



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.**

November 21, 2021

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

Today's Bach Cantata Vespers service is underwritten by Bill and Ellen Pullin in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary.

- ✦ Worship and the music ministry at Grace have been glorious blessings to their life together here.
- ✦ Please join us in the gymnasium following the service to celebrate these blessings together.

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.

Christ the King Sunday
November 21, 2021

EVENING PRAYER



PRELUDE

Livre d'orgue contenant une suite du premier ton, 1708

Pierre Du Mage
(1674–1751)

Notes on the prelude and voluntary are found on page 24 in this worship folder.

- I. Plein jeu
- II. Fugue
- III. Trio
- IV. Tierce en taille
- V. Basse de trompette
- VI. Récit
- VII. Duo
- VIII. Grand jeu

Chad Fothergill, organist

We stand.

SERVICE OF LIGHT



☐ Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, ☑ **the light no darkness can over- come.**



☐ Stay with us, Lord, for it is eve- ning, ☑ **and the day is almost o- ver.**



☐ Let your light scat- ter the dark-ness, ☑ **and illumine your Church.**

☐ 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.

MOTET: *O Heiland, reiß die Himmel auf*, Op. 74, No. 2

Johannes Brahms
(1833–1897)

*O Heiland, reiß die Himmel auf,
Herab, herauf vom Himmel lauf,
Reiß ab vom Himmel Tor und Tür,
Reiß ab, was Schloss und Riegel für.*

*O Gott, ein' Tau vom Himmel gieß,
Im Tau herab o Heiland fließ,
Ihr Wolken, brecht und regnet aus,
Den König über Jakobs Haus.*

*O Erd, schlag aus, schlag aus o Erd,
Daß Berg und Tal grün alles werd,
O Erd, herfür dies Blümlein bring,
O Heiland, aus der Erden spring.*

*Hie leiden wir die größte Not,
Vor Augen steht der bittere Tod,
Ach komm, führ uns mit starker Hand
Von Elend zu dem Vaterland.*

*Da wollen wir all danken dir,
Unserm Erlöser für und für,
Da wollen wir all loben dich,
Je allzeit immer und ewiglich.
Amen.*

**O Savior, tear open the heavens,
Flow down to us from heaven above,
Tear off heaven's gate and door,
Tear off every lock and bar.**

**O God, a dew from heaven pour,
In the dew, O Savior, downward flow,
You clouds, break open and rain down,
The one who's king of Jacob's house.**

**O earth, burst forth, burst forth, O earth,
So that mountain and valley all become green,
O earth, bring forth this little flower,
O Savior, spring forth out of the earth.**

**Here we suffer the greatest distress,
Before our eyes stands bitter death,
Ah, come lead us with your powerful hand
From this misery to our Father's land.**

**Therefore we all want to thank you,
Our Redeemer, forever and ever,
Therefore we also want to praise you,
At all times, always, and forever.
Amen.**

Silence for meditation is observed, then:

COLLECT

L Lord Jesus Christ,
so govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit
that, ever mindful of your glorious return,
we may persevere in both faith and holiness of living;
for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever.

C Amen.

OFFERING/VOLUNTARY: Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659

J. S. Bach
(1685–1750)

*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: O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

Concertato by Michael D. Costello
(b. 1979)



- All** 1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel - come you a - right?
Choir 2 Your Zi - on strews be - fore you green boughs and fair - est palms;
Men 3 I lay in fet - ters, groan - ing; you came to set me free.
Choir 4 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me.



Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!
and I, too, will a - dore you with joy - ous songs and psalms.
I stood, my shame be - moan - ing; you came to hon - or me.
Your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro - cured my lib - er - ty.



Oh, kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, your lamp with - in my breast
My heart shall bloom for - ev - er for you with prais - es new
A glo - rious crown you give me, a trea - sure safe on high
Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace



to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.
and from your name shall nev - er with - hold the hon - or due.
that will not fail or leave me as earth - ly rich - es fly.
in love, all love ex - cel - ling, our lost and fall - en race.

- Women** 5 Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,
who sit in deepest gloom,
who mourn your joys departed
and tremble at your doom.
Despair not; he is near you,
there, standing at the door,
who best can help and cheer you
and bids you weep no more.

- All** 6 He comes to judge the nations,
a terror to his foes,
a light of consolations
and blessed hope to those
who love the Lord's appearing.
O glorious Sun, now come,
send forth your beams so cheering
and guide us safely home.

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–1676; tr. composite
Music: WIE SOLL ICH DICH EMPFANGEN, Johan Crüger, 1598–1662

✠ WORD ✠

We sit.

READING: Romans 13:11–14

¹Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ²the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ³let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ⁴Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

READING: Matthew 21:1–9

¹When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” ⁴This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

⁵“Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; ⁷they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. ⁸A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

“Hosanna to the Son of David!
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!”

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

HOMILY

Dr. Esther Menn

CANTATA: *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*, BWV 61
(Now come, Savior of the nations)

J. S. Bach

*Translation of the German text and notes corresponding to each movement are below.
Background notes for the cantata are found on pages 22–23 in this worship folder.*

1. Chorus

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland,
Now come, Savior of the nations,
Der Jungfrauen Kind erkannt,
The Virgin's child is recognized,
Des sich wundert alle Welt,
The whole world is marveling
Gott solch Geburt ihm bestellt.
That God ordained such a birth for him.

The cantata begins with the first stanza of Luther's version of the ancient hymn *Veni Redemptor Gentium* (*Nun komm der Heiden Heiland*), which we know as the chorale "Savior of the Nations, Come" (LBW 28), one of the greatest of all sung expositions of Christ's redeeming life and work. Historically, whether in Latin, German, or English, this hymn has become associated with the First Sunday in Advent; among Lutherans it has always been regarded as the featured Hymn of the Day for that occasion.

Bach's treatment of the hymn is unusually inventive. The entire movement is cast in the form of a true French overture (slow–fast–slow tempos) with its characteristic dotted-note rhythm in the instrumental accompaniment to the beginning and ending sections. On top of this plan Bach grafts the clearly audible melody of the chorale sung by the voices in a unique fashion: the first line of the hymn is sung in duple meter in unison by each voice of the choir in turn; the second phrase is then sung by the choir in slow-moving chorale style over the instrumental accompaniment.

The fast section of the movement, which presents the third line of the melody, moves in triple meter marked in French *Gai* (gaily) to express the *wundert* (wondering or marveling) indicated in the text. Bach sets this line to a lengthy fugue in which all of the voices and instruments sing a form of the melody in patterns of rapid imitation. The fourth line, sung by the entire choir in four-part hymn style, returns to the duple meter of the second line of the stanza. All in all, a remarkable movement!

2. Recitative (tenor)

Der Heiland ist gekommen,

The Savior has come,

Hat unser armes Fleisch und Blut an sich genommen

Has taken on our poor flesh and blood,

Und nimmet uns zu Blutsverwandten an.

And accepted us as blood relatives.

O allerhöchstes Gut, was hast du nicht an uns getan?

O highest good of all, what have you not done for us?

Was tust du nicht noch täglich an den Deinen?

What do you not still do daily for your own?

Du kömmt und lässt dein Licht mit vollem Segen scheinen.

You come and let your light shine full of blessing.

The poetry anticipates Jesus' coming; the tenor sings above the accompaniment of the *continuo* up to the last two lines of text. Then the singer and continuo extol the coming of the Light (Christ) in an *arioso* (aria-like) section with passages of brief imitation.

3. Aria (tenor)

Komm, Jesu, komm zu deiner Kirche

Come, Jesus, come unto your church

Und gib ein selig neues Jahr!

And grant a blessed new year!

Befördre deines Namens Ehre,

Promote the honor of your name,

Erhalte die gesunde Lehre

Preserve sound doctrine

Und segne Kanzel und Altar!

And bless pulpit and altar!

Bach scores the dark sound of the unison violins and violas, the tenor, and the continuo in the flowing 9/8 triple meter of a French *gigue* dance. The text covers a list of blessings anticipated at the coming of Jesus: blessings for the church, for sound doctrine, for preaching and the sacraments. The *da capo dal segno* (to the head and up to the sign), marked at the end of the score of the movement, indicates a return to the beginning of the piece and then a conclusion at the given sign just before the voice enters.



4. Recitative (bass)

Siehe, ich stehe vor der Tür und klopfe an.

Behold! I stand at the door and knock.

So jemand meine Stimme hören wird und die Tür auftun,

If anyone would hear my voice and open the door,

zu dem werde ich eingehen und das Abendmahl mit ihm halten

I will enter therein and share the Lord's Supper with him

und er mit mir.

and he with me.

Another movement with unique characteristics! The words of Jesus' invitation in the book of Revelation (3:20) tell us that he stands at the door of our hearts and knocks, wanting to come in and eat the *Abendmahl* (evening meal; the German word also means Holy Communion) with us. The accompaniment is played *pizzicato* by violins and viola, plucking rather than bowing the strings in imitation of the sound of knocking. The result is a reverent background for a lovely melody given to the bass, the traditional voice for Jesus in Bach's Passion compositions.

5. Aria (soprano)

Öffne dich, mein ganzes Herze,

Open up, my whole heart,

Jesus kömmt und ziehet ein.

Jesus is coming and moving in.

Bin ich gleich nur Staub und Erde,

Although I am but dust and dirt,

Will er mich doch nicht verschmähn,

He still will not reject me;

Seine Lust an mir zu sehn,

His desire is to look on me

Dass ich seine Wohnung werde.

So that I become his dwelling.

O wie selig werd ich sein!

O how blessed will I be!

The singer humbly welcomes Jesus into her heart in a little *da capo* aria accompanied by *basso continuo*. An inviting gesture of a rising pattern of three notes at *Öffne dich* (Open up) is repeated by the bass accompaniment and the soprano. The middle section of expectation of Jesus' coming is set to a slow duple meter that contrasts with the triple meter of the first part and its repetition.

6. Chorale

Amen, amen!

Amen, amen!

Komm, du schöne Freudenkrone,

Come, you lovely crown of joy,

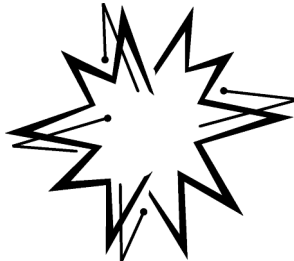
Bleib nicht lange!

Do not stay long!

Deiner wart ich mit Verlangen.

I await you with longing.

The final chorale movement is different from that of most of Bach's Leipzig cantatas: The movement is not the common four-part harmonization of one chorale stanza, but the polyphonic treatment for choir and instruments of only the last five lines of the concluding stanza of Philipp Nicolai's 1599 Epiphany chorale, *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* (O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright, LBW 76, stanza 5). The lower voices busy themselves with imitative phrases while the violins play an obbligato filigree of rapid sixteenth notes above the chorale melody, which is sung by the sopranos in long notes. The violins conclude with an ascending scale line of more than two octaves, one that ends on a high G. One author suggests that this is Bach's representation of the rising of the Epiphany Morning Star (Christ) of the first stanza of the chorale—aptly anticipated already in this Advent cantata.



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- ceit. 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,



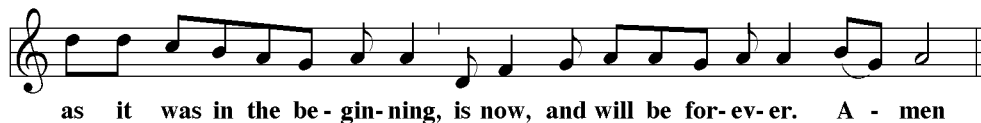
for he has re - mem - bered his prom - ise of mer - cy, the prom - ise he



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



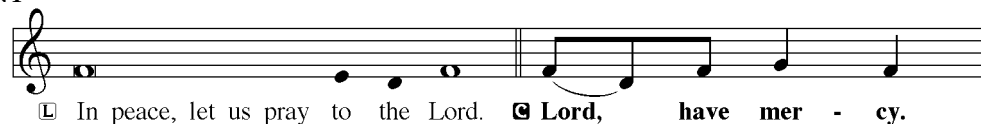
Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it;



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 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.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

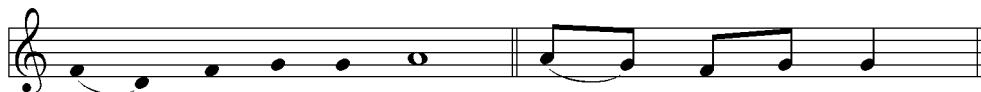
☩ Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

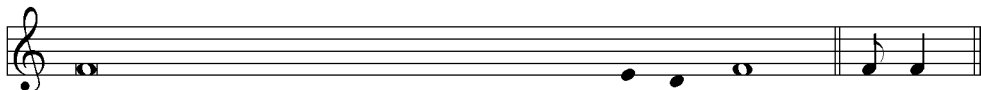
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

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: Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying Stanza Two Setting by Bartholomäus Gesius (c. 1562–1613)



All 1 Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing, the watch-men
Choir 2 Zi - on hears the watch-men sing - ing, and in her
All 3 Now let all the heav'ns a - dore you, and saints and



on the heights are cry - ing; a - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, at last.
heart new joy is spring - ing. She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom,
an - gels sing be - fore you. The harps and cym-bals all u - nite.



Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es, and at the
for her Lord comes down all glo - rious, the strong in
Of one pearl each shin - ing por - tal, where, dwell - ing



thrill - ing cry re - joic - es: "Come forth, you maid - ens! Night is past.
grace, in truth vic - to - rious. Her star is ris'n; her light is come.
with the choir im - mor - tal, we gath - er round your daz - zling light.



The bride - groom comes! A - wake; your lamps with glad - ness take!"
Oh, come, you Bless - ed One, Lord Je - sus, God's own Son.
No eye has seen, no ear has yet been trained to hear,





Al - le - lu - ia! Pre - pare your - selves to meet the
Sing ho - san - na! We go un - til the halls we
what joy is ours! Cre - scen - dos rise; your halls re -



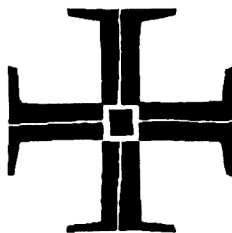
Lord, whose light has stirred the wait - ing guard.
view where you have bid us dine with you.
sound; ho - san - nas blend in cos - mic sound.

Text: Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829–1878, alt.
Music: WACHET AUF, Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608

DISMISSAL

L Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

G Thanks be to God!



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Leading Worship Today

The Rev. David R. Lyle, leader

Dr. Esther Menn, homilist

Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra

The Rev. Michael D. Costello, cantor

Chad Fothergill, organist

Maura Janton Cock, soprano

Ryan Townsend Strand, tenor

Douglas Anderson, baritone

Andrew Costello, videographer

Bill Rohlfig, audio engineer

Anne Claud, sound board operator

Orchestra

Betty Lewis, Kate Carter,

Elizabeth Brausa, and Lou Torick, violins 1

Carol Yampolsky, Elliot Lee,

and Amanda Fenton, violins 2

Naomi Hildner and Ben Weber, violas 1

Becky Coffman and Vannia Phillips, violas 2

Jean Hatmaker, cello

Douglas Johnson, double bass

Dianne Ryan, bassoon

Timothy Spelbring, continuo organ

Chorus

Soprano

Ann Anderson

Judy Berghaus

Maura Janton Cock

Cathy DeLanoy

Janel Dennen

Donna Dumpys

Gwen Gotsch

Sarah Gruendler-Ladner

Julie Hinz

Kate Hogenson

Tina Moore

Val Poulos

Ellen Pullin

Ngaire Whiteside-Bull

Alto

Lois Cornils

Eunice Eifert

Margaret Garmatz

Lois Guebert

Susan Hammon

Martha Houston

Johanna Johnson

Christa Krout

Jennifer Luebbe

Marilyn Moehlenkamp

Karen Rohde

Irmgard Swanson

Liz Thompson

Helen VanWyck

Tenor

Paul Aanonsen

Paul Cline

Owen Kaiser

Daniel Krout

Colin Krueger

Justin Martin

Ryan Townsend Strand

Bass

Douglas Anderson

John Bouman

Mark Bouman

David Kluge

Dave Mercer

Craig Mindrum

Bill Pullin

Greg Rohlfig

Bob Sideman



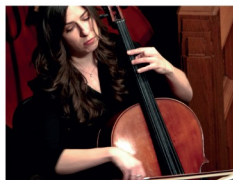


51st Year

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.**

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 Wentz, 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

Lutheran tradition holds that Advent consists of four weeks of thoughtful spiritual preparation before the celebration of Christ's birth. Although the secular American world seemingly does not understand the concept, opting instead for a manic commercial orgy of extreme consumerism, the historic Christian church has observed the period as one of penitence—of expressing sorrow for one's sins prior to the coming to earth of Jesus Christ, the Savior from sin, and of preparation for his final coming. In recent years the penitential aspect has been sublimated in many churches in favor of emphases on reflection and introspection. In this approach penitence and contemplation on Christ's final coming are not overlooked, but they are not the dominant themes they once were.

As valid as this slight change in approach is, it is quite different from the Lutheran world of Bach's Advent in Leipzig, when the penitential and somber mood of the season was reinforced by prohibitions of various kinds in daily life: weddings were postponed until after Christmas, festivities of any kind were curtailed, and even music was restricted in church. The organ was not played after the First Sunday in Advent and no cantatas or other elaborate compositions were heard.

The First Sunday in Advent was recognized as a special day because it marked the beginning of the Christian church year. The Sundays just before this, at the end of the previous church year, were eschatological in nature, focusing on the end of all things and the Day of Judgment. Some of this emphasis carried over into the observance of Advent, but in the Sundays before Christmas the believer was led to focus more on the importance of coming to Christmas aware of the need for the forgiveness assured by Christ's Incarnation.

The year of the first performance of *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* (BWV 61) is clearly established by the notation on the score of the year "1714" in Bach's own hand. Thus we know that it was initially performed on December 2, 1714, during the composer's first year of service as Concertmaster in the ducal court in Weimar. In Weimar the Advent restrictions on music performance were less stringent than in Leipzig, and as a result, of Bach's six known cantatas for the Advent season, four are known to have originated in Weimar. Three of these six Advent cantatas are known to have been performed in Leipzig on the First Sunday of Advent, including BWV 61, which was presented on November 28, 1723, as part of Bach's first annual cycle of cantatas.



The libretto of the present cantata is from the hand of the poet Erdmann Neumeister, who is credited with establishing the textual form of the cantatas that Bach used most frequently later in Leipzig: Chorus, various recitatives (on biblical texts) and arias (poetic commentaries), an optional chorus, and (later) a closing chorale. Neumeister, an influential devotional poet, was so highly regarded as an author of these annual cycles for the church year that the most prominent composer in northern Europe of that time, George Phillip Telemann, called him “the most famous and only good poet in sacred matters.” Bach, of course, set these texts to a great variety of choral and solo vocal and instrumental movements in many different musical styles.

The cantata text reflects both the Epistle (Romans 13:11–14) and the Holy Gospel (St. Matthew 21:1–9), which set the theme of the day in worship. The former declares that night is almost past and the dawn of the end of all things is at hand; the latter describes Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem prior to his crucifixion. In the cantata text Neumeister anticipates the coming of the Divine Child, Jesus, whom we welcome warmly into our hearts and who lives there as our blessed Savior.

All in all, the music of the cantata reflects the individuality of a young, creative talent; Bach was only 29 when it was written, and he had composed relatively few cantatas before this. Its six movements feature two memorable German Lutheran chorales for Advent; three of the movements are quite unusual. The cantata also reflects Bach’s earlier exposure to French musical styles during his earlier secular service at the Cöthen court. The French influence is revealed in the score indications of *Ouverture* and *Gai* (gaily, a tempo indication) in the first movement, and *gigue* (as in “jig”), the dance rhythm of the tenor aria.

The scoring is for strings (2 violins, 2 violas instead of the usual one, and cello), *basso continuo* (keyboard and bass), bassoon, four-part choir, and soprano, tenor, and bass soloists.

Carlos Messerli

NOTES ON THE PRELUDE

French organ music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was rooted in liturgical practice, particularly the need to improvise at several points during the liturgy. Contracts for some organists indicated that they played for more than 400 liturgies each year; chief among their responsibilities was to improvise *versets* in alternation (*ad alternatim*) with verses of plainsong hymns sung by choirs.

Over time, many organist-composers issued printed collections of these pieces—publications that served as markers of professional achievement as well as encyclopedias of compositional or improvisational techniques for study and emulation. In collections based on melodies of customary chants and familiar hymns, the titles of individual movements often indicated function, structure, and instrumental color—for instance, a Kyrie *verset* cast as a *Fugue sur la trompette* (Couperin, *Mass for the Convents*), a *Récit de cromorne* (de Grigny, *Veni Creator*), or *Noël, sur les jeux d'anches sans tremblant* (Daquin). Still other composers organized non-chant-based pieces into suites that often bore the title *Livre d'orgue*, or *Organ Book*.

The eight movements of this suite by Dumage, his only surviving work, would have relied on the organist's familiarity with performance implications implied by their titles. Though Dumage sometimes specifies keyboard changes, ornaments, and tempo changes, much of the interpretation relies on the player's imagination and possibilities inherent in the organ and its surrounding acoustic.

Together, these movements comprise a colorful, lyrical, and refined musical bouquet that also appealed to Dumage's musical counterparts in Germany. Between 1709 and 1712, J. S. Bach copied a *livre d'orgue* by de Grigny and he may have also copied this suite by Dumage: anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that Bach knew these pieces, but his handwritten copy has been lost. Nevertheless, the French style certainly influenced Bach's approach to both organ and cantata composition. Flowing lines of ornamented chorale settings such as *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein* (BWV 641), *Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele* (BWV 654), and, to some extent, *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* (BWV 659) are reminiscent of the expressive *en taille* melodies of French organ works, and marks of the French *ouverture* can be heard in some of the cantatas (BWV 20, 61, 97, 110, 119, 194). In this afternoon's cantata, dated 1714 in Bach's manuscript, the overture's original association with the French king's courtly entrance is theologically repurposed to joyfully welcome Christ as Savior and King. This "transposition" of meaning is brought full circle in the text of the closing chorale: "Come, you fair crown of joy, do not delay for long!"

To hear a sampling of French influences alongside some of Bach's own organ compositions is to trace aspects of his creative process as a sort of musical alchemist, a performer-composer-theologian freely combining his perfected technical abilities, consummate musical knowledge, unbounded curiosity, and faith in works that he himself could play at the instrument where his skill and expertise were revered.



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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 Lehigh 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.



Maura Janton Cock, soprano, is Adjunct Professor of Voice at Valparaiso University. She earned degrees from the University of Arizona (Tucson) and Minnesota State University-Moorhead. She has appeared as soloist with the Fargo-Moorhead Symphony, the Tucson Symphony, the Southwest Michigan Symphony, and the Northwest Indiana Symphony. She has worked extensively with Robert Shaw and Helmuth Rilling. Recent engagements include performances with the Michigan Bach Collegium, Bach Chamber Choir and Orchestra of Rockford (Illinois), Miami Bach Society, Dayton (Ohio) Bach Society and the Cuesta Master Chorale and Orchestra (California). She gave the Midwest premiere of Bach's lost aria, "*Alles mit Gott und nichts ohn' ihn*," and has frequently been a soloist for the Bach Cantata Vespers Series at Grace Lutheran Church.



Chad Fothergill, organist, is a keyboardist and historian who serves the church as a musician, writer, and teacher. He is author of *Sing with All the People of God: A Handbook for Church Musicians* (Augsburg Fortress, 2020) and has contributed writings and compositions to several worship resources. He is cantor to the Lutheran Summer Music community, interim co-director of the Institute of Liturgical Studies at Valparaiso University, and past editor of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians' journal *CrossAccent*. He has appeared as a performer, speaker, and hymn festival leader throughout the United States and Canada, and has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in theory, history, composition, and writing at Gustavus Adolphus College, the University of Delaware, and Temple University.





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.



Esther Menn, homilist, is the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Ralph W. and Marilyn R. Klein Professor of Old Testament/Hebrew Bible at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC). She joined the faculty of her alma mater in the 2001–2002 academic year. She taught previously in the department of religious studies at the University of Virginia, where she spent a sabbatical year as a visiting scholar at Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a W. F. Albright associate fellow, supported by an American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship. Concurrent with her graduate work at LSTC, Menn received the master of arts degree in the history of religions from the University of Chicago Divinity School. The doctor of philosophy degree was bestowed “with distinction” by the University of Chicago, and she received the Susan Colver Rosenberger Prize for constructive and original dissertation research. She serves on the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations and involved in local Chicago interreligious dialogue.



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

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