

Welcome to the 56<sup>th</sup> season of  
Bach Cantata Vespers!

From the opening notes of the prelude to the final stanzas of the closing hymn, Bach Cantata Vespers are a time for contemplation, prayer, robust hymn-singing, and, above all, listening as the Word of God is proclaimed in the glorious sacred music of Johann Sebastian Bach.

We hope you will join us during the 2026–27 season. You'll hear festive cantatas composed to praise and honor God, as well as cantatas offering comfort in life's trials. The season's preservice music includes renowned harpsichordist Jory Vinikour playing a Bach harpsichord concerto in September and festive works for brass, timpani, and organ by Richard Hillert in May. We'll also be joined by outstanding guest organists throughout the year. The highlight of the season comes in March, with performances of Bach's St. John Passion on Palm Sunday weekend.

These worship services are, of course, free and open to all, but they require substantial resources to produce. Your generous gifts are crucial to the continued presentation of Bach Cantata Vespers. As we look ahead to another season, please consider supporting the series financially, by returning a check in the enclosed envelope or by making a gift online at [www.bachvespers.org](http://www.bachvespers.org).

We are immensely grateful for the financial support we receive from all of you and look forward to seeing you in the fall.

Soli Deo Gloria!



The Rev. Michael D. Costello, Grace Cantor

[www.bachvespers.org](http://www.bachvespers.org)

## Year at a glance...

**September 27** *BWV 148*

**Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens**

Bruce K. Modahl, homilist; Jory Vinikour, harpsichordist  
J. S. Bach: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, BWV 1052

**October 25** *BWV 194*

**Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest**

Brian E. Konkol, homilist  
J. S. Bach: Concerto for Two Violins in D minor, BWV 1043  
Richard Hillert: Prelude to Evening Prayer

**November 22** *BWV 71*

**Gott ist mein König**

Carla Thompson Powell, homilist; Catherine R. Rodland, organist

**January 24** *BWV 3*

**Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid**

Dan Heim, homilist; Kontras Quartet

**February 28** *BWV 159*

**Sehet! Wir gehn hinauf gen Jerusalem**

Craig Mueller, homilist; Steven Wente, organist

**March 20, 21** *BWV 245*

**Johannes-Passion**

Saturday, March 20, 7:00 p.m. (Preview lecture at 6:00 p.m.)  
Sunday, March 21, 4:00 p.m. (Preview lecture at 3:00 p.m.)

*Admission is free; free-will offering*

**April 25** *BWV 134*

**Ein Herz, das seinen Jesum lebend weiß**

Robert L. Shaner, homilist; Scott M. Hyslop, organist  
Kapelle of Concordia University Chicago, guest choir  
Charles P. Brown, conductor

**May 23** *BWV 129*

**Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott**

Jennie English-Dumont, homilist  
Richard Hillert: Three Pieces for Brass, Timpani, and Organ



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56<sup>th</sup> Year  
2026–2027  
**BACH**  
Cantata Vespers



Grace Lutheran Church  
River Forest, Illinois

BACH  
Cantata Vespers

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Grace Lutheran Church  
7300 Division Street  
River Forest, Illinois 60305



## September 27 BWV 148

### Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens

*Bring to the Lord the glory due his name*

The season begins with Bach's festive cantata for the 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity, based on a gospel text about honoring the Sabbath. The first movement is a jubilant contrapuntal work for chorus, trumpet, oboe, and string orchestra. After a pair of virtuosic arias, the cantata concludes with an earnest prayer for guidance at all times.

**3:00 p.m. Cantata Preview Lecture**

**3:45 p.m. Orchestral/Harpsichord Prelude**

J. S. Bach: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, BWV 1052  
Jory Vinikour, Chalons-sur-Saône, France, harpsichordist

**4:00 p.m. Bach Cantata Vespers**

Bruce K. Modahl, Elmhurst, Illinois, homilist

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, *Sicut cervus*, motet

Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra  
Grace Cantor Michael D. Costello, conducting

Sarah Ponder, mezzo-soprano  
Brian Skoog, tenor

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## October 25 BWV 194

### Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest

*Most highly desired festival of joy*

Bach wrote this cantata for the dedication of a new Hildebrandt organ at the church in the small village of Störmthal. The first performance on November 2, 1723, was sung by members of the Leipzig Thomanerchor, with Bach's wife, Anna Magdalena Bach, as the soprano soloist. It was sung again in Leipzig on Trinity Sunday, 1724.

**3:00 p.m. Cantata Preview Lecture**

**3:45 p.m. Orchestral Prelude**

J. S. Bach: Concerto for Two Violins in D minor, BWV 1043  
Betty Lewis and Paul Zafer, violinists

Richard Hillert: Prelude to Evening Prayer

**4:00 p.m. Bach Cantata Vespers**

Brian E. Konkol, Valparaiso University,  
Valparaiso, Indiana, homilist

Vaclav Augustinas, *Cantate Domino*, motet

Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra  
Grace Cantor Michael D. Costello, conducting

Carolyne DalMonte, soprano  
Ace Gangoso, tenor  
Jared Esguerra, tenor



## November 22 BWV 71

### Gott ist mein König

*God is my king*

An ambitious J. S. Bach, age 22, composed *Gott ist mein König* for the inauguration of the town council in Mühlhausen. The cantata shows the influence of Bach's 17<sup>th</sup> century predecessors, flowing seamlessly from one section to the next. Vocal and orchestral forces are divided into "choirs" heard from at different times in the cantata. Trumpet fanfares remind us that God is King, as the town council is lifted up and prayed for so that all may prosper.

**3:00 p.m. Cantata Preview Lecture**

**3:45 p.m. Organ Prelude**

Catherine R. Rodland, St. Olaf College,  
Northfield, Minnesota, organist

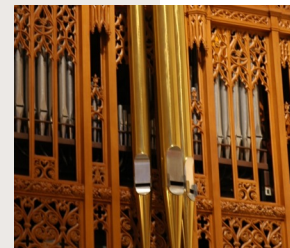
**4:00 p.m. Bach Cantata Vespers**

Carla Thompson Powell, Metropolitan Chicago Synod,  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, homilist

Heinrich Schütz, *Verleih uns Frieden*, motet

Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra  
Grace Cantor Michael D. Costello, conducting

Susan Nelson, soprano  
Amanda Koopman, mezzo-soprano  
Samuel Rosner, tenor  
Aaron Wardell, bass-baritone



## February 28 BWV 159

### Sehet! Wir gehn hinauf gen Jerusalem

*Behold! We go up to Jerusalem*

Bach composed this cantata in 1729 for Quinquagesima, the last Sunday before Lent. Cantatas were not performed in Leipzig churches during the penitential season of Lent, so Bach, anticipating Lent and Holy Week, used this Sunday to present music expressing grief and sorrow over Jesus' crucifixion. The title comes from the gospel lesson for the day in which Jesus foretells his death. Children of Grace Lutheran School join us to sing the final chorale of this cantata.

**3:00 p.m. Cantata Preview Lecture**

**3:45 p.m. Organ Prelude**

Steven Wentte, Concordia University Chicago,  
River Forest, Illinois, organist

**4:00 p.m. Bach Cantata Vespers**

Craig Mueller, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church,  
Chicago, Illinois, homilist

Ludwig Senfl, *Non moriar sed vivam*, motet

Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra  
Grace Cantor Michael D. Costello, conducting

Cassidy Smith, mezzo-soprano  
Matthew Dean, tenor  
Peter Wesoloski, baritone

## Saturday, March 20, 7:00 p.m. BWV 245 Sunday, March 21, 4:00 p.m.

### Johannes-Passion

*St. John Passion*

Bach composed his St. John Passion during his first year in Leipzig. It was first performed at the St. Nicholas Church on Good Friday, April 7, 1724. Recitatives and arias dramatize the scripture text while poetic arias reflect on the meaning of Christ's Passion for us.

*The Passion will be presented in concert without intermission. Admission is free; a free-will offering will be received.*

Saturday, March 20, 7:00 p.m. (Preview lecture at 6:00 p.m.)  
Sunday, March 21, 4:00 p.m. (Preview lecture at 3:00 p.m.)

Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra  
in collaboration with Consonance-Chicago Choral Artists

Grace Cantor Michael D. Costello, conducting

Hoss Brock, tenor (Evangelist)  
Aaron Wardell, bass-baritone (Jesus)  
Peter Wesoloski, baritone (Peter/Pilate)  
Carolyne DalMonte, soprano  
Sarah Ponder, mezzo-soprano  
Brian Skoog, tenor  
Daniel Eifert, bass

*Pre-concert lecture by Carl Grapentine in the Sanctuary one hour prior to each performance.*



## April 25 BWV 134

### Ein Herz, das seinen Jesum lebend weiß

*A heart that knows its Jesus is living*

In 1724, after the premiere of his St. John Passion and the busyness of Easter, Bach reworked a secular cantata composed in 1719 in Cöthen for services on Easter Tuesday. Joyful dance rhythms celebrate the risen Christ and his victory over death. The final chorus, "*Erschallet, ihr Himmel!*" ("Resound, you heavens") is a fitting summation of the three-day celebration of Jesus' resurrection.

**3:00 p.m. Cantata Preview Lecture**

**3:45 p.m. Organ Prelude**

Scott M. Hyslop, Zion Lutheran Church and School,  
Dallas, Texas, organist

**4:00 p.m. Bach Cantata Vespers**

Robert L. Shaner, Hinsdale, Illinois, homilist

Johann Sebastian Bach, *Es war ein wunderlicher Krieg*,  
from BWV 4, motet

Kapelle of Concordia University Chicago, guest choir  
Charles P. Brown, conducting

Elizabeth Frey, mezzo-soprano  
Brian Skoog, tenor

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## May 23 BWV 129

### Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott

*Praised be the Lord, my God*

Written for Trinity Sunday in 1724, Bach uses the text of Johann Olearius's 1665 hymn "*Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott*" to create a five-movement chorale cantata. The festive opening chorus, three buoyant arias, and a concluding four-part chorale all join in jubilant praise of the Triune God.

**3:00 p.m. Cantata Preview Lecture**

**3:45 p.m. Instrumental Prelude**

Richard Hillert: Three Pieces for Brass, Timpani,  
and Organ

**4:00 p.m. Bach Cantata Vespers**

Jennie English-Dumont, Bethlehem Lutheran Church,  
Chicago, Illinois, homilist

Andreas Hammerschmidt, *Heilig ist der Herr*, motet

Bach Cantata Vespers Chorus and Orchestra  
Grace Cantor Michael D. Costello, conducting

Susan Nelson, soprano  
Amanda Koopman, mezzo-soprano  
Peter Wesoloski, baritone