



51st Year

2021-2022

BACH

Cantata Vespers



**Grace Lutheran Church
River Forest, Illinois**

**Sunday afternoons
Lecture at 3:00 p.m.
Prelude at 3:45 p.m.**

October 31, 2021

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott

A mighty fortress is our God

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church

We are glad that you have joined us for this afternoon's Bach Cantata Vespers.

Those worshipping in person at Grace are asked to wear masks throughout the service, in accordance with state and local mandates. For those not able to worship with us in person, today's service is available on the [Bach Cantata Vespers YouTube Channel](#).

For those who have trouble hearing, sound enhancement units are available in the back of the church and may be obtained from an usher.

Please silence all cell phones and pagers.

Recording or photography of any kind during the service is strictly forbidden.

We ask that you kindly refrain from applause during this service of worship.

☐ Joy-ous light of glo - ry: ☑ of the im - mor - tal Fa - ther;

heav - en - ly, ho - ly, bless - ed Je - sus Christ.

We have come to the set - ting of the sun, and we look to the eve - ning light.

We sing to God, the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it: You are wor - thy of

be - ing praised with pure voic - es for - ev - er. O Son of God,

O Giv - er of life: The u - ni - verse pro - claims your glo - ry.

☐ The Lord be with you. ☑ And al - so with you.

☐ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. ☑ It is right to give him thanks and praise.

☐ Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who led your people

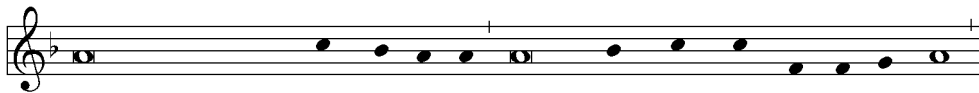
Israel by a pil - lar of cloud by day and a pil - lar of fire by night:



Enlighten our darkness by the light of your Christ; may his Word be a lamp



to our feet and a light to our path; for you are mer - ci - ful,



and you love your whole cre - a - tion, and we, your crea - tures, glo - ri - fy you,



Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it. **☩** A - men

✠ PSALMODY ✠

We sit.

PSALM 141

Women sing parts marked ❶. Men sing parts marked ❷. All sing parts marked ❸.



❸ Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense;



the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.



❶ O Lord, I call to you; come to me quick - ly; hear my voice when I cry to you.



❷ Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense;



the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.



I Set a watch be-fore my mouth, O Lord, and guard the door of my lips.



II Let not my heart in-cline to an - y e - vil thing; let me not be oc - cu -



pied in wick - ed - ness with e - vil - do - ers. I But my eyes are



turned to you, Lord God; in you I take ref - uge. Strip me not of my life.



II Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;



I as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.



III Let my prayer rise be - fore you as in - cense;



the lift - ing up of my hands as the eve - ning sac - ri - fice.

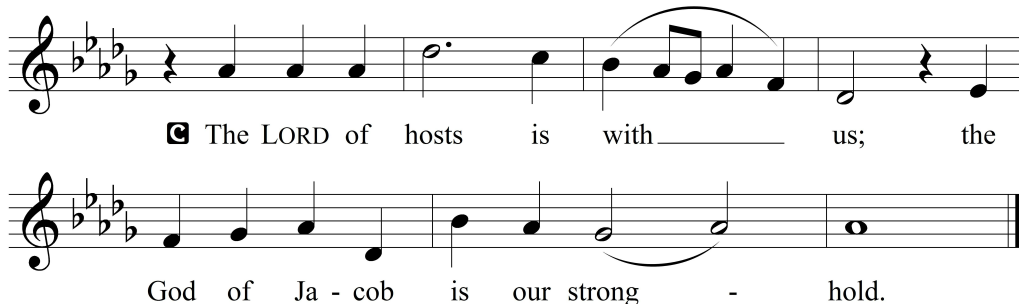
Silence for meditation is observed, then:

PSALM PRAYER

L Let the incense of our repentant prayer ascend before you, O Lord, and let your lovingkindness descend upon us, that with purified minds we may sing your praises with the Church on earth and the whole heavenly host, and may glorify you forever and ever.

C Amen.

The Antiphon is sung first by the choir, then by all each time thereafter.



☐ The LORD of hosts is with _____ us; the
God of Ja - cob is our strong - hold.

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☐ **Choir** God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;
though its waters rage and foam, and though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

☐ **ANTIPHON**

☐ **Choir** There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be shaken; God shall help it at the break of day.
The nations rage, and the kingdoms shake; God speaks, and the earth melts away.

☐ **ANTIPHON**

☐ **Choir** Come now, regard the works of the Lord, what desolations God has brought upon earth;
behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world;
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.
“Be still, then, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”

☐ **ANTIPHON**

Silence for meditation is observed, then:

PSALM PRAYER

☐ **L** Lord God, our refuge and strength,
when the restless powers of this world
and the waters of hell rise up against your holy city, watch over it and keep it safe.
By the river that flows from the throne of the Lamb,
purify this new Jerusalem as your chosen dwelling,
for you are with us, our stronghold now and forever.

☐ **Amen.**

OFFERING/VOLUNTARY: Three Hymn Preludes on “If God Himself Be for Me”

Ronald Nelson (1927–2014)

Henry V. Gerike (b. 1948)

John Eggert (b. 1946)

*The offering assists in defraying costs of the Bach Cantata Vespers ministry.
Please place your offering in the plates at the doors to the church following the service
or contribute online at www.bachvespers.org. Your generosity is appreciated.*

We stand.

HYMN: If God Himself Be For Me

Concertato by Michael D. Costello
(b. 1979)



- 1 If God him - self be for me, I may a host de - fy;
2 I build on this foun - da - tion, that Je - sus and his blood
Choir 3 Christ Je - sus is my splen - dor, my sun, my light, a - lone;
4 For joy my heart is ring - ing; all sor - row dis - ap - pears;



for when I pray, be - fore me my foes, con - found - ed, fly.
a - lone are my sal - va - tion, the true, e - ter - nal good.
were he not my de - fend - er be - fore God's awe - some throne,
and full of mirth and sing - ing, it wipes a - way all tears.



If Christ, my head and mas - ter, be - friend me from a - bove,
With - out him all that pleas - es will vain and emp - ty prove.
I nev - er should find fa - vor and mer - cy in his sight,
The sun that cheers my spir - it is Je - sus Christ, my king;



what foe or what di - sas - ter can drive me from his love?
The gifts I have from Je - sus a - lone are worth my love.
but be de - stroyed for - ev - er as dark - ness by the light.
the heav'n I shall in - her - it makes me re - joice and sing.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676; tr. Richard Massie, 1800–1887, adapt.
Music: IST GOTT FÜR MICH, Augsburg, 1609

✠ WORD ✠

We sit.

READING: 2 Thessalonians 2:3–8

Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction. He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God. Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you? And you know what is now restraining him, so that he may be revealed when his time comes. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but only until the one who now restrains it is removed. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth, annihilating him by the manifestation of his coming.

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

READING: Revelation 14:6–8

Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth to every nation and tribe and language and people. He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

Then another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HOMILY

The Rev. James L. Brooks



*Translation of the German text and notes corresponding to each movement are below.
Background notes for the cantata are found on pages 24–25 in this worship folder.*

1. Chorus

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,
A mighty fortress is our God,
 Ein gute Wehr und Waffen;
A good defense and weapon.
 Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,
He helps to free us from all need,
 Die uns itzt hat betroffen.
Which now has us befallen.
 Der alte böse Feind,
The old evil foe,
 Mit Ernst er's jetzt meint,
Means it seriously now;
 Groß Macht und viel List
Great power and much guile
 Sein grausam Rüstung ist,
Are his gruesome armor.
 Auf Erd ist nicht seinsgleichen.
On earth he has no equal.

Luther's great melody and text clearly inspired Bach to create a magnificent choral composition in this opening movement. Each phrase of the chorale tune and each line of the text are presented in an intricate polyphonic structure that glorifies the thought of the text, but does not obscure the chorale melody. A full orchestra, which includes three trumpets and timpani, as well as the usual strings and keyboard, adds to the luster of the setting.

The voices begin in turn—tenor, alto, soprano, bass—each supported by an instrument, to present a mildly embellished version of the melody. Soon the simple chorale melody is also sounded above and below in long notes by instruments alone: the trumpets on high, paired with the oboes beneath, and followed immediately in strict canon by the double bass three full octaves below the trumpets. As if this overall effect of grandeur is not enough, Bach continues the pattern and treats each line with special meaning. For example, in line five, which speaks of the devil as “the old evil foe,” the bass line creeps up in menacing chromatic motion while the choral voices sing their elaborate polyphony. Throughout, trumpet and timpani sound arresting accents in significant phrases.



2. Aria (Bass) and Chorale (Soprano)

Alles, was von Gott geboren, ist zum Siegen auserkoren.

Everything that is born of God, is ordained to triumph.

Mit unsrer Macht ist nichts getan,

With our power nothing can be done,

Wir sind gar bald verloren.

We are quickly doomed.

Es streit' vor uns der rechte Mann,

But fighting for us is the right man,

Den Gott selbst hat erkoren.

Whom God himself has chosen.

Wer bei Christi Blutpanier in der Taufe Treu geschworen,

Whoever, under Christ's blood banner, has sworn his faith in baptism,

Siegt im Geiste für und für.

Triumphs in the Spirit forever.

Fragst du, wer er ist?

You ask, who he is?

Er heißt Jesus Christ,

He is called Jesus Christ,

Der Herre Zebaoth,

The Lord Sabaoth,

Und ist kein andrer Gott,

There is no other God,

Das Feld muß er behalten.

The field he must hold.

Alles, was von Gott geboren, ist zum Siegen auserkoren.

Everything that is born of God, is ordained to triumph.

Four distinct elements cooperate in a striking setting of stanza two of the chorale that is combined with a poetic commentary on the text: 1) a line of persistent bustling motion by the upper strings, 2) the clear, slightly elaborated chorale melody of the soprano supported simultaneously by, 3) a highly embellished version of the same chorale melody played by the oboe, and 4) an independent florid line of the bass vocalist, singing the text of the commentary on the chorale. While it may seem overwhelming to grasp all of the intricacies Bach employed in the setting, the total effect is one of magnificent militancy as the ultimate victory of the Christian in the face of devilish adversity is described.

3. Recitative (Bass)

Erwäge doch, Kind Gottes, die so große Liebe,

Consider, child of God, how great is the love,

Da Jesus sich mit seinem Blute dir verschriebe,

Since Jesus dedicated himself to you with his blood,

Wormit er dich zum Kriege wider Satans Heer und wider Welt, und Sünde

Whereby he, in battle against Satan's host and against the world and sin,

Geworben hat!

Has won you!

Gib nicht in deiner Seele dem Satan und den Lastern statt!

Grant not a place in your soul for the devil and vice!

Laß nicht dein Herz, den Himmel Gottes auf der Erden, zur Wüste werden!

Let not your heart, God's heaven on earth, become a wasteland!

Bereue deine Schuld mit Schmerz, daß Christi Geist mit dir sich fest verbinde!

Repent your guilt with pain, that Christ's spirit may firmly bind itself to you!

A simple declamation over a static accompaniment with a text that challenges the child of God to steadfastness. The writing becomes more active as union with Christ is contemplated in the last line of the text.

4. Aria (Soprano)

Komm in mein Herzenshaus,

Come into my heart's dwelling,

Herr Jesu, mein Verlangen!

Lord Jesus, my longing!

Treib Welt und Satan aus

Drive the world and Satan out

Und laß dein Bild in mir erneuert prangen!

And let your image shine renewed in me!

Weg, schnöder Sündengraus!

Away, vile horror of sin!

Christ is invited into the "heart's dwelling" of the believer at the beginning and end of this *da capo* aria. When the longing (*Verlangen*) of the faithful is addressed, the line is stretched by melismas of many notes over several measures. In the middle section, which states that Satan and the world must be cast out at *weg, weg, weg* ("hence," or "away, away, away"), the soloist sings commanding rising intervals. At the repetition of *Verlangen* in the final section, Bach repeats the earlier melismas, but further extends and ornaments the melodic line.



5. Chorale

Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär
And if the world were full of devils
Und wollten uns verschlingen,
Who wanted to devour us,
So fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr,
We are not frightened very much,
Es soll uns doch gelingen.
We shall surely be successful.
Der Fürst dieser Welt,
The prince of this world,
Wie saur er sich stellt,
However angry he may be,
Tut er uns doch nicht,
He can do nothing to us,
Das macht, er ist gericht',
Because he is condemned,
Ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen.
One little word can fell him.

The unadorned chorale melody returns in stanza three in long, firm notes for all choral voices singing in unison over the brilliant instrumental accompaniment of the orchestra, which again includes oboes and trumpets. Bach has chosen a 6/8 meter, somewhat unusual for a movement of such martial character.

6. Recitative (Tenor)

So stehe dann bei Christi blutgefärbten Fahne,

So then by Christ's bloodstained flag,

O Seele, fest

O soul, stand firm,

Und glaube, daß dein Haupt dich nicht verläßt,

And believe, that your master will not desert you,

Ja, daß sein Sieg

Yea, that his triumph

Auch dir den Weg zu deiner Krone bahne!

Will also pave the way to your crown!

Tritt freudig an den Krieg!

March joyfully to war!

Wirst du nur Gottes Wort

If only you would hear God's word

So hören als bewahren,

And as well as preserve it,

So wird der Feind gezwungen auszufahren,

Then the foe will be forced to flee,

Dein Heiland bleibt dein Hort!

Your Savior remains your stronghold!

The faithful believer is now exhorted to stand firm in a simple recitative that flows directly into a brief arioso. The believer is encouraged to go into battle against the foe.



7. Aria (Alto and Tenor)

Wie selig sind doch die, die Gott im Munde tragen,
How happy are they, who bear God on their tongues;
Doch selger ist das Herz, das ihn im Glauben trägt!
Even happier is the heart that bears him in faith!
Es bleibt unbesiegt und kann die Feinde schlagen
It remains undefeated and can strike the enemy
Und wird zuletzt gekrönt, wenn es den Tod erlegt.
And will at last be crowned, when it has slain death.

The oboe and violin and the alto and tenor voices engage in a kind of double duet in triple meter. The five brief sections of the movement present the instruments and voices moving in canonic imitation and in sweet parallel motion. Words such as *tragen* (to bear), *bleibet* (to remain) and *schlagen* (to strike) each receive extended melismas or long-held notes that illustrate Bach's care in setting individual words of the text. The score calls for an *oboe da caccia* ("hunting oboe," a tenor instrument pitched a fifth lower than the conventional oboe), which is usually replaced today by an English horn.

8. Chorale

Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn
The Word they shall let stand,
Und kein' Dank dazu haben.
And receive no thanks for it.
Er ist bei uns wohl auf dem Plan
He is surely with us on the plain
Mit seinem Geist und Gaben.
With his spirit and his gifts.
Nehmen sie uns den Leib,
If they should take our life,
Gut, Ehr, Kind und Weib,
Wealth, honor, child and wife,
Laß fahren dahin,
Let them pass away,
Sie habens kein' Gewinn;
They will have no gain;
Das Reich muß uns doch bleiben.
The kingdom must for us remain.

The cantata concludes with a triumphant setting of stanza four of the chorale for all voices and instruments—one of the finest and most familiar of Bach's chorale harmonizations—eminently appropriate in addressing the victory assured the believer by Christ.

Silence is observed, then:

- Ⓐ In many and various ways God spoke to his people of old by the prophets.
- Ⓑ But now in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.

We stand.

MAGNIFICAT



Ⓑ My soul pro-claims the great-ness of the Lord; my spir-it re-joic-es in



God my Sav-ior, for he has looked with fa-vor on his low-ly ser-vant.



From this day all gen-er-a-tions will call me bless-ed.



The Al-might-y has done great things for me, and ho-ly is his name.



He has mer-cy on those who fear him in ev-'ry gen-er-a-tion.



He has shown the strength of his arm; he has scat-tered the



proud in their con-cept. He has cast down the might-y from their thrones,



and has lift-ed up the low-ly. He has filled the





hun- gry with good things, and the rich he has sent a - way emp - ty.



He has come to the help of his ser - vant Is - ra - el,



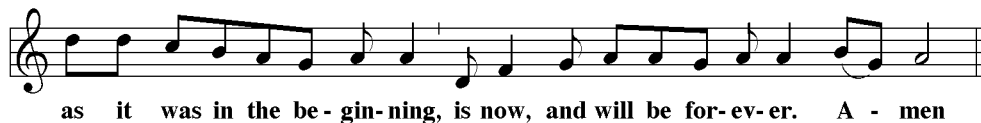
for he has re - mem - bered his prom - ise of mer - cy, the prom - ise he



made to our fa - thers, to A - bra - ham and his chil - dren for - ev - er.



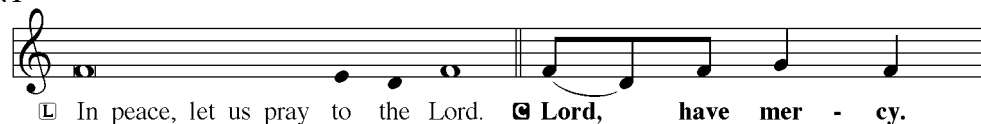
Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;



as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men

✠ PRAYERS ✠

LITANY



☐ In peace, let us pray to the Lord. ☑ Lord, have mer - cy.

After each petition:

☐ ...let us pray to the Lord.



☑ Lord, have mer - cy.



The litany continues:

☒ For the faithful who have gone before us and are at rest, let us give thanks to the Lord.



The litany concludes:

☒ Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Silence is kept, then:

☒ Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.



☒ O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works: Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God forever.

☒ **Amen.**

We sit.

CHORAL PRAYER: Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809–1847)

Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich, Herr Gott, zu unsern Zeiten.

Graciously grant us peace, Lord God, in our time.

Es ist doch ja kein anderer nicht, der für uns könnte streiten, denn du, unser Gott, alleine.

There is indeed no other, who could fight for us, but you, our God, alone.

Martin Luther



We stand.

LORD'S PRAYER

☒ Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

☑ **Our Father, who art in heaven,**
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

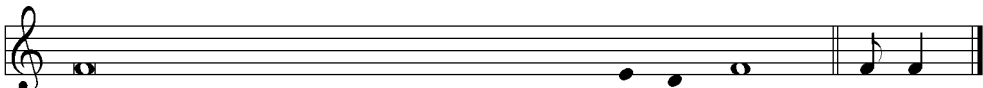
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

BENEDICAMUS DOMINO & BENEDICTION



☒ Let us bless the Lord. ☑ **Thanks be to God.**



☒ The almighty and merciful Lord,
the Father, † the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and pre-serve you. ☑ **A-men**



HYMN: A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Concertato by Michael D. Costello



1 A might - y for - tress is our God,
 2 No strength of ours can match his might!
 Choir 3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land
 4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide,



a sword and shield vic - to - rious;
 We would be lost, re - ject - ed.
 all threat - 'ning to de - vour us,
 no thanks to foes, who fear it;



he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod
 But now a cham - pion comes to fight,
 we trem - ble not, un - moved we stand;
 for God him - self fights by our side



and wins sal - va - tion glo - rious.
 whom God him - self e - lect - ed.
 they can - not o - ver - pow'r us.
 with weap - ons of the Spir - it.



The old e - vil foe, sworn to work us woe,
 Ask who this may be: Lord of hosts is he!
 This world's prince may rage, in fierce war en - gage.
 If they take our house, goods, fame, child, or spouse,



with dread craft and might he arms him - self to fight.
 Je - sus Christ, our Lord, God's on - ly Son, a - dored.
 He is doomed to fail; God's judg - ment must pre - vail!
 wrench our life a - way, they can - not win the day.

On earth he has no e - qual.
 He holds the field vic - to - rious.
 One lit - tle word sub - dues him.
 The king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, 1978

Music: EIN FESTE BURG, Martin Luther, 1483–1546

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DISMISSAL

L Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

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Leading Worship Today

The Rev. David R. Lyle, leader
The Rev. James L. Brooks, homilist
Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra
The Rev. Michael D. Costello, cantor
Timothy Spelbring, organist
Susan Nelson, soprano
Amanda Koopman, mezzo soprano
Ryan Townsend Strand, tenor
Douglas Anderson, baritone
Anne Claud, videographer
Bill Rohlfling, audio engineer
Al Swanson, sound board operator

Orchestra

Cynthia Fudala, flute
Christine Janzow Phillips, oboe/oboe d'amore
Adèle-Marie Buis, oboe/English horn
Nancy Hagen, English horn
Barbara Drapcho, clarinet
Dianne Ryan, bassoon
Liz Deitemyer, horn
Greg Fudala, Christian Anderson,
Candi Horton, and Brian Becker, trumpets
Tim Coffman, trombone
John Harshey, tuba
Richard Janicki, timpani
Jon Johnson, percussion
Betty Lewis, Lori Ashikawa, Mark Agnor,
Lou Torick, and Reka Seko, violins 1
Roy Meyer, Carol Yampolsky,
Henry Zheng, and Amanda Fenton, violins 2
Naomi Hildner, Becky Coffman, and Ben Weber, violas
Jean Hatmaker and Victoria Mayne, cello
Douglas Johnson, double bass
Timothy Spelbring, continuo organ
Jeremy Zimmer, organ

Chorus

Soprano

Ann Anderson
Katrina Beck
Judy Berghaus
Cathy DeLanoy
Janel Dennen
Donna Dumpys
Gwen Gotsch
Sarah Gruendler-Ladner
Julie Hinz
Kate Hogenson
Susan Nelson
Ellen Pullin
Liz Rudy

Alto

Karen Brunssen
Lois Cornils
Leanne Cribbs
Margaret Garmatz
Lois Guebert
Susan Hammon
Cynthia Hill
Martha Houston
Johanna Johnson
Amanda Koopman
Christa Krout
Marilyn Moehlenkamp
Karen Rohde
Irmgard Swanson
Liz Thompson

Tenor

Paul Aanonsen
Paul Cline
Daniel Krout
Colin Krueger
Justin Martin
John Rudy
Ryan Townsend Strand

Bass

Douglas Anderson
John Bouman
Kim Brunssen
Jeff Cribbs
David Kluge
Bill Pullin
Greg Rohlfling
Bob Sideman





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2021–2022

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Cantata Vespers



**Grace Lutheran Church
River Forest, Illinois**

**Sunday afternoons
Lecture at 3:00 p.m.
Prelude at 3:45 p.m.**

September 26

BWV 29

Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir *We thank you, God, we thank you*

Rebekah Weant Costello, Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Schaumburg, Illinois, homilist
Thomas Schmidt, Chicago, Illinois, guest organist

October 31

BWV 80

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott *A mighty fortress is our God*

James L. Brooks, Harmony Community Church, Chicago, homilist
Barbara Harbach: *Suite Luther*

November 21

BWV 61

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland *Now come, Savior of the nations*

Esther Menn, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, homilist
Chad Fothergill, Birmingham, Alabama, guest organist

January 30

BWV 123

Liebster Immanuel, Herzog der Frommen *Dearest Immanuel, ruler of the righteous*

Troy E. Medlin, Grace Lutheran Church and School, River Forest, Illinois, homilist
Kontras Quartet: Eleanor Bartsch, François Henkins, Ben Weber, and Jean Hatmaker

February 27

BWV 23

Du wahrer Gott und Davids Sohn *You true God and David's son*

Peter A. Pettit, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Davenport, Iowa, homilist
J. S. Bach: *Orchestral Suite No. 1 in C Major, BWV 1066*

March 27

BWV 178

Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält *Where the Lord God does not abide with us*

Myron F. McCoy, First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple, homilist
Vivaldi: *Concerto for 4 violins in B minor, RV 580*
Hillert: *Prelude to Evening Prayer*

April 24

BWV 67

Halt im Gedächtnis Jesum Christ *Hold in remembrance Jesus Christ*

E. Jon Benson, Saint John Lutheran Church, Council Bluffs, Iowa, homilist
Steven Wentte, Concordia University Chicago, guest organist

May 22

BWV 172

Erschallet ihr Lieder, erklinget ihr Saiten! *Ring forth, you songs, resound, you strings!*

Ingrid Schalk, Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran Church, Loudon, Tennessee, homilist
J. M. Molter: *Sonata Grossa in D Major for 3 trumpets, 2 oboes, timpani, strings, and continuo*

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BACKGROUND OF THE CANTATA

Martin Luther wrote his best-known hymn, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” sometime between 1527 and 1529, roughly ten years after he set off a theological and political firestorm in Germany with the publication of his *Ninety-Five Theses*. A 1529 broadsheet copy of the hymn text, a paraphrase of Psalm 46, is headlined “A Hymn of Comfort.” Luther’s words vividly describe the upheaval of confrontations with “the old evil foe,” but he also reminds embattled Christians that they need not fear, because an all-powerful God fights on their side. Through the centuries, the hymn has become known as “The Battle Hymn of the Reformation” and a musical symbol of Lutheranism.*

Bach’s cantata on Luther’s great hymn, BWV 80, was the first of his cantatas to be published in the 19th century — in 1821, before the publication of the Passions or the B Minor Mass. In a 1991 essay Bach scholar Christoph Wolff notes “embarrassing tendencies in its reception” in the 19th and 20th centuries, as the chorale settings of the first and fifth movements, with their trumpet fanfares, became associated with German nationalism. Those trumpets, however, are not found in Bach’s original score. The trumpets and timpani were added by his son, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, who, after his father’s death, repurposed the first and fifth movements for another occasion, using Latin texts. (The trumpets, however, have become part of traditional performances of BWV 80 and will be included in this afternoon’s Bach Cantata Vespers performance.)

Bach’s *Ein feste Burg*, BWV 80, has its roots in a cantata on baptismal themes, *Alles was von Gott geboren*, BWV 80a, which Bach composed in 1715 when serving as organist at the Court of Weimar. It was written for the Third Sunday in Lent to a text by Salomo Franck. The gospel reading for that day was Luke 11:14–28, in which Jesus explains that casting out devils was a sign of the kingdom. Bach quoted the tune of “*Ein Feste Burg*” in the oboe part in the accompaniment to the bass aria and ended the cantata with a four-part setting of the second stanza of the hymn (“*Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär*” — and if the world were full of devils).

Bach could not perform this music in Leipzig, where cantatas were not presented during the penitential season of Lent, but he used the arias and recitatives as the basis for his chorale cantata on “*Ein Feste Burg*.” An early version (BWV 80b), dated to 1723, opened with a straightforward four-part chorale setting of the first stanza of the hymn. The 228-measure opening chorus of the later version of the cantata was not composed until the mid-to-late 1730s, a decade after Bach’s years of prolific cantata composition. Alfred Dürr calls it “the high point of Bach’s chorale-based vocal music” with its phrase-by-phrase contrapuntal treatment of the hymn tune. In the second movement Bach added a soprano to the *cantus*



firmus, singing the text of the second stanza of the hymn, doubled by the oboe. The third stanza of the chorale appears in a unison choral setting accompanied by strings. The closing chorale uses the text of Luther's final stanza.

Philip Spitta, in his multi-volume biography of Bach published in Germany in 1873 and 1880, describes BWV 80 as a high point in German culture:

The bold spirit of native vigour, which called the German Reformation into being, and which still stirred and moved in Bach's art, has never found any artistic expression which could even remotely compare with this stupendous creation.

Both Luther and Bach would have attributed that "bold spirit" to divine help and inspiration, honoring God with the glory of their creations. Thankful for God's grace, they would have counted themselves among those described in the alto-tenor duet:

How happy are they, who bear God on their tongues;
Even happier is the heart that bears him in faith!

Gwen Gotsch

*The hymn's close ties to Lutheran identity continue into the 21st century: the password for the public wi-fi network here at Grace Lutheran Church is "mightyfortress."

Notes on the individual cantata movements were prepared by Carlos Messerli.

BIOGRAPHIES



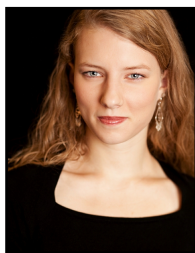
Michael D. Costello, director, has served as Cantor at Grace since 2008. He has served as a church musician in several parishes and as a pastor at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Columbia, South Carolina. A native of Pennsylvania, he graduated with a Bachelor in Sacred Music from Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory, North Carolina, and a Master of Sacred Theology from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina. He has published choral and organ works with several publishers and is Artistic Director of Chicago Choral Artists.



Douglas Anderson, baritone, is a long-standing member of Grace Lutheran Church and its choir. He has been a soloist in Grace's Bach Cantata Vespers since 1978 and has also been a frequent soloist with Chicago's Music of the Baroque. Dr. Anderson has appeared with many Chicago area ensembles and has performed several times in Evanston's Bach Week Festival. Dr. Anderson is a neurosurgeon and professor at Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood. He is married to Ann, who often performs as flutist at Grace. They are the parents of four adult children, all of whom have studied music.



James L. Brooks, homilist, currently serves as the Senior Pastor of Harmony Community Church and as the Vice-President of mission and community engagement at Lawndale Christian Health Center. Pastor Brooks is a *summa cum laude* graduate of Concordia University Chicago, where he majored in Organizational Management. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Northern Theological Seminary, where he was the first John Perkins Scholar graduate. Pastor Brooks completed his Youth and Theology Certification at Princeton Theological Seminary and Clinical Pastoral Education unit at the University of Illinois Medical Center. He is also a John Maxwell Certified Life Coach.



Amanda Koopman, mezzo soprano, has recently performed as soloist in Vivaldi's *Gloria* and Bach's *Mass in F* with Music of the Baroque, performed several recitals in cities in China, and Bach's *Mass in B Minor* with Bella Voce. She has participated as soloist for the Northwest Symphony Orchestra and is a regular soloist with the Bach Cantata Vespers series at Grace. She has performed with the Chicago Arts Orchestra, Grant Park Music Festival, Music of the Baroque, Elgin Master Chorale, and University of Illinois at Chicago. She graduated from Northwestern with her Masters in vocal performance in 2011.



Betty Lewis, principal violinist, is an active violinist and violist in the Chicago area performing with groups as diverse as Broadway in Chicago shows and as an extra with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. In the summer, she is on the faculty of the Birch Creek Music Performance Center and is a member of the Peninsula Music Festival, both in Door County, Wisconsin. She teaches violin and viola at Francis Parker School in Chicago and at the Chicago School of Violin Making.



Susan Nelson, soprano, a frequent soloist at Grace, holds degrees from the University of Illinois and the Eastman School of Music. Susan teaches voice at Concordia University and Providence St. Mel School, and is the choir and music director at Grace Lutheran Church in Mount Prospect. She has appeared as a chorister and soloist with Lyric Opera of Chicago, Grant Park Chorus and Music of the Baroque, for which she has also served as a teaching artist for the past six years. Other local appearances include performances with Midwest Mozart Festival, Harbor Country Opera, and the Rockford and Elmhurst Choral Unions.



Ryan Townsend Strand, tenor, is a Minnesota native whose passion for Baroque and New Music have afforded him an expanding career as a concert and oratorio soloist. Strand most recently was a featured soloist with Bella Voce performing Mozart's *Requiem*. Along with being thrilled to return to Bach Cantata Vespers at Grace, this season he will be heard in Bach's *Johannes-Passion* with the Elmhurst Symphony, Wally Gunn's *The Ascendant* with the William Ferris Chorale, and Kevin Puts' *To Touch The Sky* with La Caccina & Constellation Men's Ensemble. Strand has sung with the Grammy award-winning contemporary vocal ensemble The Crossing in Philadelphia under the direction of Donald Nally. Locally, he performs with the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Music of the Baroque, Stare at the Sun, and the Grant Park Festival Chorus. He is a founding tenor and executive director of Constellation Men's Ensemble in Chicago.



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Special thanks are extended to Karen P. Danford for her translation of the cantata text from German to English, to Gwen Gotsch for her background notes on the cantata, and to Len Berghaus for tuning the continuo organ.

Thank you for your continued support of this ministry and for your prayers. *Soli Deo Gloria!*

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