



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

Edmund Milly – Bass
 Nobuo Kitagawa – oboe

The April Bach at Noon concert was named in honor of the singers of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem during the 100th Bach Festival Season, 2006–2007, and all Bach Choir alumni. The concert is supported in part by generous endowment gifts from these choir members and choir alumni who have given of their treasure as well as their time and talent so that future generations of musicians and listeners can enjoy Bach at Noon.

April 8, 2025 – PROGRAM

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681–1767)

Ouverture-Suite in G minor for Three Oboes, Bassoon, Strings & Basso continuo, TWV 55:g4

- I. Ouverture: II. Rondeau: Gayement III. Les Irrésoluts
 IV. Les Capricieuses V. Loure
 VI. Gasconnade VII. Menuet I - Menuet II*

– Nobuo Kitagawa, Mark Snyder & Evan Ocheret – oboe
 Emeline Chong – bassoon

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

*Sinfonia & Chorus from
 Cantata Christ lag in Todesbanden, BWV 4*

Johann Sebastian Bach

*Cantata Ich will den Kreuzstab
 gerne tragen, BWV 56*

Members of the Bach Festival Orchestra

- Elizabeth Field, concertmaster, Inna Eyzerovich, Linda Kistler,
 Julie Bougher, Simon Maurer & Christopher Souza – violin
 Nina Falk & Agnès Maurer – viola
 Loretta O’Sullivan – cello
 Tim Ressler – bass
 Nobuo Kitagawa, Mark Snyder & Evan Ocheret – oboe
 Emeline Chong – bassoon
 Kerry Heimann – keyboards



Second Tuesdays

* 12:10–1:00pm

Bach at Noon returns
 to Allentown in June!

Next Bach at Noon
 Tuesday,

June 10, 2025

St. John’s Lutheran Church
 Downtown Allentown

As a courtesy to others, kindly silence your cell phone.



J.S. Bach | from Cantata *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, BWV 4

– Translation by H. Ellis Finger

1. Sinfonia

2. Chorus

Christ lag in Todesbanden
für unsre Sünd gegeben,
er ist wieder erstanden
und hat uns bracht das Leben;
des wir sollen fröhlich sein,
Gott loben und ihm dankbar sein
und singen Halleluja,
Halleluja!

*Christ lay in bondage to death
sacrificed for our sins,
he then rose again
and brought us new life;
of this we should be joyful,
praising God and giving thanks unto him
and sing Hallelujah,
Halleluja!*



J.S. Bach | Cantata *Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen*, BWV 56

– Translation by H. Ellis Finger

1. Aria (Bass)

Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen,
er kömmt von Gottes lieber Hand,
der führet mich nach meinen Plagen
zu Gott, in das gelobte Land.
Da leg ich den Kummer auf einmal ins Grab,
da wischt mir die Tränen mein Heiland selbst ab.

*The cross shall be my welcome burden,
it comes from God's kind hand
and will guide me, following my torments,
back to God, into the promised land.
There I will bury my grief in the grave
and the Savior himself will dry my tears.*

2. Recitative (Bass)

Mein Wandel auf der Welt
ist einer Schifffahrt gleich:
Betrübnis, Kreuz und Not
sind Wellen, welche mich bedecken
und auf den Tod
mich täglich schrecken;
mein Anker aber, der mich hält,
ist die Barmherzigkeit,
womit mein Gott mich oft erfreut.
Der rufet so zu mir:
ich bin bei dir,
ich will dich nicht verlassen noch versäumen!
Und wenn das wütenvolle Schäumen
sein Ende hat,
so tret ich aus dem Schiff in meine Stadt,
die ist das Himmelreich,
wohin ich mit den Frommen
aus vielem Trübsal werde kommen.

*My journey through the world
is like a voyage at sea:
sadness, burden, and distress
are like waves that wash over me
and to the death
terrify me each day;
my anchor, however, ever holding me steady,
is the mercy with which
God so often gladdens my spirit.
He cries out to me:
I am at your side.
I will neither abandon you nor show neglect!
And when the raging storm surge
comes to an end,
then I shall step out of the boat into my dwelling place,
entering the kingdom of heaven,
in the company of the righteous,
out of great affliction.*

• Loretta O'Sullivan, cello •

3. Aria (Bass)

Endlich, endlich wird mein Joch
wieder von mir weichen müssen.
Da krieg ich in dem Herren Kraft,
da hab ich Adlers Eigenschaft,
da fahr ich auf von dieser Erden
und laufe sonder matt zu werden.
O gescheh es heute noch!

*At long last my yoke
must be lifted from me.
Then shall I gain strength in the Lord,
then shall I know the eagle's nature,
then shall I soar upward from this Earth
and journey without growing weary.
O may it happen today!*

• Nobuo Kitagawa, oboe •

Bach | Cantata *Ich will den Kreuzstab gerne tragen* | continued

4. Recitative & Arioso (Bass)

Ich stehe fertig und bereit,
das Erbe meiner Seligkeit
mit Sehnen und Verlangen
von Jesus Händen zu empfangen.
Wie wohl wird mir geschehn,
wenn ich den Port der Ruhe werde sehn.
Da leg ich den Kummer auf einmal ins Grab,
da wischt mir die Tränen mein Heiland selbst ab.

*I stand ready and willing
to accept the birthright of my salvation
with longing and desire
from Jesus' own hands.
How fortunate I will be
when I sight the harbor of repose.
There I shall bury my grief in the grave
and the Savior himself will dry my tears.*

5. Chorale

Komm, o Tod, du Schlafes Bruder,
komm und führe mich nur fort;
löse meines Schiffeins Ruder,
bringe mich an sichern Port!
Es mag, wer da will, dich scheuen,
du kannst mich vielmehr erfreuen;
Denn durch dich komm ich herein
zu dem schönsten Jesulein.

*Come, o death, the brother of sleep,
come and lead me away;
cut loose my vessel's rudder,
bring me safely to my port!
Let anyone who so chooses shy away from you,
all the more shall you gladden my heart;
for through you I shall enter into
the presence of my Jesus most fair.*

Donation Challenge: April Bach at Noon Concert

The April concert was endowed partially through gifts from choir members and choir alumni during our 100th Bach Festival/2006–2007 season. Board President Harold Black and his wife, Allison, have offered a \$1,500 challenge gift this month, to honor the choir and to commemorate our final Bethlehem Bach at Noon Concert of this season.

They have offered to match \$1,500 of your Bach at Noon donations this month, essentially doubling the impact of your contributions.

“Allison and I are pleased to offer a matching gift for today’s concert, and to join with the choir members and alumni who have given their time, talent, and treasure to ensure that future generations can enjoy Bach at Noon concerts. I remember the wonder of those first concerts in 2005 listening to the music, learning about Bach’s methods, and watching as the audience grew. How wonderful to see an idea become a tradition.”

– Hal Black, President of the Board of Managers

This June, Hal Black will retire from our Board of the Managers, having served as President for a decade and the Bach organization for over 20 years. We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Hal for his steadfast leadership through a period marked by a pandemic, a significant leadership transition, and many creative and artistic accomplishments. We hope that you will join us in thanking Hal and Allison for this challenge and for making the well-being and future of the Bach Choir a priority in their lives.

Please donate generously to help us meet the April Bach at Noon challenge to support these concerts and to honor Hal’s leadership and service to our organization. Donate by mail, by phone (610-866-4382) or online at BACH.org. Text to give by phone to BNoon to 44321



We begin our Bach at Noon summer series in Allentown on Tuesday, June 10.

Join us at the beautiful St. John’s Lutheran Church, 37 S. 5th Street.

Doors open at 11:30. Mark your calendars!

Soloists

EDMUND MILLY, bass-baritone, is sought after for his “perfect diction” (*Los Angeles Times*), distinctive “delicacy and personal warmth” (*Boston Classical Review*), and “rich and resonant” sound (*KC Metropolis*). Milly has recently been featured by the Bach Choir of Bethlehem, Washington Bach Consort, the Oregon Bach Festival, the Baltimore Choral Arts Society, the Thirteen, and the American Pops Orchestra. His 2023–2024 season includes performances of Bach’s cantatas at Bachfest Leipzig, as well as with Trinity Wall Street, Cantata Collective, Gamut Bach Ensemble, the Oklahoma Bach Choir, and Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity. Recent solo credits include *Carmina Burana* with the University of South Carolina Symphony, Vaughan Williams’ *Five Mystical Songs* with the New Jersey Choral Society, and Brahms’ *Requiem* with the Thirteen. A consummate ensemble singer, he has also recently sung with Seraphic Fire, Ensemble Altera, and TENET. Milly’s musical education began with cello lessons at age three and continued at the American Boychoir School, where he amassed formative musical experiences under the batons of Seiji Ozawa, Kurt Mazur, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, and André Previn. He holds degrees from McGill University and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, where he studied with James Taylor. In his Lincoln Center debut with Yale Schola Cantorum directed by Masaaki Suzuki, Milly portrayed an “authoritative and confident” Jesus in Bach’s *St. John Passion* (*Seen and Heard International*). He has since sung the role at Trinity Wall Street and the Oregon Bach Festival and has performed over 90 of Bach’s cantatas. A veteran of the U.S. Army Band Pershing’s Own, he has been a soloist at the White House, the Pentagon, and the U.S. Supreme Court. Performance schedule at edmundmilly.com.

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 115 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 Salzburger Dom, Nikolaikirche in Potsdam, and the Thomaskirche, Bach’s church in Leipzig, as part of the 2024 European tour; Herkulesaal at Munich’s Royal Residence 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 Bach Choir has released 12 recordings on the Dorian and Analekta labels, including most recently Mendelssohn/Bach *Matthäus-Passion* (2024), Bach’s Cantata 21 and Handel’s *Ode for Saint Cecilia’s Day* (2018), *A Child’s Christmas in Bethlehem* (2013), and *St. 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.

NOBUO KITAGAWA, oboe, a graduate of the Tokyo University of the Arts, holds both a Master of Music and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Yale University. He has won the Woolsey Hall Competition, the NHK Young Artists’ Audition, and the Katz Young Musicians’ Competition, which sponsored his debut recital in New York City. He has appeared as a concerto soloist with the Denver Symphony, Yale Philharmonia, Orchestra New England, and the Pennsylvania Sinfonia Orchestra. As an orchestral musician, he has performed with Orchestra New England, the New Haven Symphony, the Stamford Symphony, the Princeton Symphony, and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s. He is currently the principal oboist of the Pennsylvania Sinfonia Orchestra. On Broadway, he performed in the productions of *Beauty and the Beast*, *Miss Saigon*, and *The Phantom of the Opera*. Additionally, he served as the principal oboist for the Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber National Tour. He recorded for Koch International, Delos, and New World Records. The *Morning Call* praised his playing, describing it as having a “sweet, velvety sound that simply melted into every corner of the hall.” He is a faculty member at Lafayette College, Muhlenberg College, and the Kinhaven Adult Chamber Music Workshop. His YouTube channel, featuring nearly 900 instrumental exercise pieces, enjoys a large worldwide following. He also publishes his work through his online store, NK Music Lab, including modern editions of compositions by Georg Philipp Telemann.



Festival Artist-in-Residence
Rachell Ellen Wong



One Festival. Four Days...

117th Bethlehem BACH FESTIVAL

A New Festival Format! We are thrilled to launch our redesigned Festival experience, now transformed into one unforgettable four-day weekend. Enriching opening day programs kick off the revamped schedule on Thursday, where we step **Outside the Bachs with Fire & Grace**, an eclectic collaboration between guitarist **William Coulter** and violinist **Edwin Huizinga**. This unique duo explores the connective musical elements of classical, folk, and contemporary traditions from around the world. **Flamenco dancer Fanny Ara** joins **Fire & Grace** for this special interdisciplinary program. The music continues Friday and Saturday with our traditional lineup.

Experience the time-honored tradition of the choir’s annual performance of Bach’s *Mass in B Minor*, retaining its pride of place on Saturday at 2:30pm. Delight in our cherished core concerts, including **Bach at 8**, **Ifor Jones Memorial Chamber Music Concert**, **Bach at 4**, and **Zimmermann’s Coffee House**.

The celebrations conclude on Sunday with two new additions, a **Lovefeast** hosted by Central Moravian Church and the **Cantata in Context Series**, along with the traditional **Chamber Music in the Saal**. These concerts take place in the heart of the newly inscribed **UNESCO World Heritage Site** on the grounds of the Moravian Church Settlements – Bethlehem.

Throughout the Festival, you can enjoy our talented Bach Choir singers, Bach Festival Orchestra, and invited guest performers. Join us for this immersive musical experience as we celebrate Bach’s music and influence, renew old friendships, and forge new bonds.

An Unforgettable Experience. THURS–SUN | MAY 8–11 | HISTORIC & SOUTHSIDE BETHLEHEM



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



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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

As an active and vibrant Moravian faith community in Bethlehem for over 282 years, Central Moravian Church is situated in the newly inscribed UNESCO World Heritage site, recognizing the Moravian Church Settlements of Gracehill (Northern Ireland), Christiansfeld (Denmark), and Herrnhut (Germany), as well as Bethlehem.

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 Minister 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.

Bach at Noon broadcast LIVE on WWFM & now LIVESTREAMED!

Bach at Noon concerts are broadcast live on WWFM, a long-time media sponsor. This year's broadcasts are made possible by the generous support of John L. and the late Carol H. Daniel and Arthur Mead Martin. Listen live at WWFM.org or tune in to a station in your area.

NEW! Since September 2024, Bach at Noon concerts are also livestreamed on the choir's YouTube channel in partnership with Central Moravian Church. Please see BACH.org for more information. Please donate to support our Bach at Noon live broadcast.

Bach at Noon 2024-2025 Bethlehem Schedule

2024
September 10
October 8
November 12

2025
January 14
February 11
March 11
April 8



Special thanks to:
Central Moravian Church,
Senior Pastor Janel Rice
Rebecca Lepore, Minister of Music

John C. Baker Recordings, LLC,
for generosity and expertise in support
of livestreaming

The Guarantors of the Bach Choir
for their continuing support.

Bach at Noon 2025 Allentown Schedule:

June 10 July 8 August 12

610-866-4382 | BACH.org