



Members of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem
& Bach Festival Orchestra
Dr. Christopher Jackson, Artistic Director & Conductor

present

BACH at NOON

A Gift of Music & Spiritual Refreshment



Soloists

Jessica Beebe – soprano
Robin Bier – alto
Andrew Fuchs – tenor
Graham Bier – baritone
Chuck Holdeman – bassoon

Christopher Jackson
Artistic Director & Conductor

January 9, 2024 – PROGRAM

Christoph Graupner (1683–1760)
Bassoon Concerto in C Minor, CWV 307

Andante
Vivace
Largo
Allegro

– Chuck Holdeman, bassoon

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)
Cantata Mein Gott, wie lang, ach lange?, BWV 155

Johann Sebastian Bach
Cantata Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 61

with members of the Bach Festival Orchestra
– Elizabeth Field, concertmaster
Linda Kistler, Inna Eyzarovich & Stephani Bell – violin
Nina Falk & Agnès Maurer – viola
Loretta O’Sullivan – cello
Heather Miller Lardin – bass
Kerry Heimann – organ & harpsichord



Second Tuesdays

* 12:10–1:00pm

Central Moravian Church
Historic Downtown Bethlehem

Next Bach at Noon
Tuesday,
February 13, 2024!



125 YEARS
1898–2023

The January Bach at Noon concert is named in honor of J. Fred Wolle, founder and first conductor of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, and supported in part by generous endowment gifts from the Wolle family.



Bach | Recitative & Aria from *Mein Gott, wie lang, ach lange?*, BWV 155

– Translation by H. Ellis Finger

1. Recitative (Soprano)

Mein Gott, wie lang, ach lange?
Des Jammers ist zuviel,
Ich sehe gar kein Ziel
der Schmerzen und der Sorgen!
Dein süßer Gnadenblick
hat unter Nacht und Wolken sich verborgen,
Die Liebeshand zieht sich, ach! ganz zurück,
Um Trost ist mir sehr bange.
Ich finde, was mich Armen täglich kränket,
der Tränen Mass wird stets voll eingeschenket,
der Freuden Wein gebricht;
Mir sinkt fast alle Zuversicht.

2. Aria Duet (Alto & Tenor)

Du musst glauben, du musst hoffen,
du musst gottgelassen sein!
Jesus weiss die rechten Stunden
dich mit Hilfe zu erfreun.
Wenn die trübe Zeit verschwunden,
steht sein ganzes Herz dir offen.

*My God, how long, how very long?
There is too much misery,
I see no end whatsoever
to these sorrows and cares!
Your precious vision of mercy
is shrouded in night and clouds,
the hand of love is utterly withdrawn,
as for my comfort I am most anxious.
That which daily sickens me, wretched one,
the measure of my tears is ever replenished,
the pleasures of wine now broken:
all my self worth falls to ruin.*

*You must have faith, you must maintain hope,
you must remain entrusted with God!
Jesus knows the proper hours
to grant you delights with his help.
When the dark moment shall vanish,
his whole heart shall be open to you.*



Bach | Cantata *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 61

– Translation by H. Ellis Finger

1. Chorus

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland,
der Jungfrauen Kind erkannt,
des sich wundert alle Welt,
Gott solch Geburt ihm bestellt.

*Now come, Savior of the nations,
the Virgin's child made known,
all the world marvels at this fact
that God ordains so wondrous a birth for him.*

2. Recitative (Tenor)

Der Heiland ist gekommen,
hat unser armes Fleisch und Blut
an sich genommen
und nimmet uns zu Blutsverwandten an.
O allerhöchstes Gut,
was hast du nicht an uns getan?
Was tust du nicht
noch täglich an den Deinen?
Du kömst und lässt dein Licht
mit vollem Segen scheinen.

*The Savior has come,
has taken our frail flesh and blood
upon himself
and embraces us as blood kindred.
O supreme Goodness,
what have you ever failed to do for us?
What do you not do
each day for your own?
You come and cause your light
to shine with abundant blessing.*

3. Aria (Tenor)

Komm, Jesu, komm zu deiner Kirche
und gib ein selig neues Jahr!
Befördre deines Namens Ehre,
erhalte die gesunde Lehre
und segne Kanzel und Altar!

*Come, Jesus, come to your church
and bestow a blessed new year!
Uphold the honor of your name,
sustain the healthy ministry
and sanctify the chancel and altar!*

Bach | Cantata *Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 61 | continued

4. Recitative (Bass)

Siehe, ich stehe vor der Tür und klopfe an.
So jemand meine Stimme hören wird und die Tür auftun,
zu dem werde ich eingehen und das Abendmahl
mit ihm halten und er mit mir.
(Revelation 3:20)

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock.
Anyone that hears my
voice and opens the door, to him I will enter
and take the evening meal with him and he with me.*

5. Aria (Soprano)

Öffne dich, mein ganzes Herze,
Jesus kömmt und ziehet ein.
Bin ich gleich nur Staub und Erde,
will er mich doch nicht verschmähn,
seine Lust an mir zu sehn,
dass ich seine Wohnung werde.
O wie selig werd ich sein!

*Open yourself, all my heart,
Jesus comes and settles within.
Even though I am but dust and soil,
he does not wish to show me scorn
by witnessing his pleasure in me,
that I might be his dwelling place.
O how blessed shall I be!*

• Loretta O'Sullivan, cello •

6. Chorale

Amen, amen!
Komm, du schöne Freudenkrone, bleib nicht lange!
Deiner wart ich mit Verlangen.

*Amen! Amen!
Come, you precious crown of joy, do not tarry,
I watch for you with longing.*

BACH at NOON Tuesday, February 13

The Choir and the bassoon will be on full display for February's Bach at Noon, as we perform Cantata *Nach dir, Herr, verlangst mich*, BWV 150. This early cantata, like most of Bach's younger works, is far more adventurous and experimental than Bach's later works. Nearly every movement features intricate and expressive writing for the full choir, and it is scored for only violins and bassoon – a truly unique orchestration.

We are also thrilled to be giving the world premiere of a new composition by American composer Jasmine Barnes that is based on Cantata 150. Come hear great music, both old and new!

Soloists

JESSICA BEEBE, *soprano* Lauded as having a “honey-colored tone” and “the most radiant solo singing” from *Opera News*, soprano Jessica Beebe is a highly sought-after concert soloist who has performed with several major orchestras and ensembles around the world. These include The New York Chamber Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, The English Concert at the Barbican Theatre and Carnegie Hall, The Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, The Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, The Folger Consort, Utah Symphony, Omaha Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Lancaster Symphony Orchestra, Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra, The Washington Bach Consort, Piffaro, Gamut Bach Ensemble, The Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Philadelphia Bach Collegium, Lyric Fest, Curtis Symphony Orchestra, and more. Some of Beebe’s solo operatic highlights include premiering multiple operas by Jennifer Higdon, Lembit Beecher, and David Hertzberg with Opera Philadelphia, Bergen National Opera in Norway, and a Los Angeles Philharmonic debut in Meredith Monk’s opera, *Atlas*. Beebe is a member of Variant 6, The Crossing, Seraphic Fire, Clarion, Lorelei, Trio Eos, and The Thirteen. She has been a voice faculty member at Franklin and Marshall College since 2015. More info at jessicabeebesoprano.com.

ROBIN BIER, *alto* Praised for her “inimitable, resonant contralto” (*Phindie*), “particularly moving singing” (*Cleveland Classical*), and “mysterious, dark hue and sauntering presence” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), Robin Bier enjoys a varied career of solo and ensemble singing. She has appeared as a soloist with the Washington Bach Consort, American Bach Soloists, Sarasota Orchestra, Cantata Collective, Bourbon Baroque, Dartington Festival Orchestra, English Symphony Orchestra, and Yorkshire Baroque Soloists, among others. As an ensemble singer, Bier has performed and recorded with the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, Everlasting Voices, Clarion, Musica Secreta, I Fagiolini, Apollo’s Fire, Choral Arts Philadelphia, and Ensemble VIII. She is Co-Founder and alto of solo-voice early music ensemble Les Canards Chantants, with whom she has garnered praise for “elegant vocalism” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), “finely tuned vocals, robust singing, emotional flexibility, and sense of adventure” (*Broad Street Review*), “brilliant and moving programming” (*Early Music America*), and “liveliness and theatricality” (*Boston Musical Intelligencer*). Originally from Alaska, Bier holds degrees from Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music and the University of York in England. She is based in Philadelphia, where she teaches studio voice at Swarthmore College, coaches the trebles at Bryn Athyn Cathedral, and enjoys prowling the trails of the Pennypack Nature Preserve with husband, Graham, and son, Roland.

ANDREW FUCHS, *tenor* A native of Kansas City, MO, New York City-based tenor Andrew Fuchs’ wide-ranging repertoire includes an abundance of early and new music, which he performs as both a soloist and vocal chamber musician. In 2020, he joined the GRAMMY-nominated quartet New York Polyphony, whose extensive touring takes the acclaimed ensemble to major concert series and festivals around the world. He is a frequent artist with some of the United States’ finest historical performance ensembles (Pegasus Early Music, ARTEK, TENET, The Clarion Choir, and The Choir of Trinity Wall Street), and his expressive singing shines in repertoire ranging from Monteverdi madrigals to Bach’s Evangelists. Also passionate about contemporary music, he has premiered many works including the principal role of Me in Daniel Thomas Davis’ chamber opera *Six*.

Twenty. Outrageous. (American Opera Projects), and song cycles by Alexander Goehr (The Juilliard School’s Focus Festival) and Juliana Hall (Lyric Fest). He has sung substantial works by Harrison Birtwistle and Kurt Rohde (Brooklyn Art Song Society) and Steve Reich (Ensemble Signal). Other highlights include *Liebeslieder Waltzes* (Mark Morris Dance Group), Vaughan Williams’ *On Wenlock Edge* (Momenta Quartet), and Bach’s *Saint John Passion* Evangelist (St. John the Divine). andrew-fuchs.com

GRAHAM BIER, *baritone*, is based in the Philadelphia area, where he stays busy as Director of Music at Bryn Athyn Cathedral, Music Director of the Reading Choral Society, lecturer at Bryn Athyn College, and Co-Director of the solo-voice ensemble Les Canards Chantants. He is an avid ensemble singer, including appearances with I Fagiolini, Stile Antico, and The Crossing and also performs as a soloist, most recently in BWV 27 with Choral Arts Philadelphia, BWV 106 with members of Tempesta di Mare, and Beethoven’s *Symphony No. 9* with Berks Sinfonietta. Bier can be heard (and briefly glimpsed) with the Philadelphia Symphonic Choir in the Netflix film *Maestro*; other recordings include Stile Antico’s *The Phoenix Rising* (Harmonia Mundi) and Stef Conner’s *Riddle Songs* (Delphian). Since the pandemic he has served as a chorusmaster with the award-winning Stay At Home Choir. Bier holds a B.A. in music from Oberlin College and an M.A. in Vocal Studies and Ph.D. in Musicology, both from the University of York (UK).

CHUCK HOLDEMAN, *bassoon*, joined the Bach Festival Orchestra in 1969. He became principal bassoon several years later upon the retirement of Sol Schoenbach, who had been his teacher at the Curtis Institute of Music. Holdeman composed his second opera, *Young Meister Bach*, in 2014, with libretto by Bill Bly. It was commissioned and premiered by The Bach Choir, receiving three performances in Bethlehem and one in Philadelphia for the 250th anniversary of the German Society of Pennsylvania. The opera is composed in contrapuntal style as are Holdeman’s two suites for piano, which can be heard on the SoundCloud website, Chuck Holdeman page playlists. As bassoonist, Holdeman is a member of Philadelphia’s new music ensemble Relâche, and for many years he was principal bassoon for the Delaware Symphony Orchestra.

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. In 2022, Dr. Christopher Jackson



became the seventh Artistic Director and Conductor of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem. The 95 dedicated volunteer singers of The Bach Choir, performing with the Bach Festival Orchestra and distinguished soloists, have received international acclaim. Programming includes 40 concerts and educational programs per year for an audience of more than 22,000. Venues have included the Herkulessaal 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 11 recordings on the Dorian and Analekta labels, including most recently Bach’s Cantata 21 and Handel’s *Ode for Saint Cecilia’s Day* (2018), *A Child’s Christmas in Bethlehem* (2013), and *Saint John Passion* (2012). 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*. It 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 (2011–2020). 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. The Bel Canto Youth Chorus is The Bach Choir’s youth choir educational program under the direction of Director Kelly Rocchi. Through Bel Canto and other educational programs, The Bach Choir is training the next generation of choral singers and cultivating a life-long passion for the choral arts. For more information visit The Bach Choir’s website – **BACH.org**.

Artistic Director & Conductor

DR. CHRISTOPHER JACKSON, now in his second season, is the seventh Artistic Director and Conductor of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem. He has worked for 17 years as a conductor, educator, professional singer, and scholar. Throughout his career, he has led numerous collegiate, professional, and amateur ensembles across the United States, and he works frequently as a guest conductor for orchestras, choirs, and music festivals. His ensembles have toured China, Canada, and the continental United States. During his tenure at Lycoming College in Williamsport, PA, he co-founded the Lycoming Baroque Choir and Orchestra and designed academic courses that allowed students to travel to Germany and explore links between Baroque music, art, and architecture. He has taught courses and master classes in conducting, music theory, music history, vocal methods and pedagogy, and Baroque performance practice and has been a guest artist and lecturer at the San Juan Conservatory, the Coro de Niños de San Juan, and the Baldwin Wallace Bach Festival. He was nominated as a finalist for the American Prize in Virtual Performance for his work with the Muhlenberg College choral ensembles during the Covid-19 pandemic. Dr. Jackson remains an active professional choral singer and soloist, with focuses in the Baroque, Renaissance, and Modern eras. As a member of the Boston-based chamber choir Skylark, he has appeared on three GRAMMY-nominated albums (Best Choral Performance) and also serves as the ensemble’s Director of Education. In that position, he helped design free materials for music educators across the country to use for virtual music-making. He has performed with the GRAMMY Award-winning ensemble Roomful of Teeth, the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Artefact Ensemble, Les Canards Chantants, and Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity Lutheran in New York City. Dr. Jackson received his Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Performance from Oklahoma State University, studying conducting under Dr. Dirk Garner (Baldwin Wallace Bach Festival). He received his Master of Music in Choral Conducting from Westminster Choir College and was the graduate assistant conductor of the Westminster Symphonic Choir under Dr. Joe Miller and Dr. Amanda Quist, as well as studying with Dr. Andrew Megill (Carmel Bach, Illinois Bach Academy). He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from the University of North Texas, studying with Dr. Jerry McCoy and Dr. Richard Sparks. His areas of research include the programming and performance of Baroque and Renaissance music for choirs of all ages and levels of experience, as well as the choral music of Benjamin Britten.

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Artistic Director and Conductor Christopher Jackson, The Bach Choir, and Bach Festival Orchestra have invited dancers from Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts and the Muhlenberg College dance departments to choreograph new work to music written by Bach & Brahms. They will also welcome two special guests: Artistic Director and Conductor Emeritus Greg Funfgeld and Steinway Artist Eugene Abulescu for an exciting performance on piano four hands. *Don't miss it: Bring your family and friends to this exciting, interactive concert!*

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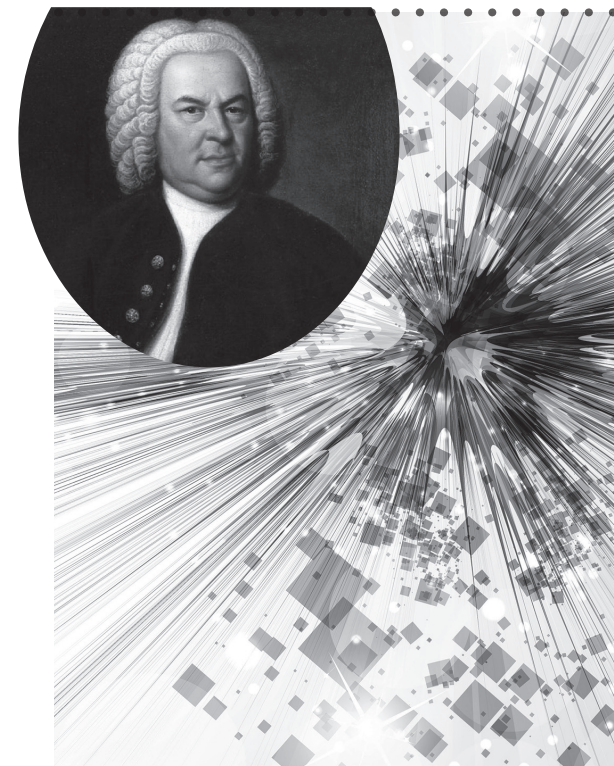
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SPRING CONCERT BACH Inspired

4pm Sunday, March 17, 2024
First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem

Be part of our musical expedition as we explore the connections between the rich past and dynamic present of choral music. We'll embark on a melodious adventure that connects generations and cultures through the power of sound. On the program is Bach's timeless and brilliant cantata *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*, BWV 80, which we believe was first heard in the U.S. at Central Moravian Church in 1823. In a revelatory juxtaposition, we'll perform the powerful *To the Hands* by Pulitzer Prize-winning contemporary composer Caroline Shaw. Rounding out the concert will be a sampling of repertoire from The Choir's upcoming European Tour of Germany and Austria in June 2024. *Soloists*: soprano Nola Richardson; alto Janna Critz; tenor Lawrence Jones; and bass Edmund Milly.



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The Bach Choir is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts



CENTRAL MORAVIAN CHURCH

The Moravian Church had its origin in the pre-Reformation awakening under John Hus. The Unitas Fratrum (Unity of the Brethren) was organized in 1457. Because much of its early history is centered in Moravia, the Unity is known formally as the Moravian Church and recognized as the oldest organized Protestant denomination in the world. The Moravian Church places much emphasis on mission, music, and education. It was J. Fred Wolle, organist of Central Moravian Church in Bethlehem, who founded The Bach Choir of Bethlehem in 1898 and conducted The Choir in the first performance of Bach's *Mass in B Minor* in America here at Central Church in 1900. Central Moravian Church continues to have a flourishing music program presented by its resident music ensembles and visiting artists, under the leadership of Director of Music and Organist Rebecca Lepore. In addition to five Central Moravian Church music CDs, including *An Old Fashioned Moravian Music Christmas* – an organ recording featuring Rebecca Lepore, and *Christmas Eve at Central Moravian Church*, a recently published 256-page book entitled *Praise and Thanksgiving: 275 Years of Music at Central Moravian Church* is available at the Moravian Book Shop.

For further information about The Bach Choir:

- Visit BACH.org for upcoming concert and ticket information, to join our mailing list, or to order CDs and other Bach Choir merchandise.
- Consider becoming a Guarantor with The Choir: Learn more at the website or by calling 610-866-4382 ext. 113.
- Follow us on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and LinkedIn.     Watch us on YouTube. 

Freewill offerings to help support Bach at Noon will be accepted at all doors or you may donate online at BACH.org or send your contribution to:

- The Bach Choir of Bethlehem • 440 Heckewelder Place, Bethlehem, PA 18018
- To donate by phone, text BNOON to 44-321.

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Bach at Noon 2023-2024 Bethlehem Schedule

2023
September 12
October 10
November 14

2024
January 9
February 13
March 12
April 9



Special thanks to:
Central Moravian Church,
especially

Rt. Rev. C. Hopeton Clennon, Senior Pastor
Rebecca Kleintop Lepore, Minister of Music

The Guarantors of The Bach Choir
for their continuing support.

Bach at Noon 2024 Allentown Schedule:

June 4 (first Tuesday due to European Tour) July 9 August 13

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