



BACH CHOIR NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE BACH CHOIR OF BETHLEHEM, INC.

VOLUME 47, NUMBER 1, SPRING/SUMMER 2022

REFLECTIONS FROM GREG FUNFGELD

Artistic Director & Conductor (1983–2022)

WHEN I BEGAN MY WORK WITH THE BACH CHOIR, WE SANG THREE OR FOUR

pieces at a Moravian Christmas Vigil Service each December and the two weekends of the Festival each May. In 1985, we celebrated the tercentenary of Bach's birth with two Christmas Concerts and a Spring Concert – the *Saint John Passion*, first performed in America in 1888 by The Bethlehem Choral Union which later became The Bach Choir. There was also a Bach organ recital by Marie-Claire Alain. Sir David Willcocks came to the Festival as Guest Conductor of the *Mass in B Minor*. Our concert season expanded the next year when the Christmas Concerts became annual affairs. Later, we added the Spring Concert – initially to perform the *Saint John* and *Saint Matthew Passions* every other year. We eventually expanded the repertoire for these concerts to include Bach's works for Palm Sunday, Easter, and Ascension. In 2000, after careful deliberation and lots of conversation, we started to do works by other composers – composers who influenced Bach or the panoply of composers influenced by Johann Sebastian Bach! The first program included motets by Bach, Mendelssohn and Brahms. Later we paired Bach's exquisite Cantata 106 with Johannes Brahms' *German Requiem*. Commissioned works from Libby Larsen, Stephen Paulus, and Chuck Holdeman also became an important part of our expanded repertoire. There were two European tours – including Germany with a performance of the *Mass in B Minor* in the Thomaskirche, Leipzig, where Bach worked for the last 27 years of his life, and the UK with – among others – memorable

As I reflect on 39 years of my life as the sixth Artistic Director and Conductor of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem...

I am so grateful for the PEOPLE who are part of what I lovingly call our Bach Choir Family – our incredible Choir and Orchestra members, the soloists who visit each year, the gifted Staff and Board of Managers, the Guarantors and audience members – all who give so much of their time, talent and treasure to this 124-year-old Choir that we love so dearly!

performances for the BBC Proms in London's Royal Albert Hall and a performance of the *Mass in B Minor* in the Chapel of Kings College, Cambridge. Concerts in the United States included The Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and lots of other venues. The Choir represented the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in concerts on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of 9/11 at Trinity Church Wall Street and Saint Paul's Chapel in New York City. We made more than 15 recordings and films.

Educational Outreach and Community Engagement became major efforts of The Choir during this period. We initiated BACH TO SCHOOL, a program that has been presented to more than 175,000 students in elementary, middle and high schools throughout the Lehigh Valley and well beyond. Each year, we see every third grader in the cities of Bethlehem and Easton and every fifth grader in the city of Allentown. It's a thrill to share the glories of Bach with these precious young people! Then we added the FAMILY CONCERT, an interactive, multi-disciplinary concert where we collaborate with dancers, visual artists, theatre ensembles such as Mock Turtle Marionette Theatre and Touchstone, school groups and so many more! We started BACH AT NOON in 2005 and now offer ten concerts each year – seven in Bethlehem and three Summer concerts in Allentown. This series has done much to bring a better understanding of Bach and his music to our supporters in a relaxed atmosphere. We started the CHORAL SCHOLARS program for high school seniors to sing with The Choir. We partnered with The AMERICAN BACH SOCIETY in a biennial competition for young American singers, under the age of 30, whom we think will have major

Please turn to page 3

top to bottom: Greg reviewing score with Libby Larsen; Family Concert autograph signing (Hub Willson)
Performance of *Mass in B Minor* at Kings College in Cambridge, UK (Bach Archives)



INSIDE...

From the Executive Director	2
From the President	2
And That's A Wrap!	3
Season at a Glance 2022-2023	3
Gala 2022	4
The Well-Tempered Clavier	4
Meet Our New Artistic Director & Conductor	5
Bel Canto Season Wrap-Up	5
Conductor Funfgeld Farewell	6
New Ticketing System	8

Dear Friends:



GREETINGS FROM BETHLEHEM! As I write this letter in my lovely office at Heckewelder House, my first year as Executive Director is rapidly coming to a close. I find myself viscerally experiencing the paradoxical nature of time. A year can be both an eternity and a blink of an eye depending on one's perspective. In many ways, this year has been both for me – busy days and weeks full of rewarding work that go by seemingly in an instant and beautiful new relationships with my Bach Choir family who already feel like familiar, age-old friends. I am so grateful to be part of such a venerable organization that has the heart of an intimate family circle.

As I reflect on the past year, it is the glorious intersection of the music and the people that stands out. At the pinnacle has been the true gift to work alongside Greg Funfgeld. From our virtual *Bach at Noon* concerts last summer at the gorgeous St. John's Lutheran Church in Allentown to the triumphant celebratory 114th Bethlehem Bach Festival at Packer Chapel, the people of The Bach Choir poured their hearts, souls, and love into making music together again, finally. Greg's final celebratory season was highly anticipated, well-deserved, and many times surprising as we constantly did our best to navigate the ongoing pandemic. Throughout the season, I was repeatedly reminded of the specialness of our Bach Choir community. Both my husband Fritz and I had tears in our eyes as we sang *Stille Nacht* with the audience and Choir at the Christmas Concert. It was pure joy to watch the talented young dancers of the Lehigh Valley Charter High School of the Arts take the music of Bach into their bodies and release it with their inspired movements at the Greg Funfgeld Family Concert: *Dancing with Bach*. The spring went by at

lightning speed as we searched for the 7th Artistic Director and Conductor of The Bach Choir culminating in the wonderful appointment of Christopher Jackson. Our dazzling Gala with Yo-Yo Ma and Kathryn Stott was followed two weeks later by Greg's 39th and final Festival performances – we are grateful that so many of you were able to join us in person to celebrate Greg, and that those who could not had the chance to be part of this meaningful and moving Festival by watching our virtual *B Minor Mass* performance.

Our 2022-2023 season brings more change and celebration – The Bach Choir's 125th anniversary, Bel Canto's 30th anniversary, and Christopher Jackson's inaugural season. It will be indeed a season of musical milestones and new beginnings, and we are excited to embark on this journey with you together. We invite you to join us for our *Bach at Noon* concerts throughout the year, the completion of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* at our Christmas Concerts, a youthful celebration of high school choirs at our Greg Funfgeld Family Concert, Bach's *Easter Oratorio* and the conclusion of Handel's *Messiah* at our Spring Concert, Bel Canto concerts, and of course the 115th Bethlehem Bach Festival under the baton of Christopher Jackson. Christopher looks forward to meeting each of you, and we warmly invite you to greet him at any of these upcoming events.

And so, as we look to the future, we embrace and honor the past, the timelessness of J.S. Bach's works, and the vibrant community that singing Bach's masterpieces creates.

With warmest wishes,

Leela Breithaupt, Executive Director

Dear Friends:



FOR THOSE WHO JOINED US AT FESTIVAL this year, once again we had the opportunity to hear the glorious music of J.S. Bach performed live. After a two-year hiatus, The Bach Choir of Bethlehem with its large chorus, Festival Orchestra and beloved soloists filled Packer Church on Lehigh University's campus with a stirring performance of the *Saint Matthew Passion* and the *Mass in B Minor*. Adding an element of poignancy to this return was the knowledge that Greg Funfgeld, after 39 years as the Artistic Director and Conductor, was retiring. Through Greg's stewardship The Choir is what it is today. His ability to relate to people is a distinguishing feature that is rare and much treasured, and perhaps as much as his musicianship, is the reason so many to want to sing in his choirs, play in the orchestra, and return as a soloist. His humanity reminds everyone what music is all about: the connection of souls to create an ephemeral but breathtaking beauty.

Greg has led The Choir through nearly one-third of its 124-year history. To express our gratitude for his constancy and vision, the Board awarded him the title of Artistic Director & Conductor Emeritus, the first in our Choir's long history. Next season, as we

celebrate our 125th year, we will reflect on the long journey we have taken, where we are today, and where we want to go in the future.

The artistic leader on that journey is the newest member of our team, Dr. Christopher Jackson, our next Artistic Director and Conductor. Christopher was selected after an extensive search process from a field of many, wonderful musicians. He distinguished himself not only with his love of Bach and his talent as a choir and orchestral conductor, but also by his knowledge of and natural connections with The Choir's mission and character. We look forward with great anticipation to watching Christopher build on the legacy of the last 124 years.

As we plot our course, we are confident that Leela Breithaupt and Christopher Jackson, our leadership team, understand and support the legacy, mission and tradition of The Choir while being fully engaged with current practices and approaches to choral excellence and the Arts. The journey continues!

Sincerely,

Harold G. Black, President

REFLECTIONS cont.

careers as Bach singers – Meg Bragle, Dashon Burton, Nola Richardson and Janna Critz (left) among the winners. Rosa Lamoreaux became The Choir's vocal coach and comes regularly to Bethlehem to give private lessons to our singers and work with the full Choir at some of our Monday night rehearsals. The BEL CANTO YOUTH CHORUS for young singers in grades 2 through 12 became part of our Bach Choir Family and continues to enrich our life and work.

Always looking ahead, and thanks to the extraordinary generosity of so many of you and the careful stewardship of our Staff and Board, we have built a significant endowment that supports the ongoing work of The Bach Choir. We continue to collaborate with so many groups and ensembles and have creative partnerships with brilliant and wonderful artists! So much energy invested in our beloved Choir, so much generosity to support all of this important work, so much love at the heart of it all. Gifted colleagues, enthusiastic audiences, loyal supporters – I am grateful for them all – for each one of you have been part of these 39 years! I am especially grateful to my beloved family – my wife

– Nanci; my two daughters – Craley and her husband, Chip, and Emma; and my three grandchildren – Eleanor Ann, Margaret Patricia and John George – I love them all and thank them from the bottom of my heart – for their sacrifice, support and endless love!

And now comes the SEVENTH Artistic Director and Conductor – CHRISTOPHER JACKSON – a gifted musician, a generous person, a fine singer, a sterling individual! Nanci and I will be cheering for Christopher and his wife, Katelyn, for our Choir and Orchestra, for the soloists, for Leela Breithaupt and her staff, for Hal and the Board of Managers, for ALL OF YOU – the best is yet to be! May God bless and keep you all! I've always thought – and often said – that I think God really loves The Bach Choir and watches over us all – I believe that in my heart and know it will continue. I look forward to the future and wish each of you God's blessings and the very best of everything!

Ever grateful...

Greg Funfgeld
Artistic Director & Conductor Emeritus

2021-2022: And That's a Wrap! by Renée James

THE BACH CHOIR'S 2021-2022 SEASON found us thrilled to be back to live performances before our loyal and appreciative audiences, and reaching even further into the entire world through five live-streamed concerts. Throughout the season, we monitored the news regarding COVID-19, and established (and revised) protocols for attending our concerts, developed to keep our musicians, our patrons and our staff safe and healthy.

We began the season by live-streaming our September *Bach at Noon* concert, the first before a live audience since March 2020. Our virtual outreach continued with the November and April *Bach at Noon* concerts, our Christmas Concert from Bethlehem and the *Mass in B Minor* from the 114th Bethlehem Bach Festival. The Festival also included a collaboration with The Bel Canto Youth Chorus (*Saint Matthew Passion*) and student composers in The Chaconne Project. We also collaborated with talented dancers from the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts who joined us at the Greg Funfgeld Family Concert, *Dancing with Bach*. And after a two-year hiatus, we presented our stunning Spring concert, performing the Duruflé *Requiem* and (at long last) Handel's *Messiah*, Part 2. Hallelujah, indeed!

April was a particularly busy month for us at Central Moravian Church! Along with Greg's final Bethlehem *Bach at Noon* concert, we offered an afternoon of music to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*. We ended the month with our Gala concert, where we welcomed the exquisite Yo-Yo Ma and Kathryn Stott.

We closed the season with a live-streamed June *Bach at Noon* concert from St. John's Lutheran Church in Allentown – Greg's final performance as our Artistic Director and Conductor. After being absent from the church since 2019, we welcomed back our audience and shared the live-streamed concert with more than 1,500 people online from around the world. As one viewer wrote, "This is absolute perfection."

In a far from perfect world, we think so, too.



SEASON AT A GLANCE 2022-2023

Bethlehem Bach at Noon 2022-2023

Central Moravian Church,
Historic Downtown Bethlehem, PA
Second Tuesdays, 12:10-1:00pm
2022 – September 13, October 11, November 8
2023 – January 10, February 14, March 14, April 11

Allentown Bach at Noon – 2023

Saint John's Lutheran Church, Allentown PA
Second Tuesdays, 12:10-1:00pm
2023 – June 13, July 11, August 8

Bel Canto Winter Concert

Sunday, December 4, 2022 at 4pm
– Wesley United Methodist Church of Bethlehem

Christmas Concerts –

Bach Christmas Oratorio Parts 4, 5 & 6
Saturday, December 10, 2022 at 4pm **NEW TIME!**
– First Presbyterian Church of Allentown
Sunday, December 11, 2022 at 4pm (☎)
– First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem

Greg Funfgeld Family Concert – Youth Choirs Festival

Sunday, February 19, 2023 at 3pm
– Zoellner Arts Center

Spring Concert –

Sunday, March 26, 2023 at 4pm
First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem

Bel Canto Spring Concert –

Saturday, May 6, 2023 at 4pm
– Wesley United Methodist Church of Bethlehem

115th BACH FESTIVAL

May 12-13 & May 19-20 (☎), 2023
Lehigh University

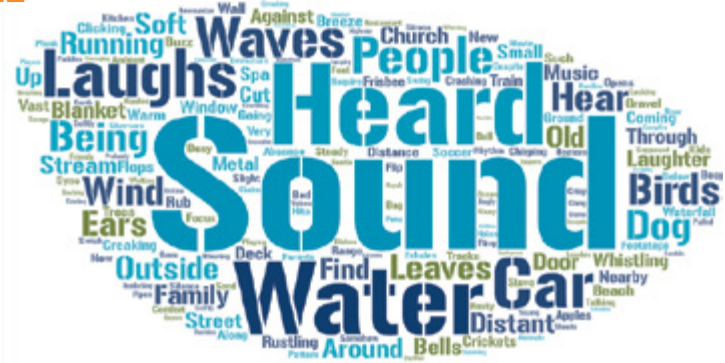
☎ Indicates concert will be Live-Streamed

An Extraordinary Evening *by Cheryl Dungan*

IN KEEPING WITH THE SPIRIT OF RENEWAL THIS SEASON, our 2022 Gala was a joyous reunion and celebration that we all needed. At the heart of it, we were thrilled to be able to present an exquisite musical program from incomparable cellist Yo-Yo Ma and world-renowned pianist, Kathryn Stott, who have been collaborators for more than 30 years. Their exquisite musical performance featured works from their recent recording, “Songs of Comfort and Hope”, an inspired response to the COVID pandemic which spans genres to offer “consolation and connection in the face of fear and isolation.” Performing to a capacity crowd in Central Moravian Church, Yo-Yo Ma closed the program after two standing ovations with a stunning solo cello performance of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.”

Our history with Yo-Yo Ma is significant. In November of 1998, he was part of our Centennial Celebration, performing J.S. Bach's beloved *Cello Suites* at Central Moravian Church. Even then, Ma was noted as drawing inspiration from a broad and diverse base of collaborators to produce music that stimulates the imagination, serving to bridge cultural and generational boundaries. Kathryn Stott shares Ma's philosophy, noting that they are "intrepid musical explorers...on the creative highway," equally fulfilled by working with inner city school students as by their formal concert performances.

We partnered with The Allentown Symphony to develop a series for teens, Culture Conversations, and invited them to explore their perspectives on the power of music and the arts to inspire and connect us (*see one of their creative projects above*). More than 50 students participated in the program and attended the Gala Concert as our guests. Our thanks to Silagh White, Culture Connections Coordinator, and to Central



Moravian Church for hosting the teens following the performance.

Prior to the concert, more than 180 Gala Benefactors, sponsors and guests gathered at Northampton Country Club, where they enjoyed a lovely evening of fine food and good company, to support a worthy cause. Funds raised from the Gala and auction help fund our Youth Education and Community Engagement Programs, including *Bach at Noon*, The Bel Canto Youth Chorus, the Choral Scholars program and our acclaimed *Bach to School* music enrichment program, which we are pleased to resume in public schools next season.

Though long-awaited, our 2022 Gala was a tremendous success in every sense – as fundraiser, a friend-raiser, an arts collaboration and certainly as a worthy celebration of the distinguished tenure of Greg Funfgeld. Like Yo-Yo Ma and Kathryn Stott, Greg has dedicated himself to inspiring, educating and demonstrating the transformative power of music to heal us and bring us together.

We're grateful to our gracious and generous sponsors for their underwriting support, which helped bring this superb performance to our community, and we are ever grateful to our Gala Committee and everyone who helped make our 2022 Gala a very successful and special event.

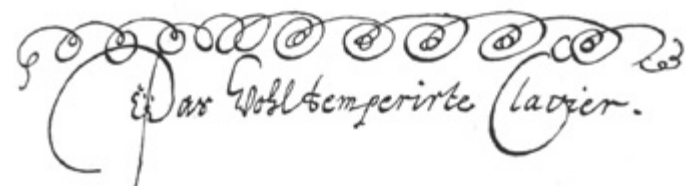
CELEBRATING A MUSICAL MILESTONE
The Well-Tempered Clavier *by Renée James*

In or around 1722:

- Jonathan Swift began writing *Gulliver's Travels*
- A small group of people from Northern Moravia settled in Herrnhut, Saxony (Germany), forming the seed of the Moravian Church revival
- And Johann Sebastian Bach composed a compilation of pieces now known as *The Well-Tempered Clavier*.

WE CELEBRATED THE 300TH ANNIVERSARY of *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book One* – one of the major teaching volumes in keyboard history - with a free concert in April at Central Moravian Church. Bach was 37 years old when he produced this incredible work of art, and it has been in constant use since then.

Artistic Director and Conductor Greg Funfgeld and Eugene Albulescu, Director of the Lehigh University Philharmonic conceived this collaborative performance and scheduled auditions for musicians to participate. The concert included pianists, a clarinet choir and a saxophone, ranging in age from 12 to 80+, to play



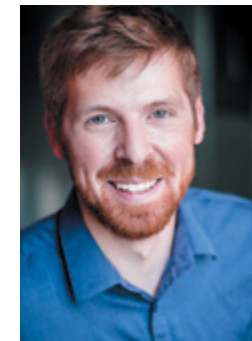
Bach's collection of Preludes and Fugues in every key, major and minor. The concert also included opening remarks from Eugene about the piece and its influence over three centuries.

Greg Funfgeld called the concert “...an incredible milestone... what joy it will be to hear these preludes and fugues played by such gifted artists, young and old, amateur and professional.”

Reflecting on the project, Eugene Albulescu noted, “From Beethoven to Chopin, to Shostakovich - countless composers referred to these preludes and fugues, and actively studied this set by Johann Sebastian, one in each key. Simply put, this set is part of the DNA of all music that followed. We are doing this in the spirit of Bach’s inscription in the title page: ‘For the benefit and use of the musical youth eager to learn, and especially for the pastime of those already skilled in this study.’”

What better time or better place or better group to mark this occasion – it was pleasure to add to our season!

Meet Dr. Christopher Jackson – OUR NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CONDUCTOR *by Leela Breithaupt*



THE BACH CHOIR OF BETHLEHEM is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Christopher Jackson as the 7th Artistic Director and Conductor in our 125-year history. Christopher will begin his tenure following the June 30 retirement of Greg Funfgeld after 39 seasons with The Bach Choir.



Our search was led by Board member Dr. Larry Lipkis and Board President Harold Black, and spanned several countries and 2½ years. We are delighted to have found Dr. Jackson in our own backyard where he served as Director of Choral and Vocal Activities at Muhlenberg College. Christopher brings not only an outstanding conducting craft, musicality, and leadership, but also his intimate knowledge of the Lehigh Valley and The Bach Choir's unique place in history and the world. We are excited to embark on our journey into the future under the baton of such a gifted and communicative artist.

Bel Canto Season Wrap Up – AT HOME & ON THE ROAD *by Joy Hirokawa*

BEL CANTO ended the 2021-22 season with a program called *Rise Up Singing!* We acknowledged the loss of singing during the pandemic, then shifted to music that uplifts and inspires. Craig Thatcher and friends were part of our program, adding a new dimension to choral performance! Two performances of Bach's *Saint Matthew Passion* with The Bach Choir quickly followed, showcasing the wide variety of musical opportunities Bel Canto choristers experience.

Our 2022 summer Stand Up Tour built on musical and historical study the choir completed while preparing the 2021 video concert *Stand Up: Singing the Underground Railroad*. In collaboration with the Choir School of Delaware (CSD) and the Children's Chorus of Washington (CCW), the three ensembles traveled the same route as the Underground Railroad on their tour.

CSD and CCW began the journey visiting Harriet Tubman's home on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, then traveled to Wilmington, and Philadelphia, where Bel Canto joined them in concert. CSD and Bel Canto performed in Easton, with Bel Canto continuing the tour to Harriet Tubman's home in Auburn, NY, Rochester, and ending in Niagara Falls. A small container of soil from the plantation where Harriet Tubman lived in Maryland, collected by the CSD & CCW, was passed from choir to choir along the way, a powerful symbol of the journey made by so many seeking freedom.

Bel Canto celebrates its upcoming 30th Anniversary season – *Roots & Branches* – with music that honors our roots in the music of Bach and the Classical Western canon, and our branches, to embrace and present our diverse musical community. Repertoire features historic composers like J. S. Bach and contemporary

Christopher is a specialist in choral conducting with expertise in early music, performance practice, and community engagement, and an educator, professional singer, and scholar. Throughout his career, Christopher has led numerous collegiate, professional, and amateur ensembles across the United States and works frequently as a guest conductor for orchestras, choirs, and festivals. His ensembles have toured China, Canada, and the continental United States and have been selected to perform at multiple Pennsylvania ACDA (American Choral Directors Association) conferences. Christopher received his BA in voice performance from Oklahoma State University, and his Master in choral conducting from Westminster Choir College, and his doctorate in choral conducting from the University of North Texas.

Christopher shares The Bach Choir's excitement - "Taking the artistic helm of The Bach Choir is an exciting endeavor, especially given the enormously talented Bach Choir "family" that has been nurtured and guided so skillfully by Artistic Director and Conductor, Greg Funfgeld. I'm elated to get started."



Images courtesy of Bel Canto



composers such as Sarah Quartel; music from the cultural heritage of Bel Canto families and the Lehigh Valley region and music that gives voice to the lived experience of the choristers.

Auditions Are Ongoing Throughout The Summer!
Please contact Connie Behringer, Bel Canto's Managing Administrator (connie@bach.org) to arrange an audition.
Online registration: [BACH.org/belcanto/2022-2023-auditions-for-bel-canto](https://bach.org/belcanto/2022-2023-auditions-for-bel-canto)

A Fond Farewell by Renée James

With apologies to Dr. Theodore Geisel, and the near iconic, revelatory moment in his classic story, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, I offer the following:

How could it be so?
It came with the virus!
It came with the heat!
It came with rising numbers, and PCRs,
and thoughts of “can we still meet?”
The world hadn’t stopped our Festival
from coming! It came!
Somehow or other,
it came, just the same.



WHETHER THE WORD “BACH” CALLS TO MIND pilgrimages to Leipzig, the final words of Schwarzenegger’s *Terminator*, or something in between, no matter. For the 500 people who gathered in Packer Memorial Church for the Festival’s annual performance of J.S. Bach’s *Mass in B Minor*, plus those watching the livestream in 26 states and overseas, the music offered something beautiful, something restorative, and a moment of gratitude.

Starting with the obvious, you have to wonder about the following: How do you keep up your spirits up when you must test for COVID every single day for weeks and weeks to keep yourself and your colleagues safe? In 90-degree heat, how do you hold onto your instrument and your bow? How do you keep your fingers on the keyboard or grasp the mallets? How do you keep blowing air into your mouthpiece and make sure your fingers don’t slip onto the wrong keys? How to you breathe deeply, watch your pronunciation, and stay on key, all while singing through a mask for more than two hours? And finally, how do you stand before 130 musicians, and overcome the heat, the formidable obstacles and the complex composition to conduct one of the most glorious pieces ever written without faltering?

If you’re Greg Funfgeld, the Artistic Director and Conductor Emeritus of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, *who has conducted more than one third of those 114 Bethlehem Bach Festivals*, you do it all with grace, composure, determination, artistry and love.

For the audience, many of whom expressed their exuberance at being able to gather and be part of the community that shares this tradition, the conclusion of the performance only amplified their emotions. The music ended, and the Conductor lowered his baton for the last time. The room remained silent. (As always, the Conductor stays in place with his arms at his sides, as he holds the audience and musicians for just a little longer, before stepping down to end the piece.) This year, Conductor Funfgeld held the sides of his podium and lowered his head, for what felt like several minutes but was likely much shorter. In the audience, in one of the last pews, I watched and waited, reveling in the feeling of comfort and peace, waiting for my cue to respond.

It felt almost intrusive to witness Greg’s response to the end of the performance. I wondered: What is he feeling? Gratitude? Relief? Joy? Triumph? Heat-exhaustion? Maybe. But more likely

– peace. Over the past two years, which have been riddled with challenges that couldn’t have been imagined, Greg has responded to the tumult with “Let’s try this. Let’s do this. Let’s figure out a way,” never compromising the standards he holds for himself and his musicians. It’s what we do; it’s what people need.

Greg released his hold and stepped off the podium to end the concert. Almost as one, everyone in the church stood, clapping and cheering wildly (through five “curtain calls!”) for the artistry and the man who has offered so much of himself and his gifts with nothing but profound joy for 39 years. After being absent from Bethlehem since 2019, The Bethlehem Bach Festival was indeed back, led by our indefatigable and singular Conductor Funfgeld, and he couldn’t have found a more receptive audience.

For me, it was more than that. I was happy, yes – for Greg. For this particular moment where I hope he was feeling the love. But also for every minute of his 39-year tenure. For every single time he conducted a note that – unbeknownst to him – made a listener feel hopeful, or comforted, or joyful. For every collaboration that brought artists together and built bridges, not barriers. For his career and a mission that never faltered, built around a passion for the music that he communicated with great enthusiasm, whether talking to a Bach scholar at Oxford or to a 3rd grader at *Bach to School*, a lively and innovative program he inaugurated 20 years ago.

One of my favorite tasks at The Choir is reading thank you notes from the students who experience *Bach to School*. This one sticks with me: “Thank you for the concert. My favorite part is everything.” As our community celebrates the many, many seasons of beautiful music and more, courtesy of the artist and friend who has led The Bach Choir since 1983, I can’t think of a better way to express our appreciation:

“Thank you, Greg. Our favorite part is everything.”



Clockwise from top: *Bach at Noon*, April 2022 – Greg’s final Bethlehem *Bach at Noon* concert opened with a standing ovation; Chorale Sing, 2022 Festival – A well-loved tradition Greg began many years ago; A grateful heart: Greg Funfgeld at the Festival

Counterclockwise from top: Greg Funfgeld conducting in Packer Memorial Church; Festival patrons delighted to be “Back with Bach!”; Chaconne Project student composers at the Festival



The Bach Choir of Bethlehem
440 Heckewelder Place
Bethlehem, PA 18018-5806

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
LEHIGH VALLEY
PERMIT NO 227



WE'RE INTRODUCING A NEW TICKETING AND DONATIONS SYSTEM for the upcoming season!

Our goal is to make your online experiences with The Choir and your transactions as seamless and smooth as possible, whether making a ticket purchase or a donation or placing a merchandise order. The system also incorporates live-streaming options into the platform which will make those viewing opportunities easier than ever. The new system, PatronManager, specifically addresses the needs of arts and culture organizations, and has built its integrated solutions on the worldwide CRM leader, Salesforce. It is the fastest growing solution in the industry, and serves a full roster of notable theaters, operas, museums, and more.

We hope you check it out and find it as helpful and user-friendly as we do. Please let us know what you think!



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: Leela Breithaupt
Development Officer: Cheryl Dungan
Marketing Director: Renée James
Bel Canto Administrative Manager: Connie Behringer
Finance & Business Manager: Claudia Carroll
Production Manager: Sophia Verbiscar

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, Tax ID Number 24-0795385. 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.

Join us for our anniversary seasons! Information about auditions for The Bach Choir is on the website: [BACH.org/auditions](https://bach.org/auditions).
For Bel Canto, please see [BACH.org/belcanto/2022-2023-auditions-for-bel-canto](https://bach.org/belcanto/2022-2023-auditions-for-bel-canto).