



Members of The Bach Choir of Bethlehem  
& Bach Festival Orchestra  
Dr. Christopher Jackson, Artistic Director & Conductor  
present

# BACH at NOON

A Gift of Music & Spiritual Refreshment



## Soloists

Clara Rottsoik – soprano

Robin Bier – alto

James Reese – tenor

Brian Ming Chu – baritone

## November 12, 2024 – PROGRAM

### Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1643–1704)

Selections from *Noëls sur les instruments* (H. 534)  
and *Noëls pour les instruments* (H. 531)

*Vous qui desirez sans fin* (You who desire without end)

*Joseph est bien marié* (Joseph is happily married)

*Or nous dites Marie* (Now tell us Mary)

*A la venue du noel* (When Christmas comes)

*Laissez paistre vos bestes* (Let your animals graze)

### Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Cantata *Schwingt freudig euch empor*, BWV 36

Members of the Bach Festival Orchestra

– Elizabeth Field, concertmaster, Inna Ezyerovich, Elizabeth Wright,

Linda Kistler, Rebecca Brown & Mary Ogletree – violin

Nina Falk & Agnés Maurer – viola • Loretta O’Sullivan – cello

Daniel McDougall – bass

Nobuo Kitagawa & Lynne Cohen – oboe d’amore

Kerry Heimann – harpsichord & organ



## Second Tuesdays

\* 12:10–1:00pm

Central Moravian Church  
Historic Downtown Bethlehem

Next Bach at Noon  
Tuesday,  
January 14, 2025



The November Bach at Noon concert was named in honor of Greg Funfgeld in celebration of his 25th season as the sixth conductor of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem, his extraordinary vision, including the initiation of Bach at Noon, and the phenomenal growth and development of the choir’s program and artistry under his leadership. The concert is named and supported in part by a generous endowment gift from Donald and Christine Wertman.

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



## J.S. Bach | Cantata *Schwingt freudig euch empor*, BWV 36

– Translation by H. Ellis Finger

### 1. Chorus

Schwingt freudig euch empor zu den erhabnen Sternen,  
ihr Zungen, die ihr itzt in Zion fröhlich seid!  
Doch haltet ein! Der Schall darf sich nicht weit entfernen,  
es naht sich selbst zu euch der Herr der Herrlichkeit.

*Soar upward with joy unto the stars sublime,  
you voices, so jubilant now in Zion!  
Yet show restraint! Your sound need not travel far,  
the Lord of glory himself now draws near.*

### 2. Chorale (Soprano and Alto)

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland,  
der Jungfrauen Kind erkannt,  
des sich wundert alle Welt,  
Gott solch Geburt ihm bestellt.

*Now come, Savior of the nations,  
the Virgin's child made known,  
all the world marvels at this fact  
that God ordains so wondrous a birth for him.*

### 3. Aria (Tenor)

Die Liebe zieht mit sanften Schritten  
sein Treugeliebtes allgemach.  
Gleichwie es eine Braut entzückt,  
wenn sie den Bräutigam erblicket,  
so folgt ein Herz auch Jesu nach.

*Love draws forth with gentle steps  
and steady pace its truly beloved.  
Just as the bride is enraptured,  
when she beholds her groom,  
thus the heart follows after Jesus.*

• Nobuo Kitagawa, oboe d'amore •

### 4. Chorale

Zwingt die Saiten in Cythara  
und lasst die süsse Musica  
ganz freudenreich erschallen,  
dass ich möge mit Jesulein,  
dem wunderschönen Bräutigam mein,  
in steter Liebe wallen!  
Singet, springet, jubiliert, triumphieret, dankt dem Herren!  
Gross ist der König der Ehren.

*Pluck the strings of the harp  
and let sweet music  
resound with abundant joy,  
so that I might journey with Jesus,  
my bridegroom of wondrous beauty,  
in steadfast love.  
Sing, dance, be jubilant, be triumphant, give thanks to the Lord!  
Great is the King of honor.*

### Second Part

#### 5. Aria (Bass)

Willkommen, werter Schatz!  
Die Lieb und Glaube machet Platz  
vor dich in meinem Herzen rein,  
zieh bei mir ein!

*Welcome, dearest treasure!  
Love and faith prepare space  
for you within my heart so pure,  
enter and abide with me.*

#### 6. Chorale (Tenor)

Der du bist dem Vater gleich,  
führ hinaus den Sieg im Fleisch,  
dass dein ewig Gotts Gewalt  
in uns das krank Fleisch enthält.

*You who are the Father's likeness,  
lead forth victory in the flesh,  
so that God's eternal power  
is held within our sickened flesh.*

• Nobuo Kitagawa & Lynne Cohen, oboe d'amore •

#### 7. Aria (Soprano)

Auch mit gedämpften, schwachen Stimmen  
wird Gottes Majestät verehrt.  
Denn schallet nur der Geist darbei,  
so ist ihm solches ein Geschrei,  
das er im Himmel selber hört.

*Even with muted, feeble voices  
God's Majesty shall be exalted.  
For as long as the Spirit shall sound  
it is to him so great a cry  
that he himself hears it in Heaven.*

• Elizabeth Field, violin •

#### 8. Chorale

Lob sei Gott, dem Vater, g'ton,  
Lob sei Gott, sein'm eingen Sohn,  
Lob sei Gott, dem Heiligen Geist,  
immer und in Ewigkeit!

*Praise be given to God the Father,  
praise to God, his own Son,  
praise to God, the Holy Spirit,  
forever and in eternity."*

## Soloists

**CLARA ROTTSOLK, *soprano*** A brilliant and accomplished concert artist, “resplendent” soprano Clara Rottsolk has appeared as a soloist with orchestras including American Bach Soloists, Santa Fe Pro Musica, Pacific MusicWorks, the American Classical Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, Richmond Symphony, Bach Collegium San Diego, Virginia Symphony, New Mexico Philharmonic, Pacific Symphony, Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Trinity Wall Street, and Seattle Baroque Orchestra under the direction of conductors including Stephen Stubbs, David Danzmayr, Nicholas McGeegan, Grete Pedersen, Jeffrey Thomas, Daniel Hyde, Joshua Rifkin, Bruno Weil, John Sinclair, Chia-Hsuan Lin, Gabriel Crouch, Timothy Nelson, and Andrew Megill. With “sophisticated mastery of the nuances of the libretto: with perfect diction and expressive delivery” (*Cleveland Classical*), she performs chamber and recital repertoire with Les Délices, ARTEK, TENET, Folger Consort, Piffaro, Byron Schenkman & Friends, Colorado Bach Ensemble, and as soloist at festivals including Carmel Bach, Berkeley Early Music, Montréal Baroque, Spoleto USA, Winter Park Bach, St. Louis Bach, Indianapolis Early Music, Whidbey Island Music, and Boston Early Music Fringe. Her solo recordings can be found on Chandos, MSR Classics, and independent labels. Currently Rottsolk is based in Philadelphia and teaches voice at Swarthmore, Haverford, and Bryn Mawr colleges.

**ROBIN BIER, *alto*** Praised for her “inimitable, resonant contralto” (*Phindie*), “particularly moving singing” (*Cleveland Classical*), and “mysterious, dark hue and sauntering presence” (*San Francisco Classical Voice*), Robin Bier enjoys a varied career of solo and ensemble singing. She has appeared as a soloist with the Washington Bach Consort, American Bach Soloists, Sarasota Orchestra, Cantata Collective, Bourbon Baroque, Dartington Festival Orchestra, English Symphony Orchestra, and Yorkshire Baroque Soloists, among others. As an ensemble singer, Bier has performed and recorded with the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, Everlasting Voices, Clarion, Musica Secreta, I Fagiolini, Apollo's Fire, Choral Arts Philadelphia, and Ensemble VIII. She is Co-Founder and alto of solo-voice early music ensemble Les Canards Chantants, with whom she has garnered praise for “elegant vocalism” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*), “finely tuned vocals, robust singing, emotional flexibility, and sense of adventure” (*Broad Street Review*), “brilliant and moving programming” (*Early Music America*), and “liveliness and theatricality” (*Boston Musical Intelligence*). Originally from Alaska, Bier holds degrees from Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music and the University of York in England. She is based in Philadelphia, where she teaches studio voice at Swarthmore College, coaches the trebles at Bryn Athyn Cathedral, and enjoys prowling the trails of the Pennypack Nature Preserve with husband, Graham, and son, Roland.

**JAMES REESE, *tenor***, brings his versatile and thoughtful singing to concert stages throughout the U.S., Canada, and Europe. He regularly performs with world-class orchestras and ensembles, particularly in the field of Baroque music. Among his collaborators are Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, American Bach Soloists, Portland Baroque Orchestra, Tafelmusik, The Sebastians, and the Boston Early Music Festival. He is also an active recitalist; he collaborates with pianist Daniel Overly in performances of song, and together, they made a recital debut at the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society in 2022. Reese also makes regular appearances with leading art song presenter Lyric Fest, with whom he has performed four world premieres. The *San Francisco Chronicle* has praised his singing as “splendid,” and the *Broad Street Review* has written of his singing: “[Reese] was captivating...even more impressive than his vocal deployment was the narrative momentum he sustained throughout the performance.”

**BRIAN MING CHU's, *baritone*** association with the Bach Choir of Bethlehem goes back to his seminal musical experience as a young boy treble, singing the chorale lines in the *St. Matthew Passion* during a Bach Festival under Greg Funfgeld, which sowed the seed of his abiding affinity for Bach's choral music. Now based in Philly, he is an established interpreter of oratorio and Baroque music, acclaimed for his “sterling performances” (*Washington Post*) and “range, agility, and expressive storytelling ability” (*Monterey Herald*). He has been a featured artist with the King's Noye, Brandywine Baroque, the Carmel Bach Festival, the Dryden Ensemble, Piffaro, Portland Baroque, and the Choir of Trinity Wall Street, with repeat appearances in the title role of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, the Bach *Passions*, Haydn's *Creation*, the Brahms and Verdi *Requiems*, and Handel's *Messiah* on three continents. Chu's solo appearances in the 2024/25 season include Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mozart *Requiem*, French Baroque arias of Grétry and Charpentier, and the acclaimed premiere of Chinese composer Huang Ruo's staged oratorio, *Angel Island*, at the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival. In 2014 he performed several roles in the premiere of Chuck Holdemann's opera *Young Meister Bach* at the Bethlehem Bach Festival, in addition to Bach's *Coffee Cantata*. An advocate for contemporary art song, Chu has been cited for “vocal and interpretive confidence” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*) with the ensemble Network for New Music and has given recitals at Carnegie's Weill and Merkin Halls in New York and Washington's Phillips Collection, and as an U.S. Embassy Cultural Artist in West Africa and Austria. He holds degrees in architecture from Cornell University and in voice/ opera from Peabody Conservatory; he has served on the voice faculty of Muhlenberg College for 20 years.

Please help us meet November's Bach at Noon Donation Challenge!

David & Carol Beckwith are sponsoring a \$1,000 matching grant in recognition of the success and hard work of the leadership and staff of the Bach Choir. Support the November Donation Challenge with a freewill donation at today's concert using the enclosed envelope, donate online at [bach.org/SupportBachAtNoon](https://bach.org/SupportBachAtNoon), or text BNOON to 44-321. Contributions can also be mailed to The Bach Choir of Bethlehem at 440 Heckewelder Place, Bethlehem, PA 18018.



## Artistic Director & Conductor

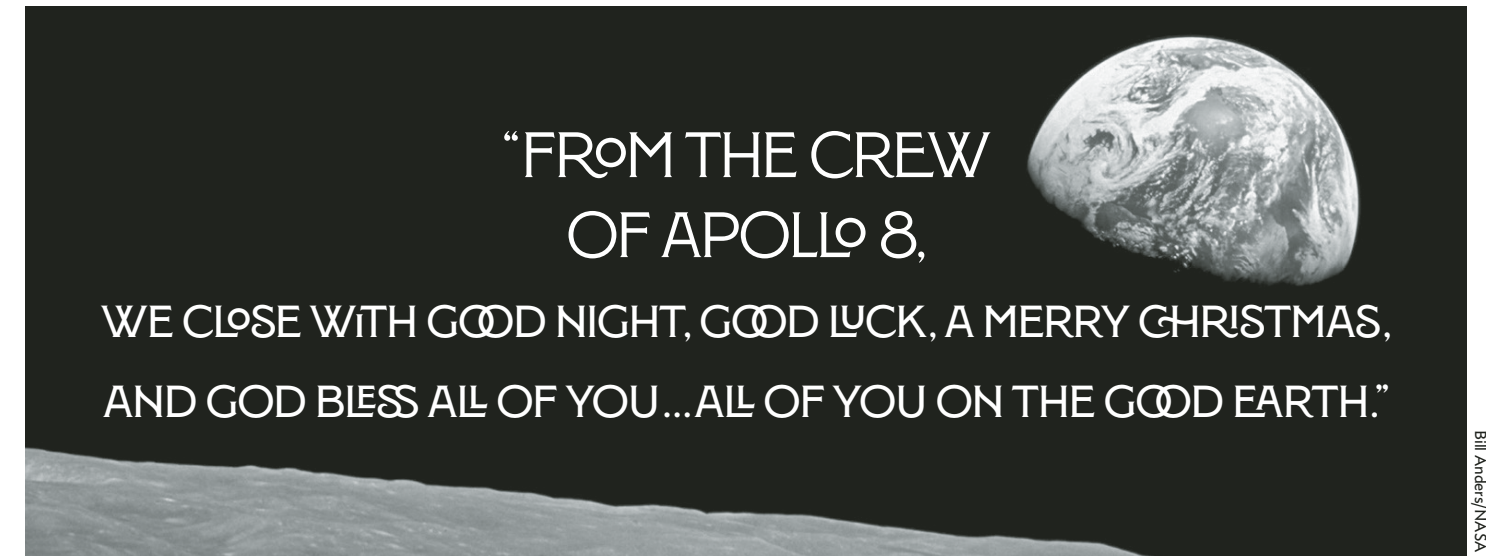


**DR. CHRISTOPHER JACKSON**, now in his third season, is the seventh Artistic Director and Conductor of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem. He has worked for 18 years as a conductor, educator, professional singer, and scholar. Throughout his career, he has led numerous collegiate, professional, and amateur ensembles across the United States, and he works frequently as a guest conductor for orchestras, choirs, and music festivals. His ensembles have toured China, Canada, and the continental United States. During his tenure at Lycoming College in Williamsport, PA, he co-founded the Lycoming Baroque Choir and Orchestra and designed academic courses that allowed students to travel to Germany and explore links between Baroque music, art, and architecture. He has taught courses and master classes in conducting, music theory, music history, vocal methods and pedagogy, and Baroque performance practice and has been a guest artist and lecturer at the San Juan Conservatory, the Coro de Niños de San Juan, and the Baldwin Wallace Bach Festival. He was nominated as a finalist for the

American Prize in Virtual Performance for his work with the Muhlenberg College choral ensembles during the Covid-19 pandemic. Jackson remains an active professional choral singer and soloist, with focuses in the Baroque, Renaissance, and Modern eras. As a member of the Boston-based chamber choir Skylark, he has appeared on three GRAMMY-nominated albums (Best Choral Performance) and also serves as the ensemble's Director of Education. In that position, he helped design free materials for music educators across the country to use for virtual music-making. He has performed with the GRAMMY award-winning ensemble Roomful of Teeth, the Santa Fe Desert Chorale, Artefact Ensemble, Les Canards Chantants, and Bach Vespers at Holy Trinity Lutheran in New York City. Jackson received his Bachelor of Arts in Vocal Performance from Oklahoma State University, studying conducting under Dr. Dirk Garner (Baldwin Wallace Bach Festival). He received his Master of Music in Choral Conducting from Westminster Choir College and was the graduate assistant conductor of the Westminster Symphonic Choir under Dr. Joe Miller and Dr. Amanda Quist, as well as studying with Dr. Andrew Megill (Carmel Bach, Illinois Bach Academy). He earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting from the University of North Texas, studying with Dr. Jerry McCoy and Dr. Richard Sparks. His areas of research include the programming and performance of Baroque and Renaissance music for choirs of all ages and levels of experience, as well as the choral music of Benjamin Britten.

## The Bach Choir of Bethlehem

**THE OLDEST AMERICAN BACH CHOIR**, the Bach Choir of Bethlehem gave the first complete American performances of Bach's *Mass in B Minor* in 1900 and *Christmas Oratorio* in 1901. Since its founding in 1898, the now-famous choir has been attracting thousands of visitors from across the United States and beyond to the annual Bethlehem Bach Festival in Pennsylvania. In 2022, Dr. Christopher Jackson became the seventh Artistic Director and Conductor of the Bach Choir of Bethlehem. The 115 dedicated volunteer singers of the Bach Choir, performing with the Bach Festival Orchestra and distinguished soloists, have received international acclaim. Programming includes 40 concerts and educational programs per year for an audience of more than 22,000. Venues have included the Salzburger Dom, Nikolaikirche in Potsdam, and the Thomaskirche, Bach's church in Leipzig, as part of the 2024 European tour; Herkulesaal at Munich's Royal Residence as part of the 1995 Germany tour; The Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall as part of the choir's Centennial Celebration in 1998-2000; the BBC Proms in London's Royal Albert Hall as part of an eight-concert tour of the United Kingdom in 2003; and Severance Hall, Cleveland, for the 75th anniversary of the Baldwin Wallace Bach Festival in 2007. In September 2011, the Bach Choir represented the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in a 10th anniversary musical observance of 9/11 in New York City, giving concerts in Saint Paul's Chapel and Trinity Church, Wall Street. In 2013, the choir performed Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at Strathmore in the Washington, D.C., area, and in 2014, the new opera *Young Meister Bach* for the 250th anniversary of the German Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. The Bach Choir has released 12 recordings on the Dorian and Analekta labels, including most recently Mendelssohn/Bach *Matthäus-Passion* (2024), Bach's Cantata 21 and Handel's *Ode for Saint Cecilia's Day* (2018), *A Child's Christmas in Bethlehem* (2013), and *St. John Passion* (2012). The choir has been featured on National Public Radio's *Performance Today* and *Prairie Home Companion*, Deutsche Radio, the BBC World Service, *CBS Sunday Morning*, and the Emmy award-winning PBS documentary on the choir, *Make a Joyful Noise*. It has been recognized for its outstanding educational outreach programs (Bach at Noon, Bach to School, and interdisciplinary Family Concerts) by annual awards from the National Endowment for the Arts (2011-2020). The J.S. Bach Foundation in Switzerland named the Bach Choir of Bethlehem as the first American recipient of its annual award to a single Bach organization, recognizing the Bach Choir's outstanding work in Bach performance and education for young people (2012). *Mr. Bach Comes to Call*, a film based on the acclaimed Classical Kids CD, was co-produced by the Bach Choir of Bethlehem and is distributed internationally by the Children's Group. The Bel Canto Youth Chorus is the Bach Choir's youth choir educational program under the direction of Director Kelly Rocchi. Through Bel Canto and other educational programs, the Bach Choir is training the next generation of choral singers and cultivating a life-long passion for the choral arts. For more information visit the Bach Choir's website - [BACH.org](http://BACH.org).



“FROM THE CREW  
OF APOLLO 8,

WE CLOSE WITH GOOD NIGHT, GOOD LUCK, A MERRY CHRISTMAS,  
AND GOD BLESS ALL OF YOU ...ALL OF YOU ON THE GOOD EARTH.”

Bill Anders/NASA

## Christmas Concerts

### Heavenly Christmas: Johann Sebastian Bach, Kile Smith, & Carols

We welcome you to join us for these infectious joyful performances that are a cherished part of the Lehigh Valley's Christmas season.

**SAT** | December 7, 2024 | 4pm  
First Presbyterian Church, Allentown

**SUN** | December 8, 2024 📺 | 4pm  
First Presbyterian Church, Bethlehem

Celebrate the holiday season with an uplifting concert experience featuring the music of J.S. Bach and Philadelphia composer Kile Smith. Bach's cantata *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*, BWV 1, (*How Brightly Shines the Morning Star*) known as the “Queen of Chorales,” brings together soaring vocals, warm French horns, and a brilliant violin obbligato in a joyful celebration of the Christmas spirit. Smith's *The Consolation of Apollo* captures the awe of the Apollo 8 crew's historic view of Earth from the moon, blending Genesis passages and transcripts of lunar transmissions into an evocative, multimedia choral work.

This year's concert also honors the recent UNESCO World Heritage recognition of the Moravian Church Settlement with a new carol by Smith set to historical Moravian text as part of the Carol Commission Project. Join the tradition as the audience is invited to sing along with the choir, making this concert a cherished Lehigh Valley Christmas institution.

📺 Share the Christmas concert with friends and family via our livestream broadcast from Bethlehem!

#### Guest soloists:

Nola Richardson & Katelyn Grace Jackson – soprano • Janna Critz & Kate Maroney – mezzo-soprano  
Lawrence Jones & Nathan Hodgson – tenor • Steven Eddy & Daniel Schwartz – bass



The Bach Choir of Bethlehem gratefully acknowledges our Bach at Noon corporate & foundation sponsors.



Jephson Educational Trusts

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The Bach Choir is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts








## CENTRAL MORAVIAN CHURCH

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

The Moravian Church had its origin in the pre-Reformation awakening under John Hus. The Unitas Fratrum (Unity of the Brethren) was organized in 1457. Because much of its early history is centered in Moravia, the Unity is known formally as the Moravian Church and recognized as the oldest organized Protestant denomination in the world. The Moravian Church places much emphasis on mission, music, and education. It was J. Fred Wolle, organist of Central Moravian Church in Bethlehem, who founded The Bach Choir of Bethlehem in 1898 and conducted The Choir in the first performance of Bach's *Mass in B Minor* in America here at Central Church in 1900. Central Moravian Church continues to have a flourishing music program presented by its resident music ensembles and visiting artists, under the leadership of Minister of Music and Organist Rebecca Lepore. In addition to five Central Moravian Church music CDs, including *An Old Fashioned Moravian Music Christmas*, an organ recording featuring Rebecca Lepore, and *Christmas Eve at Central Moravian Church*, a recently published 256-page book entitled *Praise and Thanksgiving: 275 Years of Music at Central Moravian Church* is available at the Moravian Book Shop.

### For further information about the Bach Choir:

- Visit [BACH.org](http://BACH.org) for upcoming concert and ticket information, to join our mailing list, or to order CDs and other Bach Choir merchandise.
- Consider becoming a Guarantor with the choir: Learn more at the website or by calling 610-866-4382 ext. 113.
- Follow us on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and LinkedIn.     Watch us on YouTube. 

### Freewill offerings to help support Bach at Noon will be accepted at all doors or you may donate online at [BACH.org](http://BACH.org) or send your contribution to:

- The Bach Choir of Bethlehem • 440 Heckewelder Place, Bethlehem, PA 18018
- To donate by phone, text BNOON to 44-321.

### Bach at Noon broadcast LIVE on WWFM & now LIVESTREAMED!

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

**NEW!** Beginning with September's Bach at Noon, concerts will also be livestreamed on the choir's YouTube channel in partnership with Central Moravian Church. Please see [BACH.org](http://BACH.org) for more information. Please donate to support our Bach at Noon live broadcast.

### Bach at Noon 2024-2025 Bethlehem Schedule

**2024**  
September 10  
October 8  
November 12

**2025**  
January 14  
February 11  
March 11  
April 8



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

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

The Guarantors of The Bach Choir  
for their continuing support.

### Bach at Noon 2025 Allentown Schedule:

June 10 July 8 August 12

610-866-4382 | [BACH.org](http://BACH.org)