uplifting! The experience of community at the heart of making music *together* nourishes our hearts and minds. We feel blessed and excited, and can’t wait to share all of this with YOU!

Finally, you will read a great deal about Bridget George’s imminent retirement; the announcement of her successor, Leela Breithaupt; and the delay of my retirement and decision that I will continue to serve as your Artistic Director and Conductor for one more year. I am looking forward to working with Leela – she is a worthy successor to Bridget and will be a much-loved and admired colleague – you will enjoy getting to know her! I am honored to serve for one more year and will be eager to support my successor, who, with Leela, will lead The Bach Choir into a glorious future.

I look forward to celebrating Bridget and all that she has accomplished in her 24-year tenure as our Executive Director. Bridget has been the most wonderful colleague, a partner in the deepest and most profoundly wonderful sense of that word. Bridget and I have worked closely on projects that have brought us tremendous joy and satisfaction and enriched the musical offerings of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem. Bridget has blessed my life and the lives of everyone in our Bach Choir Family. She has given us gifts we will treasure forever. Her life and work among us will never be forgotten. I look forward to the opportunities we will have to celebrate Bridget and give her the kind of send-off she richly deserves – with love and laughter, commendation and congratulations, gratitude and love.

Ever grateful,

Greg Funfgeld, Artistic Director & Conductor

Dear Friends:



I WAS TRYING TO REMEMBER WHEN I first met Bridget George. It is like trying to remember when you first noticed the wind, or rain, or some other great force of nature sweeping you along. The occasion was when she recruited me to be on the board of Touchstone Theatre, the small, professional theater founded by Bridget, her husband Bill and two friends. I was recruited to be the “suit” on the board, a representative of a large corporation that, hopefully, could donate lots of funds. Thus began a relationship spanning perhaps 35 years during which I have remained in awe of Bridget’s complete and utter commitment to her mission of the moment. The Bach Choir has been extraordinarily blessed that it has been her mission these last 24 years.

Bridget’s partnership with Greg Funfgeld has to be one of the most productive blendings of the artistic and the administrative that I have ever seen. And the true beauty of it is that each has found a way to support the other in their combined mission, Greg providing extraordinary organizational skills in rehearsing and presenting the art, Bridget contributing creative sparks and

direction along the way. Her writing and editing skills were on display with the book *Dear Mr. Funfgeld*, and most marvelously her work with Doug Roysdon on his script and vision for *The Nightingale*. Last year’s *Noah’s Flood* perhaps showed Greg and Bridget’s partnership at its best, filling Packer Chapel with a collaboration of so many groups that we lost count.

Bridget’s retirement is well-earned, and I wish her and Bill and their multigenerational family many happy years at the family compound, Little Pond.

And I see that Bridget has reserved for herself the honor of introducing our next Executive Director, Leela Breithaupt, elsewhere in this newsletter. That is only fitting. The Board conducted a thorough search for an Executive Director and enthusiastically selected Leela, but with the advice and counsel of our long-serving and esteemed leader, Bridget. Bridget’s very visible commitment to the continuity and future success of The Choir inspires and comforts us all.

Sincerely,

Harold G. Black, President

REFLECTIONS cont.

Creative Collaborations: What an immense joy it has been to partner with Greg in initiating the many creative collaborations over the years that have widened our artistic circle and community engagement – most recently *A Joyful Noise*, *Noah’s Flood*, *A Virtual Christmas Concert* and *Bach, Bikes & Basketball*. I am profoundly touched and pleased that a “Creative and Media Collaborations Fund” is being created in my honor to help complete our Giving Bach Campaign.

Festival – I miss you: As we approach my favorite Festival time of year, let me just say how much I will miss all of you whom I was hoping to see in-person this year and how grateful I am to all the Festival audience members from around the country I have grown to know and love. Please promise me to tune in to our Virtual Festival!!!

A Great shout out of thanks to President Hal Black, and the entire board and staff for the brilliant way they are leading The Choir not only through the challenges of the pandemic but simultaneously through our leadership transition. I must mention our fabulous staff by name because without their creative imagination and devoted support, we could not have made the advances we have made during this time. THANK YOU – Cheryl Dungan, Renée James, Joy Hirokawa, Silagh White, Claudia Carroll, Mike DeCrosta, Sophia Verbiscar, Janie Kolb Florenz, and our graphic designer Anne Schauer.

Little Pond: A huge thank you to my wonderful, loving husband Bill, who has kept me sane through it all, and worked alongside me as our excellent chief videographer and film editor, including

hosting The Choir to sing for Christmas in our “Cathedral in the Woods.” We look forward to more relaxed time at Little Pond and more time with our children Sam & Carrie; Anisa & Dan; and three amazing grandchildren – Emma, Ruya, and Rowan.

Most of all and from the bottom of my heart, eternal thanks to Greg Funfgeld for his extraordinary and inspiring vision and artistry, and the warmth, generosity, and creative fun of his partnership. And blessings to our great family of artists for the sunset and sunrise of “Beauty coming, beauty gone.”

With love,

Bridget George, Executive Director

GREG FUNFGELD EXTENDS HIS TENURE by Bridget George A Celebratory Final Season 2021–2022

IT IS CHARACTERISTIC OF GREG’S COMPASSION, GENEROSITY, AND DEEP CARE for his Choir and all those involved in The Bach Choir organization that he made the difficult decision to delay his retirement for one more year and lead us through what we all hope, with great optimism, will be a post-pandemic renaissance!

Greg showed stoic patience throughout the uncertainty of the past year as he pondered the right time for this decision amidst successive cancellations of *Bach at Noon* concerts, our Christmas Concerts, *Bach to School*, Family Concert, two Spring Concerts, two Festivals, and our European Tour. Greg was also sensitive to and understanding of the need articulated by Hal Black and Larry Lipkis, co-chairs of the Artistic Director Search Committee. We needed to postpone the auditions of our five finalists for the position until The Choir and Orchestra could be back together and prepared for their investment in these all-important auditions.

With joyful enthusiasm and plain hard work, Greg *pivoted to launching the creation of soul restoring virtual offerings to replace Bach at Noon*, the Christmas Concert, and the 2021 *Bach to School/Family Concert*



Hub Willson

and Festival. He also poured love and thoughtfulness into the weekly *Moments of Comfort* that connected us with our Bach Choir Family near and far.

Now we can look forward to Greg’s beautiful vision for his celebratory final Concert Season as originally planned. We hope for record-breaking audiences for each wonderful concert, culminating in a very special Gala event just two weeks before the climax of Greg’s final Festival with the *Saint Matthew Passion* and *Mass in B Minor* you have all been waiting for.

SEASON AT A GLANCE 2021–2022

Allentown Bach at Noon – 2021

Saint John’s Lutheran Church, Allentown PA
Second Tuesdays, 12:10–1:00pm – June 8, July 13, August 10, 2021

Bethlehem Bach at Noon 2021–2022

Central Moravian Church,
Historic Downtown Bethlehem, PA
Second Tuesdays, 12:10–1:00pm
2021 – September 14, October 12, November 9
2022 – January 11, February 8, March 8, April 12

Christmas Concerts –

Bach Christmas Oratorio Parts 1, 2 & 3

Saturday December 11, 2021 at 8pm
– First Presbyterian Church of Allentown
Sunday December 12, 2021 at 4pm
– First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem

Greg Funfgeld Family Concert – Dancing with Bach

Sunday February 27, 2022 – 3pm
A Bach Choir collaboration with the Dance
Department of Lehigh Valley Charter High School
for the Performing Arts

**Spring Concert –
Durufle Requiem, Handel Messiah Part Two,**
Sunday March 27, 2022 at 4pm.
First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem

GALA CONCERT – SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday April 30, 2022 at 8pm
Central Moravian Church

114th BACH FESTIVAL

May 13–14 & May 20–21, 2022
Greg’s Final Festival includes:
Bach – *Saint Matthew Passion* & *Mass in B Minor*
Eliot Fisk as Festival Artist-in-Residence

A VIRTUAL 113th Bach Festival by Renée James

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I listened to the *Brandenburg Concertos* through my earbuds while on a run, and wondered: What would J.S. Bach think? Or more appropriately – which part would be the most confounding? That his music was heard and appreciated some 300 years after his death? That it was “recorded” and then accessed as a “file?” That tiny little devices delivered symphonic sound? Maybe just the idea that in the 21st century, people “run” – on purpose.

And what might he think of our beloved Bethlehem Bach Festival returning this year – virtually? We aren’t gathering and we’re unable to present the music to the enthusiastic and appreciative audience that attends the Festival; that’s a sadness for us. But he’d be pleased that we are sharing the experience in a different way, letting his music provide what it always has – comfort, joy, refreshment and renewal – just a little bit differently this year.

Our audience is resilient and resourceful – thank you! – and we know many of you will access and view our Festival with great joy. While it is one weekend only – May 14 and 15 – with just four events scheduled, The Choir and Orchestra members, along with our soloists, are rehearsing with enormous enthusiasm and looking forward to the live-streaming to come. We’re grateful for our technical partners, WFMZ.com, who will produce the programs and offer the online platform for viewing. They will also promote the Festival to their web visitors as well, which will introduce Bach’s music and the Festival to many new people!

Registration is free to all; with contributions of support always welcome. The best place to get the latest information on the Festival is the website: bach.org/tickets. You can also call The Choir office and speak to Mike (ext. 110) or Renée (ext. 115) if you have any questions about registration or viewing the Festival. For now, please mark your calendar for these events and join us!

BACH, Bikes & Basketball by Renée James

COMBINE THE ENERGY AND ENTHUSIASM of our *Bach to School* assemblies with the creativity and collaboration of the Greg Funfgeld Family Concerts. Add a few bikes, basketballs, and some breathtaking dancers. Blend with Choir, Orchestra, soloists and talented young musicians, all offering the glorious music of J.S. Bach. The result? *Bach, Bikes and Basketball*, a new film narrated and hosted by Greg Funfgeld, produced as part of our educational and community outreach this season.

Each year, we present *Bach to School* in-person to music teachers and students in the Lehigh Valley and adjacent communities. It includes captivating performances from Choir and Orchestra members, age-appropriate lessons for students from primary grades through high school, and an activity book for younger students. Covid restrictions meant we could not visit schools this season, so we created an online program for teachers, students, and their families, offering a refreshed program they would find engaging, lively and informative.



Friday, May 14

4pm • The Barnette Distinguished Scholar Lecture
Peter Wollny, Director of the Bach Archiv Leipzig

7:30pm • Ifor Jones Chamber Music Concert

- Paul Taylor Dance Company, Artist-in-Residence: *Brandenburgs* Opus 88
- J.S. Bach Flute Sonata: Robin Kani, flute; Greg Funfgeld, harpsichord
- Paul Taylor Dance Company: *Esplanade* Opus 61

Saturday, May 15

4pm • Chamber Music: A program of Bach, Handel & Vivaldi

- J.S. Bach *Second Suite for Unaccompanied Cello*, BWV 1008 – Paul Miller, viola
- Georg Frideric Handel • *Sonata in A Major*, Opus 1, Nr. 3 – Paul Miller, viola • Greg Funfgeld, harpsichord
- Antonio Vivaldi • *The Four Seasons* – Elizabeth Field, violin
Claire Bright & Linda Kistler, violins; Uri Wassertzug, viola;
Loretta O’Sullivan, cello; Stephen Groat, string bass;
Charlotte Mattax Moersch, harpsichord

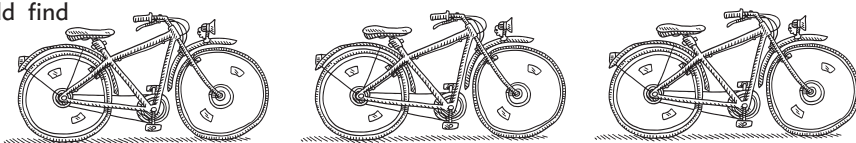
7:30pm • Blessings & Benediction: Four Bach Cantatas

- Cantata 12 *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen* • Cantata 120 *Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille* • Cantata 171 *Gott, wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm* • Cantata 191 *Gloria in excelsis Deo*
– Sherezade Panthaki, soprano; Meg Bragle, mezzo-soprano;
Lawrence Jones, tenor; Dashon Burton, bass-baritone

After sharing the link with music teachers in March, we premiered the film to the public in April on our YouTube channel, and followed that up with a Facebook premiere. Greg hoped to “engage the minds of these precious children” and our initial feedback indicates that we did just that! We received so many wonderful emails and calls – here’s just a bit of one from Guarantor Phyllis Gibson:

“I just watched the premiere of Bach, Bikes and Basketball... I LOVED it! Brava and mega congratulations to the entire team that put this film together! I thoroughly enjoy Greg’s explanations of each piece...his commentary adds a uniquely-special level of engagement... it was truly wonderful from start to finish!”

Please visit The Choir’s YouTube channel or facebook page and enjoy this creative and insightful look into Bach’s life and his music. And please share it with the children in your life!



Announcing Leela Breithaupt – BRIDGET’S SUCCESSOR AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR by Bridget George



Kim Robertson Photography

IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE to announce that our Board of Managers has approved the decision that Leela Breithaupt will be The Bach Choir of Bethlehem’s next Executive Director. A national search was orchestrated by President Hal Black, a search committee made up of board and Choir members chaired by Patty Alercia, and Executive Search Company Genovese Vanderhoof and Associates. Greg Funfgeld as

well as all staff and board members got to meet Leela on Zoom and some of us met her and her family in person on a recent visit to Bethlehem. We were all impressed by Leela’s strong grasp of the mission and culture of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, delighted by the warmth of her personality, and couldn’t be happier that she will be joining us as Executive Director on July 1, 2021. Leela will be introducing herself to you as the editor of *Bach Choir News* in the fall edition.

Leela Breithaupt trained as a flautist earning Bachelor and Master of Music degrees, Major in Flute Performance, from the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University and

a Konzertexamen (Artist Diploma) from the Berlin University of the Arts in Berlin, Germany. For 14 years she performed internationally playing both modern and baroque flute with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the New York Baroque, The Bach Society of Minnesota, and at many international festivals. Ms. Breithaupt founded the baroque ensemble *Les Ordinaires*, serving as executive producer for five CD’s and four concert seasons including budgeting, grant writing, fund-raising, operations, festival management, and marketing.

Ms. Breithaupt is deeply familiar with the music of Bach and the German culture. Having lived and worked in Germany regularly for the past 25 years, she is a near-native German speaker and retains connections with the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, Leipzig Barockorchester, and the Munich Office of Tourism.

As a volunteer, Ms. Breithaupt has served on the board and committees for the Indianapolis International Baroque Competition, the Bloomington Early Music Festival, and Indy Baroque Music. At Indy Baroque, she served for four years, first as Interim Executive Director, and then as CEO and President of the Board.

Becoming more immersed in arts administration, Ms. Breithaupt earned an MBA at the Indiana University Kelly School of Business in May 2020. She is currently Vice President of Business Development and Partnerships at E2E Advising, an educational software company.

Bel Canto by Joy Hirokawa

STAND UP

SINGING THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

BEL CANTO HAS BEEN HARD AT WORK on their spring curriculum, *Stand Up: Singing the Underground Railroad*. Using traditional spirituals as well as music by contemporary African American composers and artists, the *Stand Up* curriculum focuses on music that tells the story of the Underground Railroad. It tells a story of Survival. Endurance. Strength. Resilience. Dignity. Bravery. Hope...qualities that inspire us and that we all need in this confusing world.

Through music, storytelling, and dialogue, this program:

- develops understanding of the story of enslaved people escaping to freedom on the Underground Railroad in the mid- 19th century;
- provides historical musical context for the story of the Underground Railroad;
- connects the story of enslaved people to contemporary issues of race and equity;
- encourages greater self-awareness regarding issues of race and equity, leading to greater understanding of our communities and our world;
- features repertoire written or arranged almost exclusively by African-American composers.

As the UGRR passed through our geographic area, choristers



On rehearsal break the choristers talk about the journey of the music and the story. “It’s absolutely incredible and moving. Each song builds on the next. I can’t wait to be able to put it all together” – Skye

are connecting to our local role in the UGRR, visiting area historic sites and walking a short stretch of the path the UGRR generally traversed (as Covid precautions allow). All materials and teaching strategies are tailored to be age appropriate. Guest artists Camille Armstrong, Craig Thatcher, and Dashon Burton perform on the program and Camille is providing coaching assistance for more authentic performance. Readings and Bach Chorales set the stage for each of four sections of the program, which traces the journey from enslavement to freedom. The program will be presented in video format, making it available to a wide audience, and will premiere online in late June. Curricular materials are being developed to support music and social studies educators. We hope you join us for the premiere!

THANK YOU! by Cheryl Dungan
Our Guarantors & Sponsors

*“No winter lasts forever...
 no spring skips its turn.” – Hal Borland*

WITH THE COMING OF SPRING AFTER A LONG “WINTER,” we begin to see a path that will lead to our return to live performances later this year. In the meantime, we have been keeping busy. We are grateful for your expressions of appreciation and for your tremendous support of our musical offerings and initiatives this season. Your gifts make it possible for us to provide access to our music for an increasingly broad audience.

Our Virtual Christmas Concert in December was a tremendous success, with viewers hailing from across the United States and 14 countries. This program featured members of The Bach Choir singing together safely outdoors, acclaimed soloists, Bach Festival Orchestra musicians, and our Bel Canto Youth Chorus.

Bach, Bikes, and Basketball, a new youth education video was a true labor of love for The Choir and a wonderful enhancement to our live *Bach to School* program. Thanks to our sponsors and individual donors, including members of The Bach Choir, for providing the extra funding required to distribute packets of educational materials to public school students.

A first for The Bach Choir, the virtual 113th Bach Festival promises to be the next best thing to being here. We are sorry that we will have to wait another year to greet you here in Bethlehem for Festival, but we hope you will register to watch online, and we welcome your support of this celebration!

Guarantors: A valued tradition for more than a century, our Guarantors are among our most loyal patrons and provide us with a solid base of annual funding to sustain The Bach Choir. This year, Guarantor donations have been instrumental in providing for our ongoing efforts to share Bach’s music through recorded programs like our *Moments of Comfort* and *Bach at Noon* concerts. As we make the necessary arrangements for our singers to return to live performances safely in the months ahead, Guarantor contributions will be essential to continuing The Choir’s legacy of musical excellence. We are indebted to our family of Guarantors for their dedicated support of our mission and legacy.

Our Bach at Noon Challenge Donors: The response to our virtual Bach at Noon concert series has been inspiring and validating! Each month, we have been pleased to receive a special *Bach at Noon* contribution, which is offered as a matching gift challenge to encourage additional support. We are so thankful for these gifts, which offset some of the expenses associated with our recorded *Bach at Noon* programs.

Thank you to these Challenge Gift donors since our last newsletter, and to all who helped us achieve the goal each month:

November • Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Thomas

January • Bonnie Gardner; Bobbi Kaesemeyer Brown



Hub Willson



Hub Willson



February • Sandra Deiter

“A contribution to The Bach Choir of Bethlehem is an investment in the future of Johann Sebastian Bach’s musical legacy – so please join me with your contribution to assure that Bach’s music will continue to be heard for generations to come.” – Guarantor Sandra Deiter

March • Marie Gardner-Zoellner

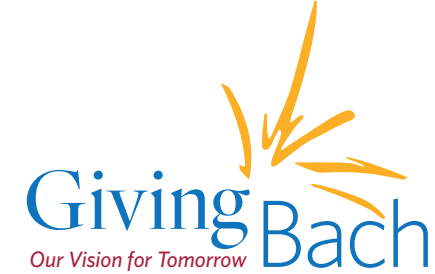
“At times, the music brings me to tears...each note is like a raindrop from heaven, nourishing my soul.” – Guarantor Marie Gardner-Zoellner

April • Dr. David & Carol Beckwith

June • Ms. Helen Tilgner

Please contact the Development Office to sponsor a *Bach at Noon* challenge gift, or to learn how you can support The Bach Choir through a one-time donation, planned gift, transfer of appreciated stock or securities or through an IRA distribution. A full listing of our Guarantors, individual donors, and season program sponsors will be posted on Bach.org, in June 2021.

To date, we have received over 80% of the yearly funds pledged by our loyal sustaining members! If you have yet to satisfy your 2020-2021 pledge, please do so before the end of June 2021. If you can, please consider fulfilling your 2021-2022 pledge ahead of the new season or increase the amount of your annual gift-it will make a big difference for The Choir!



A “Fitting Finale!” by Cheryl Dungan

We are pleased to share that we have reached 95% of our Giving Bach campaign goal-but we need your help to bring this campaign to a successful close by June 30, 2021!

We envisioned our Giving Bach Campaign more than two years ago to celebrate the great legacy of The Bach Choir under our current leaders and to put a firm foundation under our vision for the future under new leadership. The relevance of this campaign came into full focus this past year and remains essential as we move forward and navigate the challenges of the post-pandemic world.

Bringing this campaign to a successful close will be a “fitting finale” to mark the June 2021 retirement of our dedicated and visionary Executive Director Bridget George, who has worked tirelessly for more than two decades to secure the future of The Bach Choir. Gifts to this campaign also ensure that Greg Funfgeld’s final season as Artistic Director and Conductor will be the celebration we envisioned, as he prepares to pass the baton in June 2022.

We will be grateful for your new or additional gift of any amount to help us reach our goal, as we move forward into a very special time of celebration, recognition, and transition. Your undesignated contribution allows us to determine the best use of your gift. You may also consider an operating or endowment contribution to support these Giving Bach funds:

• **Creative and Media Collaborations Fund** (Formerly the Recordings, Broadcasts, & Technology Fund): Endowment or operating contributions to this fund honor Bridget George’s tenure as Executive Director and support our strategic creative collaborations and expanding media relationships to further engage, inspire, educate, and broaden the scope of our audience, locally, nationally, and internationally. *Example: Virtual Christmas Concert, Bach, Bikes & Basketball*

• **Greg Funfgeld Family Concert:** Endowed and named in Greg’s honor, our annual Family Concerts reflect Greg’s genius as a musician, educator, and collaborator. Your donations will sustain this innovative family friendly programming, first initiated by Greg in 2000. *Examples: Noah’s Flood, The Nightingale, Young Meister Bach*

• **Artistic Director & Conductor Fund:** Contributions to this fund support the salary of the full-time Artistic Director and Conductor, ensuring the continued excellence of The Choir’s artistic leadership.



Trevor Dixon

• **The Bel Canto Youth Chorus Fund:** Directed by founder Dr. Joy Hirokawa, Bel Canto Youth Chorus programs engage, educate, and train students of the choral arts. Your donations help expand the scope and impact of our youth programs, cultivating the next generation of singers and audiences. *Examples: Choral Village, Singing the Underground Railroad, Bel Canto Tours*

A message from Giving Bach Campaign Chair and Board Member Don Wertman

“Recently, you should have received a letter announcing the last phase of our Giving Bach Campaign.

The Giving Bach “Fitting Finale” objectives include the Recordings and Broadcast Fund, now renamed the Creative and Media Collaborations Fund, in honor of Executive Director Bridget George’s outstanding tenure, a career punctuated by the significant number of collaborations she has cultivated to expand the scope of our impact and audience. Were there to be a detailed accounting of the projects, programs and initiatives she managed in conjunction with the Artistic Director during her tenure, the list would likely number in the hundreds – *Bach at Noon, Zimmermann’s Coffee House*, the Family Concerts, recordings, and The Bel Canto Youth Chorus initiative are just a few examples. Always executed with professionalism and superb quality, Bridget works tirelessly to make certain, whatever the objective, that the end result will be first class.

We appreciate your donations to our “Fitting Finale” initiative, to bring our campaign to a successful close, reflecting the excellence of Bridget’s time as Executive Director of The Bach Choir!”

– Don Wertman

Share your gifts by check via mail, by credit card via phone at 610.866.4382 or online at Bach.org. Contributions through IRA distributions and stock transfers are gratefully accepted.



Hub Willson



Theo Anderson





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The Staff of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem send their warm greetings from Heckewelder House to all our Bach Choir friends. Cheers for wonderful memories, keeping the joy alive, staying creative through hard times, and a glorious future to come.

L to R: Renee James, Claudia Carroll, Bridget George, Silagh White, Sophia Verbiscar, Mike DeCrosta, and Cheryl Dungan



The Bach Choir News
is published by:
The Bach Choir
of Bethlehem
440 Heckewelder Place,
Bethlehem, PA 18018-5806
610.866.4382
BACH.org

Executive Director: Bridget George
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Supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Inc. is recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions to The Bach Choir are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration and financial information for The Bach Choir of Bethlehem may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling, toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999.

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