



56th Year
2026–2027

BACH

Cantata Vespers



**Grace Lutheran Church
River Forest, Illinois**

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

September 27, 2026

Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens
Bring to the Lord the glory due his name

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church

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

Today's service is also 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.

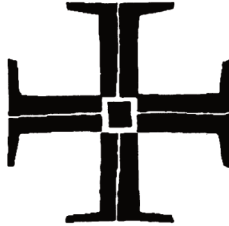
Recording or photography of any kind during the service is strictly forbidden.

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



Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
September 27, 2026

EVENING PRAYER



PRELUDE

Concerto No. 1 in D minor, BWV 1052

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750)

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio
- III. Allegro

Jory Vinikour, harpsichordist

We stand, facing the candle as we sing.

SERVICE OF LIGHT



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

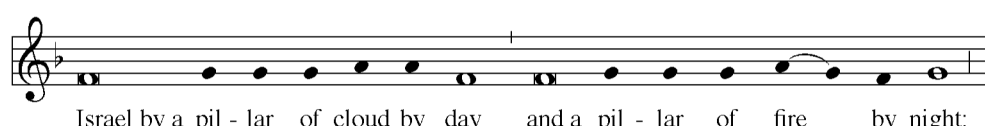
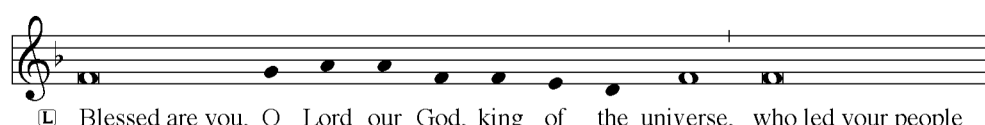
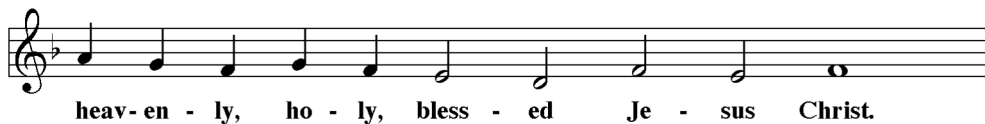


☒ Stay with us, Lord, for it is eve- ning, ☒ and the day is almost o- ver.



☒ Let your light scat- ter the dark- ness, ☒ and illumine your Church.





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.

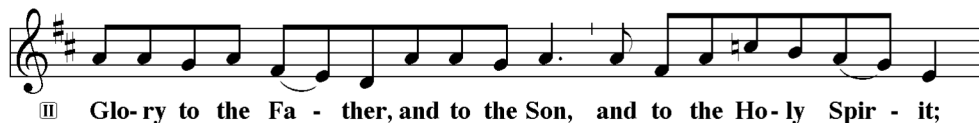
PSALM 141

*All sing parts marked **☐**.*

*Higher (treble) voices sing parts marked **I**. Lower (bass) voices sing parts marked **II**.*

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



PSALM ANTHEM: *Sicut cervus*

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina
(1525–1594)

*Sicut cervus desiderat ad fontes aquarum,
As the deer longs for running water,
ita desiderat anima mea ad te, Deus.
so longs my soul for you, O God.*

Psalm 42:1–2

Silence for meditation is observed, then:

PSALM PRAYER

☐ Lord God, never-failing fountain of life,
through the saving waters of baptism
you called us from the depth of sin to the depths of mercy.
Do not forget the trials of our exile,
but from the wellspring of the Word satisfy our thirst for you,
so that we may come rejoicing to your holy mountain,
where you live and reign now and forever.

☑ **Amen.**

The offering is gathered.

OFFERING/VOLUNTARY: Variation XIII (from *Goldberg Variations*, BWV 988) J. S. Bach

*The offering assists in defraying costs of the Bach Cantata Vespers ministry.
Please make checks payable to Grace Lutheran Church with “Bach Cantata Vespers” in the memo.
You may also contribute online at www.bachvespers.org.
Your generosity is appreciated.*



We stand.

HYMN: If Then You Have Been Raised with Christ

Concertato by Michael D. Costello
(b. 1979)



C 1. If then you have been raised with Christ Look not to earth - en things,

Choir 2. As cho - sen ones, be - loved by God, Put on the clothes of grace:

C 3. With grat - i - tude for all good gifts Sing psalms and hymns and songs.



For Christ's own death has saved your life From sin and death's sharp sting.

Com - pas - sion, kind - ness, pa - tience, love, For - give - ness in Christ's name.

In word or deed, do ev - 'ry - thing In Christ, whose name is strong.



Set hearts and minds on things a - bove, On Christ who reigns on high.

And may your hearts be filled with peace, In per - fect har - mo - ny.

All glo - ry to the Trin - i - ty: The Fa - ther and the Son,



In Christ your life will be re - vealed And with him you will rise.

Be thank - ful as Christ's word takes root; In him you are set free.

And glo - ry to the Spir - it blest. All praise the Three in One!

Text: Michael D. Costello, based on Colossians 3:1–4, 12–17

Tune: Michael D. Costello

HICKORY
CMD

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✠ WORD ✠

We sit.

READING: Ephesians 4:1–6

¹I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

READING: Luke 14:1–11

¹On one occasion when Jesus was going to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the sabbath, they were watching him closely. ²Just then, in front of him, there was a man who had dropsy. ³And Jesus asked the lawyers and Pharisees, “Is it lawful to cure people on the sabbath, or not?” ⁴But they were silent. So Jesus took him and healed him, and sent him away. ⁵Then he said to them, “If one of you has a child or an ox that has fallen into a well, will you not immediately pull it out on a sabbath day?” ⁶And they could not reply to this.

⁷When he noticed how the guests chose the places of honor, he told them a parable. ⁸“When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; ⁹and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, ‘Give this person your place,’ and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. ¹⁰But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher’; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. ¹¹For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

HOMILY

The Rev. Dr. Bruce K. Modahl



CANTATA: *Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens*, BWV 148
(Bring to the Lord the honor due his name)

Johann Sebastian Bach

*Translation of the German text and notes corresponding to each movement are below.
Background notes for the cantata are on pages 20–21 in this worship folder.*

1. Chorus

Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens,
Bring to the Lord the glory of his name,
Betet an den Herrn im heiligen Schmuck.
Pray to the Lord in holy splendor.

The festive opening chorus is scored for choir, strings, continuo, and a solo trumpet, with oboes doubling the strings (though the manuscript copy of Bach's original score does not include them by name). After a brilliant instrumental sinfonia, the voices sing the scripture text (Psalm 29:2) in a straightforward homophonic setting. The second time the voices enter, the melody introduced by the trumpet in the opening bars of the movement becomes the subject of a five-part fugue, heard first in the sopranos and altos, then the tenors and basses, and finally in the trumpet. This is followed by another fugue on the second part of the tune and text ("*betet an den Herrn*"). In the final section Bach combines the voice parts with a reprise of the opening sinfonia. As the movement ends, there's a final statement of the fugue subjects in the bass of the choir, doubled in the continuo.

2. Aria (tenor)

Ich eile, die Lehren
I hurry to hear
Des Lebens zu hören
The teachings of life
Und suche mit Freuden das heilige Haus.
And seek with joy the holy house.
Wie rufen so schöne
How beautifully do the blessed sing out
Das frohe Getöse
The joyful sounds
Zum Lobe des Höchsten die Seligen aus!
In praise of the Most High!

"Ich eile" — "I hurry" — says the text, and that's exactly what the music does in this movement for solo violin, tenor, and continuo. But it's joyful hurrying that delights in hearing both the teaching and the music of the sabbath.



3. Recitative (alto)

So wie der Hirsch nach frischem Wasser schreit,

As a deer cries for fresh water,

So schrei ich, Gott, zu dir.

So do I cry, God, to you.

Denn alle meine Ruh

For all my peace

Ist niemand außer du.

There is no one but you.

Wie heilig und wie teuer

How holy and how precious

Ist, Höchster, deine Sabbatsfeier!

Most High, is your sabbath festival!

Da preis ich deine Macht

There I praise your power

In der Gemeinde der Gerechten.

In the company of the righteous.

O! wenn die Kinder dieser Nacht

Oh! if only the children of this night

Die Lieblichkeit bedächten,

Would ponder the loveliness

Denn Gott wohnt selbst in mir.

That God himself dwells in me.

The alto recitative carefully declaims an inward-looking text, accompanied by strings that add to the mystical idea of God dwelling in the human heart.

4. Aria (alto)

Mund und Herze steht dir offen,

My mouth and heart stand open to you,

Höchster, senke dich hinein!

Most High, come down to me!

Ich in dich, und du in mich;

I in you and you in me;

Glaube, Liebe, Dulden, Hoffen

Faith, love, patience, hope

Soll mein Ruhebette sein.

Will be my bed of rest.

Two oboes *d'amore* and an English horn (the alto and tenor of the oboe family) combine with the alto to voice create an unusual sonority that would have been new to Bach's Leipzig audience. The text expands on the idea of "God dwelling in me" from the end of the recitative. The continuo is silent at many of the singer's entrances, which may represent the soul releasing itself from earthly gravity to unification with God. It is a *da capo* aria; the first section is repeated.

5. Recitative (tenor)

Bleib auch, mein Gott, in mir

Remain too, my God, in me

Und gib mir deinen Geist,

And give me your Spirit

Der mich nach deinem Wort regiere,

To rule me according to your Word

Dass ich so einen Wandel führe,

So that I may make a change

Der dir gefällig heißt,

That is pleasing to you

Damit ich nach der Zeit

So that I, after my lifetime

In deiner Herrlichkeit,

In your glory,

Mein lieber Gott, mit dir

My dear God, with you

Den großen Sabbat möge halten.

May keep the great Sabbath.

A simple prayer, accompanied only by the continuo group, leads the listeners out into daily living and points them toward the ultimate goal of celebrating the Sabbath in heaven.



6. Chorale

Führ auch mein Herz und Sinn

Lead also my heart and mind

Durch deinen Geist dahin,

By your Spirit there,

Dass ich mög alles meiden,

So I may avoid everything

Was mich un dich kann scheiden,

That can separate you and me,

Und ich an deinem Leibe

And that I remain eternally

Ein Gliedmaß ewig bleibe.

A member of your body.

The final chorale lacked a text in the manuscript copy that is the source for the cantata. This all-occasion text, assigned by editors, is appropriate and would have been sung to this tune in Leipzig churches during Bach's time.

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-ceil. 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



After each petition:

□ ...let us pray to the Lord.



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.

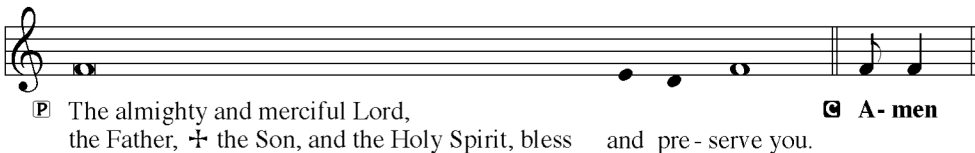
☩ Amen.

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

C 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



HYMN: Founded on Faith

Concertato by Paul D. Weber
(b. 1949)



Treble Voices 1 Found - ed on faith, the church— a - live by grace—
 2 Your cross, O Christ, re - news our life each day.
 Choir 3 E - quipped by prayer, we live the Spir - it's call.
 4 Grow - ing in grace for God's cre - at - ed earth,
 Lower Voices 5 Found - ed on faith, called forth, em-pow'ed to serve,
 6 Praise to the Fa - ther for our u - ni - ty!



pro - claims the gos - pel here and ev - 'ry place.
 Bap - tized in you, we learn and teach and pray.
 Em - pow'ed to serve with gifts, both great and small,
 we yearn for jus - tice, peace, and hu - man worth;
 we share God's end - less love with - out re - serve.
 Praise to the Son, whose blood has set us free!



The word of God re - sounds through time and space:
 Fed by your love, with thank - ful hearts we say:
 we bring the liv - ing hope of God to all.
 a world re - stored; a faith - ful, car - ing church.
 Then let us shout a - loud the liv - ing Word!
 Praise to the Spir - it! Bles - ed Trin - i - ty!



Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Paul D. Weber
 Music: FOUNDED ON FAITH, Paul D. Weber
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DISMISSAL

L Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

Join us for a reception in Fellowship Hall as we celebrate the start of a new season.



Leading Worship Today

The Rev. David R. Lyle, leader
The Rev. Bruce K. Modahl, homilist

Grace Parish Choir
The Rev. Michael D. Costello, cantor
Timothy Spelbring, organist

Sarah Ponder, mezzo soprano
Brian Skoog, tenor

Susan Weber, Lois Harb, ushers
Bill Rohlfling, audio engineer
Al Swanson, Liz Hanson
livestream audio/video

Orchestra

Charles Roberts, Gregory Strauss, trumpets
Christine Janzow Phillips, Meg Busse, oboe
Natalie Swenson, English horn

Betty Lewis, Caroline Slack,
Elizabeth Brathwaite, Lou Torick, violin I
Francois Henkins, Becky Coffman,
Kjersti Nostbakken, violin II

Naomi Hildner, Ben Weber, viola
Amali Premawardha, cello
Douglas Johnson, double bass

Timothy Spelbring, continuo organ
Jory Vinikour, harpsichord

Grace Parish Choir

Soprano

Ann Anderson
Katrina Beck
Sadie Beck
Judy Berghaus
Janel Dennen
Gwen Gotsch
Linda Grisham
Kate Hogenson
Katrina Jurica
Val Poulos
Ellen Pullin
Liz Rudy
Ngairé Whiteside-Bull

Alto

Kjersti Anderson-Uribe
Karen Brunssen
Lois Cornils
Leanne Cribbs
Eunice Eifert
Catherine Hegarty
Martha Houston
Johanna Johnson
Christa Krout
Jane Hinlicky Lauritsen
Marilyn Moehlenkamp
Sarah Ponder
Karen Rohde
Irmgard Swanson
Liz Thompson

Tenor

Paul Aanonsen
John Beed
Daniel Krout
Colin Krueger
Justin Martin
John Rudy
Brian Skoog
Blaine Willhoft

Bass

Douglas Anderson
John Bouman
Mark Bouman
Jeff Cribbs
David Kluge
Bill Pullin
Greg Rohlfling

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56th Year
2026–2027

BACH

Cantata Vespers



**Grace Lutheran Church
River Forest, Illinois**

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

September 27
BWV 148

Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens

Bring to the Lord the glory due his name

Bruce K. Modahl, Elmhurst, Illinois, homilist

J. S. Bach: Concerto in D minor, BWV 1052; **Jory Vinikour**, Chalon-sur-Saône, France, harpsichordist

October 25
BWV 194

Höchsterwünschtes Freudenfest *Most highly desired festival of joy*

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

J. S. Bach: Concerto in D minor, BWV 1043; **Betty Lewis and Paul Zafer**, violinists

Richard Hillert: Prelude to Evening Prayer

November 22
BWV 71

Gott ist mein König *God is my king*

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

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

January 24
BWV 3

Ach Gott, wie manches Herzeleid *Ah, God, how much heartache*

Dan Helm, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Oak Park, Illinois, homilist

Kontras Quartet, Chicago, Illinois

February 28
BWV 159

Sehet! Wir gehn hinauf gen Jerusalem *Behold! We go up to Jerusalem*

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

Steven Wente, Concordia University Chicago, organist

March 20, 21
BWV 245

Johannes-Passion *St. John Passion*

Admission is free; free-will offering

Saturday, March 29, 7:00 p.m. (Preview lecture at 6:00 p.m.)

Sunday, March 30, 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

April 25
BWV 134

Ein Herz, das seinen Jesum lebend weiß *A heart that knows its Jesus is living*

Robert L. Shaner, Hinsdale, Illinois, homilist

Kapelle of Concordia University Chicago, guest choir; **Charles P. Brown**, conductor

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

May 23
BWV 129

Gelobet sei der Herr, mein Gott *Praised be the Lord, my God*

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

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

GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
& SCHOOL

Free-will offering ■ Accessible facility

7300 Division Street, River Forest, Illinois ■ 708-366-6900 ■ bachvespers.org

BACKGROUND NOTES ON THE CANTATA

Johann Sebastian Bach took up the post of Cantor at the St. Thomas Church in Leipzig in late May of 1723. Beginning on his first Sunday at this new post, he presented cantatas of his own composition, most of them brand-new works, on every Sunday and liturgical festival for the better part of the next two years. It was an ambitious undertaking, and his achievement is unmatched by any other composer in the history of western music.

Why did he do it? In 1708, in his letter of resignation to the Town Council in Mühlhausen, Bach had looked ahead to the resources and opportunities he hoped would be available to him in his next job at the Court of Weimar. He saw not only “the possibility of a more adequate living” but also the opportunity for “the achievement of my goal of a well-regulated church music.” It would take time. He did not have regular opportunities to compose sacred music until he was promoted from Court Organist to Concertmaster at Weimar, where his duties ultimately included composing monthly cantatas for the palace church. However, in his next job at the princely court in Cöthen (1717–23), there was no call for elaborate church music. There he composed only secular choral music.

In Leipzig Bach set out to create a large working repertoire of choral and instrumental music that he could draw on in the years ahead. His ambitions reached far beyond the practical need to present something new every week to the people in the pews. According to biographer Christoph Wolff, cantata composition “let him fulfill an apparently long-held desire to focus on the kind of vocal-instrumental writing that met his own musical ends.”

Bach being Bach, his musical “ends” were complex and wide-ranging, blending the 15th and 16th century Lutheran vocal music tradition with more modern forms. The music would encourage and challenge his listeners’ faith while keeping their attention with familiar chorale tunes, delightful original melodies, new sonorities, and compelling counterpoint and harmony. He churned out these new and innovative works amid the realities of a demanding schedule, limited resources, and lots of people to please.

There is no single uniting principle behind the 1723–24 cantata cycle as there would be behind the cantatas of the 1724–25 cycle, all based on Lutheran chorales. New in town, Bach had to scramble to find librettos, getting to know various local poets and pastors as well as relying on published texts. Some of the cantatas he performed that first year were originally composed in Weimar. Others repurposed secular music from Cöthen that had to be adapted to new texts and ensembles.



Today's cantata, *Bringet dem Herrn Ehre seines Namens*, BWV 148 (Bring to the Lord the honor due his name), may have first been performed on the 17th Sunday After Trinity, September 19, 1723. There is no actual record of its performance, but it's the only existing cantata that could have been performed on that day. Or it may have first been performed on the 17th Sunday After Trinity in 1725. The texts of the arias and recitatives are based on a longer poem by the Leipzig poet Christian Friedrich Henrici, known as Picander, the author of other cantata texts as well as the libretto for the St. Matthew Passion. Since the poem was not published until 1725, the 1723 date would require Bach having had access to an unpublished version.

Neither the original score nor the parts for the cantata have been preserved. The music comes to us via a copy made, probably during the 1760s, by Johann Christoph Farlau (b. 1735), a student of Bach's son-in-law, Johann Christoph Altnickol. Farlau left out some details, including the text for the final chorale. The *Neue Bach-Ausgabe* edition of the cantata assigns the text of the final stanza of the hymn "*Auf meinen lieben Gott*" ("In God My Faithful God," TLH 526*) to the closing chorale. The *Stuttgarter Bach-Ausgaben* edition used in today's performance follows the lead of earlier editors, using the final stanza of Johann Heermann's hymn "*Wo soll ich fliehen hin*" (1630). Either one would have been familiar to the Leipzig congregation, and both echo the cantata themes while providing a closing message for worshipers.

Like many of the first-cycle cantatas, BWV 148 opens with a quotation from scripture, Psalm 29:2. In the gospel lesson for the day, Luke 14:1–11, Jesus challenges the people around him by asking if it is lawful to heal on the sabbath—and then he goes ahead and heals a sick man. The passage also includes a parable about those who are exalted being humbled and the humble being exalted. The cantata's focus, however, is entirely on joyfully observing the sabbath. It is a fitting celebration to open another season of worshiping together in Bach Cantata Vespers.

Gwen Gotsch

* The Lutheran Hymnal (1941)



BIOGRAPHIES



Michael D. Costello, director, has served as Cantor at Grace since 2008 and Artistic Director of Consonance—Chicago Choral Artists since 2014. Prior to moving to Illinois in 2008, Costello served as a church musician at parishes in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and served as a pastor at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Columbia, South Carolina. Costello graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sacred Music from Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory, North Carolina, and a Master of Divinity from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina. An accomplished organist known best for sensitive service playing, Costello has published choral and organ works with several publishers, has sung as a baritone with St. Charles Singers and the Grant Park Music Festival Chorus, and performs frequently as a guest musician with other local ensembles.



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 is the violin, viola and orchestra teacher at Grace Lutheran School and teaches violin and viola at the Chicago School of Violin Making.



Bruce K. Modahl, homilist, is a graduate of Christ Seminary-Seminex and holds graduate degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary and Union Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. He served churches in St. Louis, Virginia Beach, Virginia, and Tampa. He was called to Grace Lutheran Church in River Forest, Illinois in 1998 and retired in 2014. His book *The Banality of Grace* was published in 2019. He is the co-author with F. Dean Lueking of *Sermons of Consequence*. He has written essays and text studies for a variety of publications including *The Christian Century* and *Sundays and Seasons*. For ten years he served as editor for *Crossings Connection*, the newsletter of the Crossings community, founded by Seminex professors Bob Bertram and Ed Schroeder.



Sarah Ponder, mezzo-soprano, enjoys a busy career as a soloist and versatile ensemble singer, performing with Chicago institutions such as Lyric Opera Chicago, Chicago Symphony Chorus, Chicago a cappella, William Ferris Chorale, and Music of the Baroque in addition to various appearances in the region. A passionate educator and performer, Ponder holds an outreach position with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where she works with at-risk youth and has also recorded original works with Carnegie Hall's Lullaby Project. She has also performed several solo concerts with famed Maestro Riccardo Muti at the piano, bringing opera to new audiences.





Brian Skoog, tenor, performs in a wide range of operatic and concert roles. This season, operatic performances include his role debut as Ferrando in *Così fan tutte* with Chicago's Salt Creek Chamber Orchestra, Narraboth in *Salome* with Union Avenue Opera, Ralph Rackstraw in *H.M.S. Pinafore* with Winter Opera Saint Louis, and the title role in the world premiere of *The Higgle* by Margi Griebing-Haigh. In concert, Skoog makes appearances with the Bozeman Symphony (Mozart *Requiem*), Toledo Symphony (Beethoven *Symphony No. 9*, Handel *Messiah*), and West Shore Chorale (Mozart *Mass in C minor*). Skoog also recently appeared as Tempo in *Il trionfo del Tempo e del Disinganno* and Lurcanio in *Ariodante* with Opera Neo, and as Mozart in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Mozart and Salieri* with The Cleveland Opera.



Jory Vinikour, harpsichordist, has performed as soloist in repertoire ranging from Bach and before, to Poulenc and beyond, with the Cleveland Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, Philharmonic of Radio France, among many others, under the direction of renowned conductors such as Stéphane Denève, Martin Haselböck, Armin Jordan, Marc Minkowski, *et al*, and as recital soloist in series and festivals throughout much of the world.

Mr. Vinikour's debut recording for Sono Luminus, the complete harpsichord works of Jean-Philippe Rameau, was nominated for a Grammy® award, in the category of Best Classical Solo Instrumental Recording in 2013, an honor also accorded to his *Toccatas: Modern American Music for Harpsichord* in 2015.

Jory made his recital debut at Chicago's famed Ravinia Festival in August of 2019, reappearing there in 2023. Other important appearances include Printemps des Arts de Monte Carlo, Carnegie Presents, San Francisco Early Music Series, the Library of Congress, National Gallery, Salle Cortot, Valletta (Malta) Baroque Festival, Festival de Périgord Noir, and more.

In recent seasons, Mr. Vinikour has made appearances as conductor/soloist with the Aspen Festival Orchestra, St. Louis Symphony, Seattle Symphony, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Musica Angelica, Hawaii Symphony, Bergen Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Karlsruhe Handel Festival Orchestra, Korea Chamber Orchestra, musicAeterna, Juillard415, and l'Orchestre de Bretagne.

This past June, Jory conducted Marc-Antoine Charpentier's masterpiece *David et Jonathas* with Haymarket Opera, Chicago.

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Special thanks Karen Danford for her translation of the cantata from German to English and to Gwen Gotsch for her careful editing of materials in this worship folder.



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