



Members of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem

& Bach Festival Orchestra

Dr. Christopher Jackson, Artistic Director & Conductor

present Bach at Noon in Bethlehem

BACH at NOON

A Gift of Music & Spiritual Refreshment



OCTOBER 13, 2026 – PROGRAM | 12:10–1:00pm

Central Moravian Church, Historic Downtown Bethlehem

Translations by H. Ellis Finger

The October Bach at Noon is supported in part by a generous endowment gift from Mrs. Cornelius Ayer Wood Jr. in memory of The Rev. Cornelius Ayer Wood Jr., a member of the Choir's Board of Managers 1960–1977.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) | Sonata for Viola da Gamba in G Major, BWV 1027

– Dan McCarthy – tenor viola | Kerry Heimann – harpsichord

Adagio Allegro ma non tanto Andante Allegro moderato

Johann Sebastian Bach | Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn, BWV 152

1. Sinfonia

2. Aria (Bass)

Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn,
Gott hat den Stein gelegt,
der Zion hält und trägt,
Mensch, stosse dich nicht dran!
Tritt auf die Glaubensbahn!

*Embark upon the path of faith!
God has laid the stone
which upholds and sustains Zion,
mankind, do not stumble upon it!
Embark upon the path of faith!*

3. Recitative (Bass)

Der Heiland ist gesetzt
in Israel zum Fall und Auferstehen.
Der edle Stein ist sonder Schuld,
wenn sich die böse Welt
so hart an ihm verletzt,
ja, über ihn zur Höllen fällt,
weil sie boshaftig an ihn rennet
und Gottes Huld
und Gnade nicht erkennt!
Doch selig ist
ein auserwählter Christ,
der seinen Glaubensgrund auf diesen Eckstein leget,
weil er dadurch Heil und Erlösung findet.

*The Savior is firmly set
in Israel for its fall and resurrection.
The precious stone is free of blame,
even if the evil world
does harm to itself upon it,
indeed tumbling over it into hell,
it is because it races spitefully toward it
not recognizing God's favor
and grace!
Yet blessed is
that chosen Christian,
who grounds the essence of his faith upon this cornerstone,
for in so doing he finds salvation and redemption.*

4. Aria (Soprano)

Stein, der über alle Schätze,
hilf, dass ich zu aller Zeit
durch den Glauben auf dich setze
meinen Grund der Seligkeit
und mich nicht an dir verletze,
Stein, der über alle Schätze!

*Stone, exceeding all treasures,
help me at every hour
to place, through my faith,
the foundation of blessedness in you,
without harming myself upon you,
stone, exceeding all treasures!*

5. Recitative (Bass)

Es ärgre sich die kluge Welt,
dass Gottes Sohn
verlässt den hohen Ehrenthron,
dass er in Fleisch und Blut sich kleidet
und in der Menschheit leidet.
Die grösste Weisheit dieser Erden
muss vor des Höchsten Rat
zur grössten Torheit werden.
Was Gott beschlossen hat,
kann die Vernunft doch nicht ergründen;
die blinde Leiterin verführt die geistlich Blinden.

*May the clever world be vexed,
that the Son of God
left the lofty throne of honor,
that he clothed himself in flesh and blood
and found suffering in his humanity.
The greatest wisdom of this earth,
before the counsel of the Highest,
must become the greatest folly.
What God has decided
cannot be fathomed by reason;
the blind leader deceives those blind in spirit.*

6. Duet – Soprano (Soul) and Bass (Jesus)

Wie soll ich dich, Liebster der Seelen, umfassen?
– Du musst dich verleugenen und alles verlassen! –
Wie soll ich erkennen das ewige Licht?
– Erkenne mich gläubig und ärgre dich nicht!
Komm, lehre mich, Heiland, die Erde verschmähen!
– Komm, Seele, durch Leiden zur Freude zu gehen! –
Ach, ziehe mich, Liebster, so folg ich dir nach!
– Dir schenk ich die Krone nach Trübsal und Schmach. –

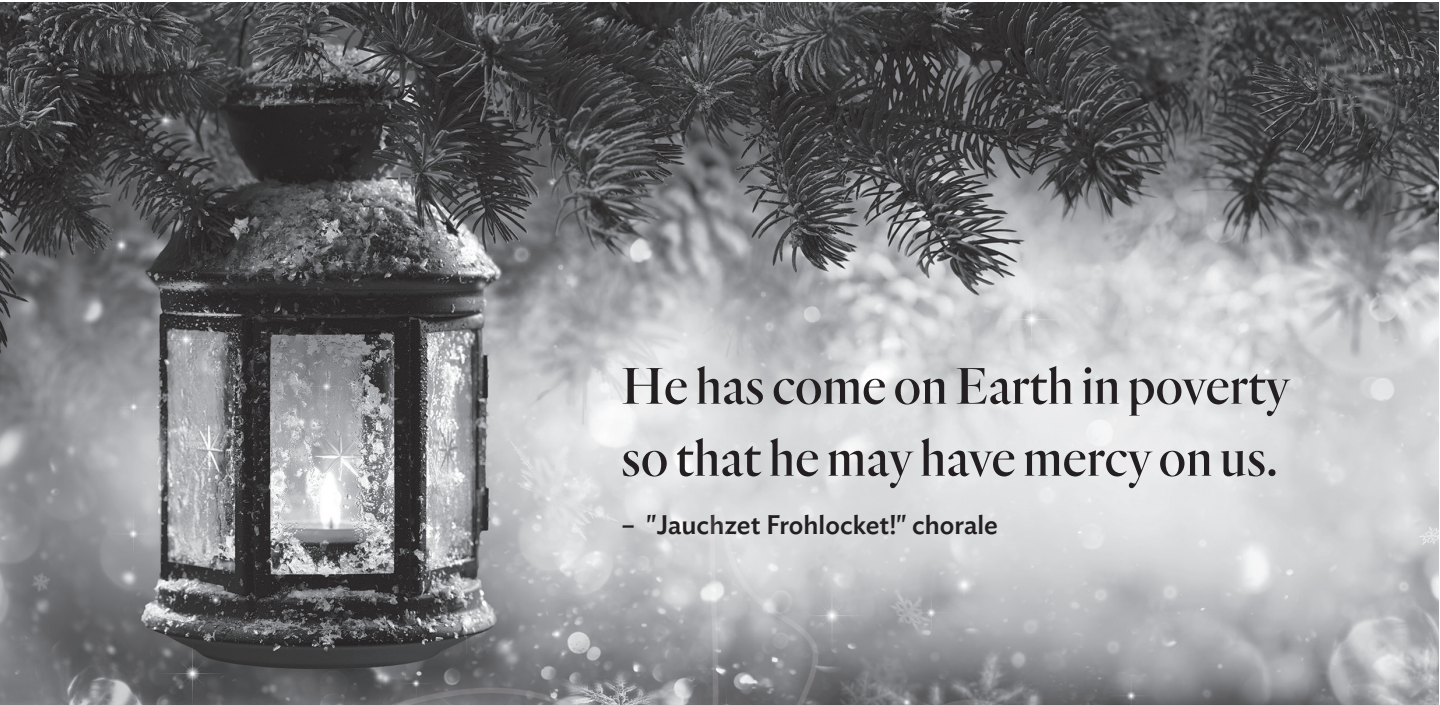
*How shall I embrace you, most lovely of souls?
– You must deny yourself and abandon everything! –
How shall I recognize the eternal light?
– Acknowledge me in faith and be not troubled! –
Come, teach me, Savior, to scorn the world!
– Come, soul, passing through sorrow into joy! –
Ah, if you lead me, beloved, I will follow you!
– Upon you will I bestow the crown after affliction and shame. –*

– Rainer Beckmann – recorder | Nobuo Kitagawa – oboe | Dan McCarthy – viola d'amore
Loretta O'Sullivan – cello | Daniel McDougall – bass | Kerry Heimann – organ

Next Bach at Noon Concert! Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Central Moravian Church, Historic Downtown Bethlehem

Join us for our November Bach at Noon featuring Corelli's beloved *Concerto Grosso in G Minor*, Op. 6, No. 8 (Christmas Concerto) and Bach's cantata *Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot*, BWV 39, (Break Your Bread for the Hungry), a reflection on generosity and gratitude as we enter the holiday season.



He has come on Earth in poverty
so that he may have mercy on us.

– "Jauchzet Frohlocket!" chorale



SOLOISTS

Nola Richardson *soprano*
Aryssa Leigh Burrs *mezzo-soprano*
Isaiah Bell *tenor*
Steven Eddy *bass*

NARRATOR

Jason King Jones



PA SHAKESPEARE
FESTIVAL

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

A Christmas Carol

Celebrate the Christmas season with music of joy and wonder. Our program opens with J.S. Bach's uplifting "Jauchzet, frohlocket!," the first cantata of his *Christmas Oratorio*, BWV 248, filled with festive celebrations and tender reverence. The concert continues with a new musical setting of *A Christmas Carol* by GRAMMY-nominated composer and Lehigh Valley resident Benedict Sheehan, a vivid choral retelling of Dickens' timeless holiday classic. Narrated by Jason King Jones of the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, this performance brings together a Baroque masterpiece and a contemporary work by one of today's outstanding choral voices.

🔊 Once again we will be livestreaming the concert from First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem. If you are unable to join us in person, join our worldwide audience as we stream the concert live from the Christmas City!

SATURDAY • 4pm
DECEMBER 12, 2026

Muhlenberg College,
Egner Memorial Chapel, Allentown

SUNDAY • 4pm
DECEMBER 13, 2026

First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem
Livestreamed!

Tickets: \$50 Livestream: \$20

Tickets & Information:
BACH.org • 610-866-4382 x. 115/110



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Soloists

Clara Rottsolk, soprano

Brian Mextorf, bass

Members of the Bach Festival Orchestra

Dan McCarthy – tenor violin & viola d'amore

Loretta O'Sullivan – cello

Daniel McDougall – bass

Rainer Beckmann – recorder

Nobuo Kitagawa – oboe

Kerry Heimann – harpsichord & organ



Use the QR code to read
the soloists' biographies.

ONE WEEKEND. FOUR DAYS.

119th Bethlehem BACH Festival

THURSDAY–SUNDAY • May 13–16, 2027

SouthSide & Historic Downtown Bethlehem

The 119th Bethlehem Bach Festival is the culminating celebration of our season, welcoming audiences back to historic Bethlehem for four days of music, discovery, and shared tradition. This year's Festival traces a journey through Bach's enduring influence, from intimate chamber performances and conversations with leading scholars to Mendelssohn's historic 1841 adaptation of the *St. Matthew Passion* and the Bach Choir's crown jewel performance of the *Mass in B Minor*. With acclaimed guest artists, beloved Festival traditions, and programs that look ahead to the Choir's return to Leipzig, the Festival invites us to experience how great music travels across generations, places, and time.



Sherezade Panthaki *soprano*

Meg Bragle *mezzo-soprano*

James Reese *tenor*

Edmund Milly *bass-baritone*

Eliot Fisk *Festival Artist-in-Residence*

SAVE THE DATE

The Bach Choir of Bethlehem gratefully acknowledges our Bach at Noon corporate and foundation sponsors.
Thank you to our Bach Choir Guarantors for their ongoing support.



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for the Arts and The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts