



Es ist das Heil uns kommen her BWV 9

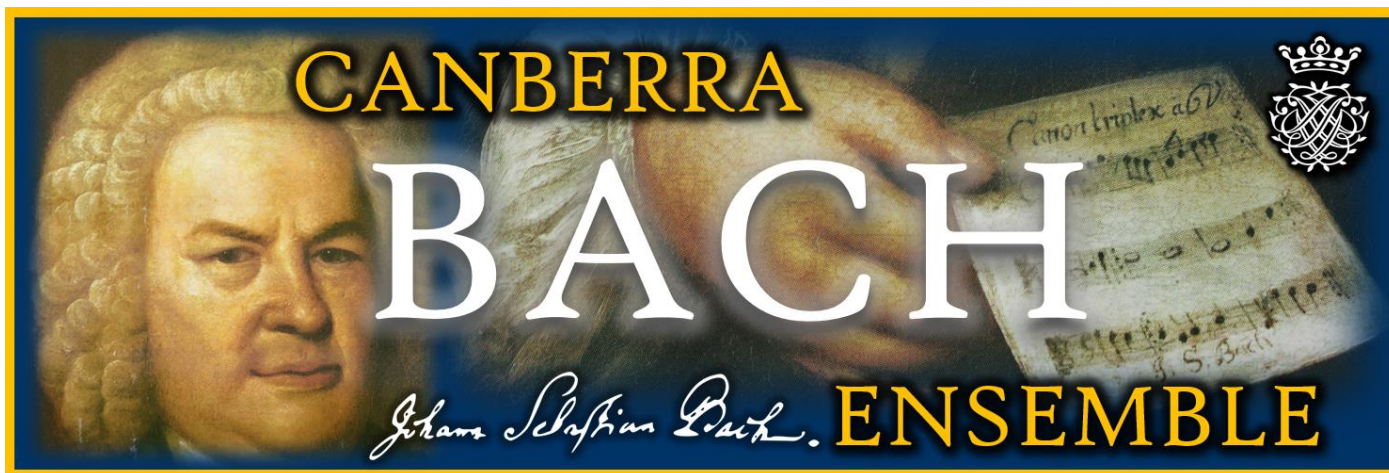
Was willst du dich betrüben BWV 107

Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält BWV 178

St Christopher's Cathedral, Manuka

Saturday 11 May 2024, 7.30 pm

Sunday 12 May 2024, 2.00 pm



Leipzig at Long Last! Leipzig Bach Festival, June 2024

The 2024 Leipzig Bach Festival is fast approaching. This year it will focus on two significant Bach-Luther anniversaries – **the 300th anniversary of the creation of Bach's Chorale Cantata cycle of 1724-25**, and **the 500th anniversary of the first publication of Lutheran chorales to appear in printed hymnbooks in 1524**.

In less than a month, the Canberra Bach Ensemble heads to Germany to take part in this year's festival to perform three cantatas from Bach's 1724-25 Chorale Cantata Cycle, *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her* BWV 9, *Was willst du dich betrüben* BWV 107 and *Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält* BWV 178. The concert will take place on Saturday, 8 June at 5.00pm, in the Peterskirche in Leipzig.



The “BACH – We are FAMILY” theme continues for the 2024 Leipzig Bach Festival. The concept, originally conceived for the 2020 festival but thwarted and delayed by the covid pandemic, is to bring together many of the dedicated Bach Ensembles from all corners of the world to meet at the epicentre of the Bach world. The

Canberra Bach Ensemble is the only Australian group to be involved, and we'll be joined by approximately twenty other Bach ensembles from around the world, performing the entire 1724-25 Chorale Cantata cycle of over 50 cantatas over the ten days of the festival, 7-16 June. <https://www.bachfestleipzig.de/en/bachfest>

Although there have been several Australian music groups and many individual musicians who have performed in Leipzig for many decades, the Canberra Bach Ensemble is the first Australian group to be invited to take part in the Leipzig Bach Festival itself. We are deeply honoured and grateful for this opportunity.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, musicians have gathered together in Leipzig and other important Bach towns and cities in Germany for what they call *Bach-Tage* (Bach Days) and *Bach-Woche* (Bach Week) to play and enjoy Bach's music together. After the reunification of Germany in 1989, as the East German states recovered throughout the 1990s, the Leipzig City Council commissioned the Leipzig Bach Archive to establish a new initiative and create a truly international Leipzig Bach Festival. The first festival took place in May 1999. <https://www.bachfestleipzig.de/en/bachfest/history-leipzig-bach-festival>

On the 12 May 1999, Helmut Schmidt, the former Chancellor of West Germany from 1974-1982, opened the first international Leipzig Bach festival. He gave his inaugural speech...

"...Our Leipzig visit took place just three days before the fall of the Wall, and it came to pass because the Bonn government under Chancellor Kohl, following my recommendation, had commissioned the Leipzig painter Bernhard Heisig to paint a portrait of me. During this time we not only became acquainted with Mr. Heisig and his wife Gudrun Brüne but also with Kurt Masur, to whom the citizens of Leipzig owe so much. Since then all three have become our good friends.

But the most important visit took place a long time before this—in fact, more than a quarter of a century ago. It occurred in a period in which it was ticklish for a West German politician to make a trip to the GDR—more difficult, in truth, than making a trip to Moscow. But the Leipzig Fair offered me the opportunity—I was at that time Finance Minister in Bonn—to visit your city. By chance it happened that on an evening when I had nothing else scheduled there was to be a Bach cantata performance here in the St. Thomas Church. We telephoned the church office to see if we could be admitted unobtrusively. They told us to come two minutes before the start and the pastor would wait for us at the side entrance. And so it happened: the pastor led my wife and me to our seats in the choir of the church—the church was as full as it is this evening—and we were barely in our places when the music began. As we glanced somewhat furtively and inconspicuously around the church, our eyes fell on a single long-stemmed rose, which lay on the floor before us. More precisely scrutinized, the rose lay on a grave plate that was embedded in the floor—an unadorned grave plate that bore the name and dates of Johann Sebastian Bach.

At that moment I was gripped by an inner emotion and excitement that can hardly be described. This experience—of having Bach's music in my ears, and his church and his name before my eyes—made me deeply aware of all that I owed to Bach's music during the course of my life. To be on a visit to the GDR was exciting enough in itself. But now came the encounter with one of the greatest minds that our society has ever produced. Seldom have I felt more deeply what it can mean to be a part of this society. And seldom have I ever sensed more clearly the happiness that can flow from music..."

The rest of Helmut Schmidt's utterly beautiful and profound speech can be read here:

<https://www.bachfestleipzig.de/en/bach-festival/helmut-schmidts-address-opening-1999-leipzig-bach-festival>

In an extraordinary coincidence, and unbeknownst to its musician members at the time, on the other side of the world, the newly formed Canberra Bach Ensemble gave its inaugural Bach cantata concert the following month on 26 June 1999, in the city of Canberra, Australia, at St Christopher's Cathedral, Manuka. Two cantatas were performed – *Aus der Tiefe rufe ich, Herr, zu dir* BWV 131, and *Christ lag in Todes Banden* BWV 4.

Australian Cultural Fund

Once again, we have set up an Australian Cultural Fund (ACF) campaign which takes us through to the EOFY 2024. I would like to thank some of our generous supporters who have already stepped forward early in the campaign to assist with the considerable costs of our excursion to Leipzig in the coming months. We must continue to strengthen this support. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Canberra Bach Ensemble's campaign.

<https://artists.australianculturalfund.org.au/s/project/a2EMn0000066CHwMAM/leipzig-at-last>

If you require further information, please feel free to contact us at realbach@tpg.com.au.



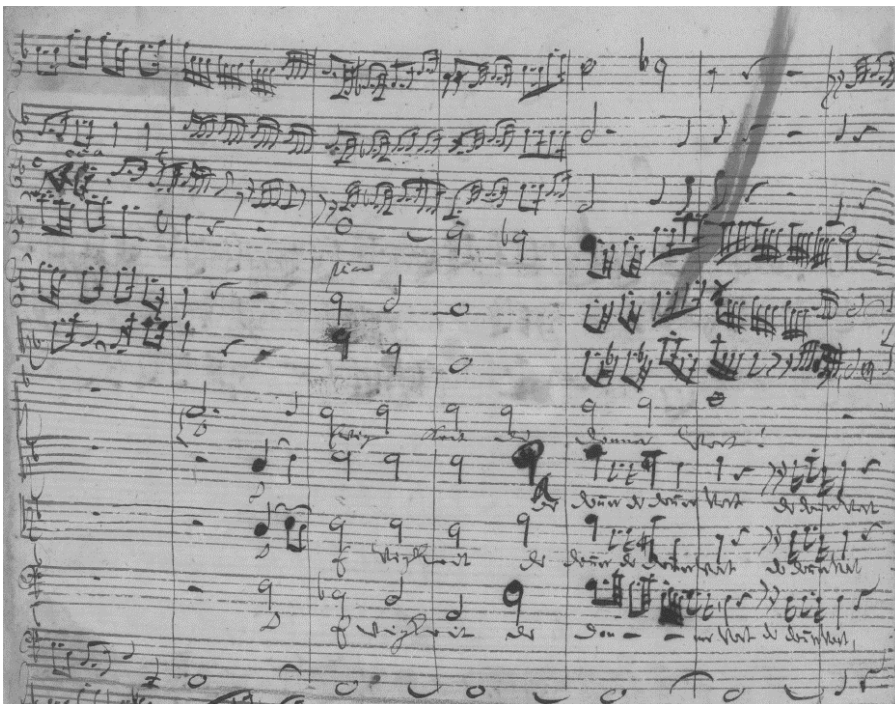
Andrew Koll, Director
Canberra Bach Ensemble
www.canberrabachensemble.com

Bach's Chorale Cantata Cycle, 1724-25

During the first twelve months of Bach's tenure as Thomaskantor, Leipzig witnessed an explosive period of musical creativity, when Bach produced two of his major works, the *Magnificat* BWV 243.1, and the *St John Passion* BWV 245.1. Alongside this was, of course, the creation of his first annual cycle of weekly sacred cantatas. From the First Sunday after Trinity (30 May 1723) onwards, Bach often went to his back catalogue of cantatas that he'd already composed, as far back to his time in Mühlhausen nearly 20 years earlier and, whenever possible, revised, reworked and repurposed a significant portion of existing cantatas and placed them into his first 1723-24 cantata cycle on the appropriate dates in the liturgical calendar. This no doubt alleviated some of the immediate pressure he would have been under to produce weekly cantatas, as he found his stride in his new job. The first annual cycle of cantatas that Bach produced thus yielded a melange of cantata forms and subgenre types, where Bach took a variety of creative and experimental approaches, producing works of extraordinary compositional sophistication, rhetorical and theological complexity, and musical beauty.

In his second year however, Bach focused his attention on the chorales – the well-known and beloved hymns that the Leipzig church congregants sang each week from their hymnbooks. Each week a hymn would be chosen that Bach would transform from an 'ordinary' multi-stanza hymn, into a spectacular modern, multi-movement concerted masterpiece. It is likely that Bach worked with a still-to-be-identified Leipzig librettist (they were far less stringent about acknowledging authorship and copyright back in those days) to transform the original metrical chorale text stanzas into a modern cantata libretto. The texts of the opening and closing stanzas would be left unmodified. For the opening stanza, Bach would compose an elaborate and dramatic musical composition, usually for the whole choir and orchestra, typically featuring the chorale melody as a *cantus firmus* clearly audible high up in the soprano part – the chorale melody sung slowly in long notes above the fervent musical activity taking place underneath in the orchestra and lower voice parts of the choir. The internal stanzas of the original chorale text were paraphrased – that is, rewritten using a variety of rhetorical techniques, which Bach then set to music as arias and recitatives. The final unaltered chorale text stanza would be set simply, as a four-part homophonic harmonisation which the congregation could join in to sing, bringing the cantata to a close.

Thus, Bach's second cantata cycle, the Chorale Cantata Cycle of 1724-25, had an overarching artistic unity and compositional approach that was absent in the first cycle of 1723-24.



The first cantata in the new cycle, *O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort* BWV 20, for the First Sunday after Trinity (11 June 1724) opens the entire year of cantatas with a splendid *ouverture* in the French style, setting the tone and high artistic standards for the year of cantatas to come.

The entry of the choir at bar 13 in Bach's autograph score of the chorale cantata *O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort* BWV 20.

D-LEb Rara I, 14.

Bach-Archiv Leipzig.

Except for the *tempus clausum* of Advent, 1724 and the following Lent, 1725, Bach produced over 40 cantatas of exceptional quality for many weeks without interruption – the most intense and productive – and stressful – year of his life to date. Bach’s 1724-25 Chorale Cantata Cycle was - as Christoph Wolff describes in his 2020 biographical masterpiece *Bach’s Musical Universe – The Composer and his Work* - “the most ambitious of all projects”.

As with nearly all the great monuments of art, architecture, and human ingenuity, it is often the case that things don’t quite go to plan. The chorale cantatas suddenly break off after Easter Day¹ 1725, with an abrupt change to the style and text type – it appears that Bach had run out of the paraphrase chorale cantata libretti that he had so consistently and systematically set to music for most of the cycle up to this point. Immediately after Easter, the cantatas swing back to the biblical dictum type form that was more typical of the first cantata cycle, before Bach found his way to the up-and-coming Leipzig poetess, Christiana Mariane von Ziegler (1695-1760) who helped him with the cantata librettos of a shorter mini cycle of nine cantatas to get him from Jubilate Sunday, 22 April, through to Trinity Sunday on 27 May 1725. A likely explanation as to why the paraphrase chorale cantatas texts suddenly dried up was the sudden and unexpected death of the Leipzig theologian and poet Andreas Stübel (1653-1725), who died on 27 January 1725. Stübel’s death was within days of the printing of the last text booklet of cantata libretti for the chorale cantata cycle from Septuagesimae Sunday, January 28, 1725 (*Ich hab in Gottes Herz und Sinn* BWV 92), to Annunciation, 25 March 1725 (*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* BWV 1).

Because this unexpected detour foiled what was probably his original artistic goal, Bach kept steadily adding more chorale cantatas to the cycle over the following ten years or so, to patch up the gaps in the liturgical calendar that had, for various reasons, disrupted his original plans. For most of these cantatas, however, the chorale texts have not been paraphrased, the original chorale stanzas were left unaltered – yet Bach’s musical settings of these chorale stanzas reach an even higher level of subtle aesthetic beauty and musical sophistication.

Rather than our usual approach to CBE concert programming, which is to select three or four cantatas that share common theological, liturgical or musical features (e.g. chorale melodies), the Leipzig Bach Fest committee has simply assigned to the Canberra Bach Ensemble three Bach chorale cantatas that fall on three consecutive Sundays of the liturgical Chorale Cantata Cycle - the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Sundays after Trinity.

¹ the non-paraphrased chorale cantata *Christ lag in Todes Banden* BWV 4, originally composed for Easter Day 1707 during Bach’s time in Mühlhausen, was performed once again in Leipzig on 1 April 1725.

Es ist das Heil uns kommen her BWV 9

Cantata for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity (1 August 1734)

For SATB soloists, SATB choir

Flauto traverso, Oboe d'amore, strings, basso continuo

Our first work, the Cantata for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity, *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her* BWV 9, however, was not performed until 1 August 1734 – that is, it was composed 10 years after it was supposed to be! Bach set this cantata text aside in 1724, when he and his wife Anna Magdalena were out of town on leave, giving guest concerts back in Cöthen, their previous town of residence. Surely Bach would have produced a very different musical setting of *Es ist das Heil uns kommen her* had it been composed 10 years earlier in July 1724. In the intervening ten years a slew of cantatas had been composed, not to mention significant monumental works like the Kyrie and Gloria of the *Mass in B minor* BWV 232.1 composed in 1733. The maturity and sophistication of the contrapuntal writing in BWV 9 has similar stylistic traits to, say, the music in the *Christmas Oratorio* BWV 248, which was also composed in 1734.

The original chorale on which cantata BWV 9 is based, is particularly special. Written by theologian Paul Speratus, a close colleague and disciple of Martin Luther, 'Es ist das heil uns kumen her' was the second hymn to ever appear in print in the very first Lutheran hymnal, *Etlich Cristlich lider (Some Christian Songs)* published in Wittenberg in 1524 (see the inside back cover at the end of this program). Speratus' chorale is 'Ein lied vom gesetz und glauben' - 'A Song about Law and Faith'. The fourteen stanzas of Speratus' original hymn describe the Lutheran doctrine of Justification by Faith alone. Salvation - human redemption



Paul Speratus (1484-1551)



The first appearance in print of Paul Speratus' hymn 'Es ist das heyl vns kumen her' published in 1524.

and reconciliation to God - cannot be achieved by good works alone. Because of the sinful, fallen state of humankind, we have no hope of being able to adhere to the Law handed down by God for us to follow. God's Law could only be fulfilled through the atonement made by God's Son, Jesus Christ, through his sacrifice on the cross. Salvation and eternal life are granted as an act of grace by God to humans which can only be obtained by the faith of the sinner and knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and humankind.

Bach's yet-to-be-identified chorale cantata librettist took Speratus' original fourteen stanza hymn and:

- 1) Jettisoned stanzas 13 and 14 which were simply a sung doxology and a short versification of the Lord's Prayer.
- 2) Left the text of stanzas 1 and 12 unaltered which Bach then set as the elaborate opening cantata chorus (movement 1.) and simple concluding chorale (movement 7.)
- 3) Paraphrased – that is, rewrote – the internal stanzas, No. 2-11, of Speratus' original 1524 chorale transforming them into recitatives and arias (duet). The three bass recitatives in BWV 9 present the sermon, giving us the detailed explanation around the two main theological points, which are set contemplatively in the tenor aria and the soprano-alto duet.

1. Chorus (SATB)

Es ist das Heil uns kommen her
Von Gnad und lauter Güte.
Die Werk, die helfen nimmermehr,
Sie mögen nicht behüten.
Der Glaub sieht Jesum Christum an,
Der hat gnug für uns all getan,
Er ist der Mittler worden.

Salvation has come here, to us,
By [God's] grace and pure goodness.
[Good] works—they never help/save [us]—
They are not able to protect [us from God's wrath].
Faith looks to Jesus Christ,
Who has made atonement for all of us;
He has become the mediator [between God and humankind].

2. Recitative (Bass)

Gott gab uns ein Gesetz, doch waren wir zu schwach,
Dass wir es hätten halten können.
Wir gingen nur den Sünden nach,
Kein Mensch war fromm zu nennen;
Der Geist blieb an dem Fleische kleben
Und wagte nicht zu widerstreben.
Wir sollten im Gesetze gehn
Und dort als wie in einem Spiegel sehn,
Wie unsere Natur unartig sei;
Und dennoch blieben wir dabei.
Aus eigener Kraft war niemand fähig,
Der Sünden Unart zu verlassen,
Er mocht auch alle Kraft zusammenfassen.

God [via Moses] gave us a [code of] law, yet we were too weak
To have been able to abide by it.
We walked only in pursuit of sins;
No person could be called pious;
The spirit stayed clinging to the flesh
And did not venture to resist [the flesh].
We were supposed to walk in the law [of Moses]
And, just as in a mirror, were supposed to see there
How depraved our nature is;
And, nonetheless, we stayed at it [our depravity].
Nobody, by his own might, was capable
Of breaking off from sin's depravity,
Even if he was able to concentrate all his might.

3. Aria (Tenor)

Wir waren schon zu tief gesunken,
Der Abgrund schluckt uns völlig ein,
Die Tiefe drohte schon den Tod,
Und dennoch konnt in solcher Not
Uns keine Hand behülflich sein.

We had indeed sunk too deep;
The bottomless pit swallowed us up entirely;
The abyss [of Satan] indeed threatened [us with] death
And, nonetheless, in such need
No [merely human] hand was able to be helpful to us.

4. Recitative (Bass)

Doch musste das Gesetz erfüllet werden;
Deswegen kam das Heil der Erden,
Des Höchsten Sohn, der hat es selbst erfüllt
Und seines Vaters Zorn gestillt.
Durch sein unschuldig Sterben
Liess er uns Hülff erwerben.
Wer nun demselben traut,
Wer auf sein Leiden baut,
Der gehet nicht verloren.
Der Himmel ist vor den erkoren,
Der wahren Glauben mit sich bringt
Und fest um Jesu Arme schlingt.

Yet the law [of Moses] had to be fulfilled;
Therefore the salvation of the earth came,
The Most High's son, who has fulfilled it himself
And appeased his father's wrath.
Through his dying, innocent,
He has purchased salvation for us.
Now whoever trusts that same man [Jesus],
Whoever relies on his [Jesus's] suffering [on the cross],
He [the believer] walks [through life] not lost [from salvation].
Heaven is chosen for him
Who has and holds within himself true faith [in Jesus]
And tightly clasps Jesus's arms.

5. Duet (Soprano, Alto)

Herr, du siehst statt guter Werke
Auf des Herzens Glaubensstärke,
Nur den Glauben nimmst du an.

Nur der Glaube macht gerecht,
Alles andre scheint zu schlecht,
Als dass es uns helfen kann.

Lord, instead of good works,
You look upon the heart's strength of faith;
Only faith do you accept.

Only faith justifies [for salvation];
Everything else shines too weakly
To be able to help/save us.

6. Recitative (Bass)

Wenn wir die Sünd aus dem Gesetz erkennen,
So schlägt es das Gewissen nieder;
Doch ist das unser Trost zu nennen,
Dass wir im Evangelio
Gleich wieder froh
Und freudig werden:
Dies stärket unsern Glauben wieder.
Drauf hoffen wir der Zeit,
Die Gottes Güte
Uns zugesaget hat,
Doch aber auch aus weisem Rat
Die Stunden uns verschwiegen.
Jedoch, wir lassen uns begnügen,
Er weiss es, wenn es nötig ist,
Und brauchet keine List
An uns; wir dürfen auf ihn bauen
Und ihm allein vertrauen.

When, from the law [of Moses], we know sin,
Then our conscience is cast down;
Yet this is to be called our consolation:
That in the gospel [of Jesus]
We immediately become glad
And joyful again;
This strengthens our faith again.
[And] so we await the [end] time
That God's goodness
Has promised to us,
But yet whose hours, also out of wise counsel,
[God's goodness] has kept quiet from us.
We are, however, content;
When there is need, he knows it,
And does not use any cunning
On us; we may rely on him
And trust in him alone.

7. Chorale (SATB)

Ob sichs anliess, als wollt er nicht,
Lass dich es nicht erschrecken;
Denn wo er ist am besten mit,
Da will ers nicht entdecken.
Sein Wort lass dir gewisser sein,
Und ob dein Herz spräch lauter Nein,
So lass doch dir nicht grauen.

If it seemed as though he [God] was not willing,
Do not let it alarm you;
For where he is most present,
There he will not reveal it.
Let his word be more certain to you,
And although your heart might say nothing but "No,"
Do not, nonetheless, let yourself be afraid.

(transl. Michael Marissen and Daniel R. Melamed)



Scan or go to www.bachcantatatexts.org/BWV9 for an annotated translation

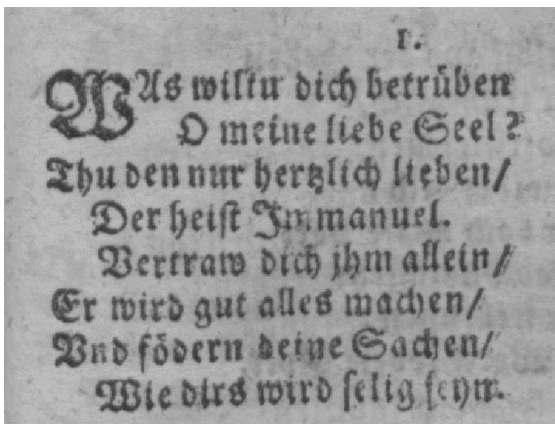
Was willst du dich betrüben BWV 107

Cantata for the 7th Sunday after Trinity (23 July 1724)

For STB soloists, SATB choir

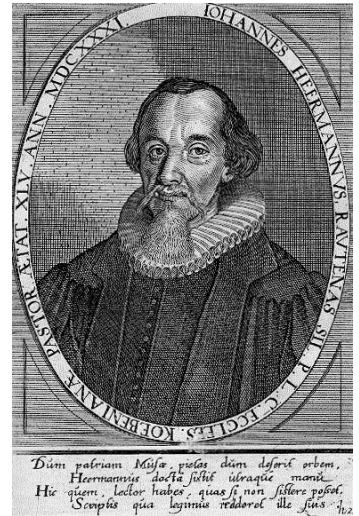
Horn, 2 Flutes, 2 Oboes d'amore, strings, basso continuo.

Curiously, the cantata libretto for the chorale cantata *Was willst du dich betrüben* BWV 107 was not paraphrased. It is the only cantata chorale text from the original cycle composed in 1724-25 where the original stanzas of the chorale were left unaltered (apart from the non-paraphrased cantatas added later to patch up the incomplete cycle). The chorale first appeared in Johann Heermann's hymnbook *Devoti Musica Cordis*, published in Leipzig in 1630. In his book *The Cantatas of J.S. Bach* Alfred Dürr suggests several possible reasons as to why this might be the case but can give none with any certainty. It was often the practice that newer chorale texts would be sung to already familiar



The original print of the opening stanza from Johann Heermann's *Devoti Musica Cordis*, published in Leipzig in 1630.

chorale melodies, when the metrical structure and mood of the new text matched the older tune. It seems that Bach himself may have chosen an older tune, "Von Gott will ich nicht lassen" dating from the early 1570s, as a suitable melody to use in his cantata setting – it also appears that Bach may have made some minor changes to original chorale text. BWV 107 is a beautiful, lyrical, and delicately scored work imploring the listener that, when one puts their trust in God, they will always find comfort and consolation, even in the face of adversity.



Johann Heermann
(1585-1647)

1. Chorale (SATB)

Was willst du dich betrüben,
O meine liebe Seel?
Ergib dich, den zu lieben,
Der heißt Immanuel!
Vertraue ihm allein,
Er wird gut alles machen
Und fördern deine Sachen,
Wie dir's wird selig sein!

Why do you wish to trouble yourself,
O my beloved soul?
Abandon yourself to loving him
who is called Emmanuel!
Trust in him alone,
He will make all things good,
and see to your affairs,
so that they come out happily for you!

2. Recitative (Bass)

Denn Gott verlässet keinen,
Der sich auf ihn verläßt,
Er bleibt getreu den Seinen,
Die ihm vertrauen fest.
Läßt sich's an wunderbarlich,
So laß dir doch nicht grauen!
Mit Freuden wirst du schauen,
Wie Gott wird retten dich.

For God abandons none
who entrust themselves to him,
he remains faithful to his own
who are firmly loyal to him.
If things go strangely
yet do not be troubled!
With joy you will see
how God will save you.

3. Aria (Bass)

Auf ihn magst du es wagen
Mit unerschrocknem Mut,
Du wirst mit ihm erjagen,
Was dir ist nütz und gut.
Was Gott beschlossen hat,
Das kann niemand hindern
Bei allen Menschenkindern;
Es geht nach seinem Rat.

In him you can dare all
with unshaken courage,
with him you shall seize
what is good and useful for you.
What God has decided upon
no one can prevent
among all humanity;
all things go according to his design.

4. Aria (Tenor)

Wenn auch gleich aus der Höllen
Der Satan wollte sich
Dir selbst entgegenstellen
Und toben wider dich,
So muß er doch mit Spott
Von seinen Ränken lassen,
Damit er dich will fassen;
Denn dein Werk fördert Gott.

Even if, out of hell,
Satan wishes
to set himself against you,
and vent his rage on you,
yet heaped with mockery
he must give up his plot,
with which he hoped to catch you;
for God furthers your deeds.

5. Aria (Soprano)

Er richt's zu seinen Ehren
Und deiner Seligkeit;
Soll's sein, kein Mensch kanns wehren,
Und wärs ihm noch so leid.
Will's denn Gott haben nicht,
So kann's niemand fortreiben,
Es muß zurückbleiben,
Was Gott will, das geschicht.

He arranges for your honour
and your happiness;
if it shall be, no one can prevent it,
even if it brings much pain.
If God does not wish something,
then no one can bring it to pass,
it must remain unfulfilled,
for whatever God wills, happens.

6. Aria (Tenor)

Drum ich mich ihm ergebe,
Ihm sei es heimgestellt;
Nach nichts ich sonst mehr strebe,
Denn nur was ihm gefällt.
Drauf ware ich und bin still,
Sein Will der ist der beste,
Das glaub ich steif und feste,
Gott mach es, wie er will!

Therefore I devote myself to him,
he shall be my hearthstone;
I need strive after nothing more
than what is pleasing to him.
Therefore I wait and am quiet,
his will is the best,
for I believe strongly and firmly,
God will do, what he wills!

7. Chorale (SATB)

Herr, gib, daß ich dein Ehre
Ja all mein Leben lang
Von Herzensgrund vermehre,
Dir sage Lob und Dank!
O Vater, Sohn und Geist,
Der du aus lauter Gnaden
Abwendest Not und Schaden,
Sei immerdar gepreist!

Lord, grant that your honour,
for all the days of my life,
may grow in the depths of my heart,
let praise and thanks be said to you!
O Father, Son, and Spirit,
Who out of pure grace
have turned away suffering and pain,
be always praised!

(Translation Pamela Dellal)

Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält BWV 178

Cantata for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity (30 July 1724)

For ATB soloists, SATB choir

Horn, 2 Oboes/d'amore, strings, basso continuo.

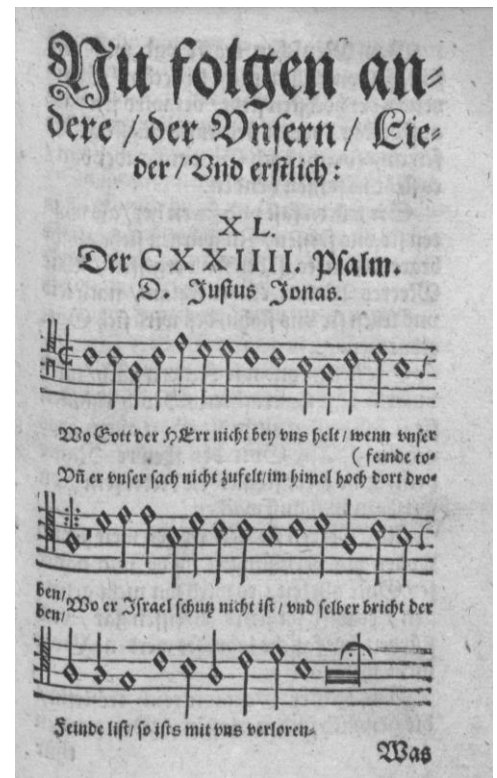


Justus Jonas the Elder
(1493-1555)
Portrait by Lucas Cranach

The reformation hymn *Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält*, which also dates from 1524, was written by Wittenberg theologian Justus Jonas the Elder, another follower of Martin Luther. Jonas' 1524 chorale is a German translation and paraphrase-versification of Psalm 124. Bach's 1724 cantata, BWV 178, is a paraphrase of Jonas' 1524 chorale. It is a bold hymn which does not pull any punches, reflecting the religious turmoil and social unrest that was boiling over in central Europe in the mid-1520s. The hymn doesn't specifically identify who these enemies were – but let's just say, there were a lot of them!

The cantata libretto for BWV 178 is a classic example of text paraphrasing and troping techniques. In the chorale-with-recitative movements 2 and 5, the original stanzas (in bold typeface) are retained in full, and the librettist 'tropes' the original chorale stanza by adding new lines of poetry (in ordinary typeface) between the lines of the original stanza to expand, enhance and modernise its meaning.

This cantata also raises a very interesting idea in the tenor aria no. 6, also discussed in Michael Marissen's latest book *Bach Against Modernity* – that human reason ('Vernunft') is a fundamentally flawed and faulty concept that cannot be relied upon. The philosophical implications of this idea – in Luther's time, in Bach's time, and indeed in our time – are profound...



A later printed edition
of Psalm 124 by Justus Jonas
"Wo Gott der herr nicht bey uns helt"
from *Geystliche Lieder* (Sacred Songs)
published by Ernst Vögelin, Leipzig 1563.

1. Chorus (SATB)

**Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns hält,
Wenn unsre Feinde toben,
Und er unser Sach nicht zufällt
Im Himmel hoch dort oben,
Wo er Israel Schutz nicht ist
Und selber bricht der Feinde List,
So ists mit uns verloren.**

Unless God the Lord holds fast by us
When our enemies rage;
And [unless] he, in high heaven there above,
Engages our [battle] cause;
Unless he is Israel's protection,
And himself foils the enemies' stratagem,
Then, for us, all is doomed.

2. Chorale w/Recitative (Alto)

**Was Menschenkraft und -witz anfäht,
Soll uns billig nicht schrecken;
Denn Gott der Höchste steht uns bei
Und machet uns von ihren Stricken frei.**

Whatever human power and human wisdom embarks upon
Shall, [rightly and] properly, not terrify us;
For God the Most High assists us
And makes us free of their snares.

**Er sitzt an der höchsten Stätt,
Er wird ihrn Rat aufdecken.**
Die Gott im Glauben fest umfassen,
Will er niemals versäumen noch verlassen;
Er stürzt der Verkehrten Rat
Und hindert ihre böse Tat.

Wenn sie's aufs klügste greifen an,
Auf Schlangenlist und falsche Ränke sinnen,
Der Bosheit Endzweck zu gewinnen;
So geht doch Gott ein ander Bahn:
Er führt die Seinigen mit starker Hand,
Durchs Kreuzesmeer in das gelobte Land,

Da wird er alles Unglück wenden.
Es steht in seinen Händen.

3. Aria (Bass)

Gleichwie die wilden Meereswellen
Mit Ungestüm ein Schiff zerschellen,
So raset auch der Feinde Wut
Und raubt das beste Seelengut.
Sie wollen Satans Reich erweitern,
Und Christi Schifflein soll zerscheitern.

4. Chorale (Tenor)

**Sie stellen uns wie Ketzern nach,
Nach unserm Blut sie trachten;
Noch rühmen sie sich Christen auch,
Die Gott allein gross achten.**
Ach Gott, der teure Name dein
Muss ihrer Schalkheit Deckel sein,
Du wirst einmal aufwachen.

5. Chorale (SATB) w/ Recitative (A,T,B)

Auf sperren sie den Rachen weit,
Nach Löwenart mit brüllendem Getöse;
Sie fletschen ihre Mörderzähne
Und wollen uns verschlingen.
Jedoch,
Lob und Dank sei Gott allezeit;
Der Held aus Juda schützt uns noch,
Es wird ihn' nicht gelingen.
Sie werden wie die Spreu vergehn,
Wenn seine Gläubigen wie grüne Bäume
stehn.
**Er wird ihrn Strick zerreißen gar
Und stürzen ihre falsche Lahr.**
Gott wird die törichten Propheten
Mit Feuer seines Zornes töten
Und ihre Ketzerei verstören.
Sie werdens Gott nicht wehren.

**He sits [in heaven] in the most high place;
He will uncover their scheme.**

Those who tightly embrace God in faith,
He will never leave nor forsake;
He subverts the scheme of the perverse
And stymies their evil action.

If they attack in the most crafty fashion,
Devising serpent-like cunning and false machinations
To carry off the ultimate aim of their malice,
Then God, however, travels another path:
With a mighty hand he leads those who are his
Through the Sea of the Cross [of Christ] into the Promised
Land [of heaven],
Where he will reverse all misfortune.
It rests in his hands.

Just like the wild waves of the sea,
In a tempest, batter a ship,
So also the enemies' anger rages,
And despoils the most goodly kindheartedness.
They [the enemies] want to enlarge Satan's kingdom,
And [they want that] Christ's little/darling ship [the
church] should smash to bits.

**They lie in wait for us as though [we were] heretics;
They seek after our blood;
Yet they pride themselves as Christians, too,
Who greatly esteem God alone.**
Ah, God, they must be using your precious name
As the cloak of their evil;
You will at some time awaken [to protect us].

They open wide their maw
In the manner of a lion, with roaring sound;
They bare their murderous fangs
And want to devour us.
But—
Praise and thanks be to God always—
[Jesus,] the hero from Judah protects us yet;
They will not succeed.
They will pass away like chaff,
Whereas [those of] his who have [true] faith will stand like
verdant trees.
**He will completely tear apart their snares,
And subvert their false teaching.**
God will put the foolish prophets to death
With the fire of his wrath,
And will crush their heresy.
They will not hinder [the teachings of] God.

6. Aria (Tenor)

Schweig, schweig nur, taumelnde Vernunft!

Sprich nicht: Die Frommen sind verlorn,
Das Kreuz hat sie nur neu geboren.
Denn denen, die auf Jesum hoffen,
Steht stets die Tür der Gnaden offen;
Und wenn sie Kreuz und Trübsal drückt,
So werden sie mit Trost erquickt.

Be silent, simply be silent, tottery reason.

Do not say: "The godly are doomed";
The cross has simply begotten them anew.
For to those who hope in Jesus
The door of grace stands ever open;
And if cross-bearing and tribulation weighs them down,
Then they will be restored by [Christ's] consolation.

7. Chorale (SATB)

Die Feind sind all in deiner Hand,
Darzu all ihr Gedanken;
Ihr Anschläg sind dir, Herr, bekannt,
Hilf nur, dass wir nicht wanken.
Vernunft wider den Glauben ficht,
Aufs Künftge will sie trauen nicht,
Da du wirst selber trösten.

The enemies are all in your hand,
Along with all their [evil] thoughts;
Their designs are known to you, Lord;
Simply help [us so] that we do not waver [in our faith].
Reason fights against faith;
It [reason] will not put stock in the time [of the afterlife] to come,
Where you yourself will console [us, your proper believers].

Den Himmel und auch die Erden
Hast du, Herr Gott, gegründet;
Dein Licht lass uns helle werden,
Das Herz uns werd entzündet
In rechter Lieb des Glaubens dein,
Bis an das End beständig sein.
Die Welt lass immer murren.

Heaven and also earth,
Lord God, you have created;
Let your light [of the gospel] grow bright for us,
May our heart grow aflame
In proper love of your faith,
[And so that our heart] may be steadfast [in Christian faith] until the end.
Let the world forever murmur [against your gospel].

(transl. Michael Marissen and Daniel R. Melamed)



Scan or go to www.bachcantatatexts.org/BWV178 for an annotated translation

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Portrait of Johann Sebastian Bach by Elias Gottlob Haußmann, 1746.

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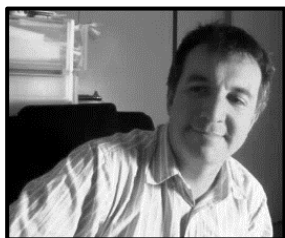
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Andrew Koll

CBE Artistic Director, Conductor

Andrew Koll is a specialist in aural training, harmony and counterpoint, the science of just intonation, and the works of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Andrew formed the Canberra Bach Ensemble in 1999. Over the past 25 years, Andrew has directed many of Canberra's choirs and instrumental groups, including Canberra Choral Society's 2018 performance of the Bach *St Matthew Passion* BWV 244, the ANU Choral Society (SCUNA), The University of Canberra Chorale, the Choir of St Paul's Manuka, and the Canberra Community Orchestra (now known as the National Capital Orchestra).

Since completing his studies at the School of Music, ANU in the late 1990s, Andrew established a music study group in the early 2000s called the Real Bach Society, where he presents multimedia seminars examining the musical, historical, liturgical and theological interconnections within Bach's music and beyond, and the musical sciences that underpin Bach's art. Andrew is a regular delegate at the dialogue meetings hosted by the Bach Network at Madingley Hall, Cambridge, UK.



Stephen Freeman

CBE Guest Leader of the Orchestra

Inspired by the pioneers of historical performance practice, Stephen pursued his interest in this field studying baroque violin at the Royal Conservatoire, The Hague after graduating from the Canberra School of Music in 1991. Upon completion of his studies and a brief intermezzo back home as principal 2nd violin with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and teaching at Melbourne Uni, Stephen returned to Europe. Based in Amsterdam for over a decade he performed, toured and recorded with numerous ensembles including Ricercar Consort, Concerto d'Amsterdam, Gabrieli Consort, Capriccio Stravagante, Il Gardellino and New Dutch Academy (concertmaster, 2007-2012). Alongside his musical career, Stephen trained at the Alexander Technique Centre in Amsterdam qualifying as a teacher in 2010. Back in Australia since 2014, his performances and recordings with Early Music ensembles include Australian Haydn Ensemble, Pinchgut Opera, Bach Akademie Australia, Bach Band @ St James (lead violin), Genesis Baroque and Salut!Baroque. (Photo © Robert Gatto).



Greta Claringbould

Soprano

Canberra based, Greta Claringbould is a Baroque Soprano at freelance, with extensive performance experience as a soprano soloist of principally baroque oratorio and cantata. Her vocal timbre combines purity and clarity combined with warmth and richness. Her fluent execution of florid baroque coloratura is renowned. Described recently in the Canberra City News – "Claringbould has a beautiful voice of remarkable purity and precision."

Greta holds a Bachelor of Music with Honours in Viola Performance, an AMusA in voice, and an ATCL in Violin Performance. Greta was formerly: a professional orchestral violist, leader of the Violas in the New Zealand National Youth Orchestra, chorister with the Wellington Cathedral Choir, Director of the iconic Canberra Children's Choir and Head of Choirs at Canberra Girl's Grammar School. Currently Greta is

Principal Soprano Soloist with the Canberra Bach Ensemble, NZ Barok and ensemble Adhoc Baroque and is a private vocal coach.

In 2016, along with alto Maartje Sevenster and harpsichord/continuo player Peter Young, Greta collectively formed the Trio Adhoc Baroque which regularly performs esoteric sacred and secular Baroque chamber works. Adhoc Baroque gave the antipodean premier of Brunetti's 1764 *Stabat Mater* in 2017 and performed in both 2018 and 2019 at the prestigious Canonwindra Baroque Festival. Other recent appearances include as soloist in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with Canberra Choral Society, Bach's *St John Passion* and Handel's *Israel in Egypt* with Igitur Nos Chamber Choir, Handel's *Messiah* with NZ Barok and the Scholars Baroque Aotearoa and as guest artist with Limestone Consort. Greta looks forward to appearances with NZ Barok, at their 20th anniversary concert series in October 2024.



Maartje Sevenster

Alto

Maartje Sevenster obtained a BMus in the Netherlands, studying part-time with Roberta Alexander, Frans Huyts and Connie de Jongh. Since 2009, Maartje has focused on baroque repertoire, both as a member of choirs or ensembles and as a soloist. Currently, Maartje is alto soloist with the Canberra Bach Ensemble, and in performances with the Limestone consort and other Canberra-based musicians. In 2023, she was alto soloist in Bach's *St John's Passion* with Igitur Nos. She sings with the Bach Akademie Australia, and performed with the Song Company in the Canberra International Music Festival. With ensemble Adhoc Baroque, Maartje performed many lesser-known pieces of the baroque repertoire in a one-per-part setting to great acclaim, including several Australian premieres. She also performed the premieres of David Cassat's *Die Hand*, for mezzo-soprano, viola, cello, flute and clarinet, and Judith Clingan's *In this Fateful Hour*, and was part of the community oratorio *Passion for Peace* by Canberra composer Glenda Cloughley.

Maartje conducts a small community choir in the village of Gundaroo.

Next to performing, she has an ongoing interest in the acoustics of the vocal tract. The active control of resonances and the role of so-called formant theory in vocal training were the central topics of her bachelor thesis. She participated in the Estill Voice Training System level one and two courses in 2015.

(Photo © Lindi Heap).



Richard Butler

Tenor

Richard Butler made his symphony orchestra debut in 2014 singing Handel's *Messiah* in a joint concert series with Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth Symphony Orchestras. He returned to WASO recently to sing Bach's *St John Passion* and has been soloist for various projects for Joseph Nolan at St George's Cathedral in Monteverdi's *Vespers*, *St Matthew Passion* and *Judas Maccabaeus*. Also in Perth, at UWA, Richard sang Britten's *War Requiem*.

Richard sang the role of Pilate in Pärt's *Passio* for the Adelaide Chamber Singers and the Song Company, was evangelist in Bach's *St John Passion* for the Australian Haydn Ensemble's collaboration with St James's Church, King St, Sydney and evangelist in Bach's *St Matthew Passion* for Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and the late Richard Gill as well as for Elder Conservatorium in Adelaide. He also sang the title role in Britten's *St Nicolas* for Brett Weymark and the Sydney Chamber Choir. Richard has appeared as soloist in

various Australian Brandenburg Orchestra concert series, including Monteverdi's *Orfeo*, Mozart *C Minor Mass* and Bach's *Magnificat*. Very recently Richard was tenor soloist for Bach Akademie Australia's launch concert series of various cantatas including the *Ascension Oratorio* as well as for Pinchgut's inaugural concert series, singing Bach's *Easter Oratorio* and Telemann's *Donner-Ode*. Richard is a former Choral Scholar of King's College, Cambridge, Lay Clerk at Westminster Cathedral and soloist in various projects for the Gabrieli Consort. Richard is currently Principal Lay Clerk at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney.



Andrew Fysh

Bass

Originally from Hobart, Tasmania, where he began his singing career over forty years ago as a treble at the city's Anglican cathedral, Andrew has considerable experience as both consort singer and soloist. Church music has featured continuously throughout Andrew's musical journey: in 2005–06, while living in London, Andrew sang with the Choir of the London Oratory, England's pre-eminent Catholic church choir, and in recent years has sung with the choirs of St James' Church, Sydney and St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney.

Now based in Canberra, Andrew has appeared as soloist with all of the city's major choirs: recent performances include Handel *Israel in Egypt*, Handel *Messiah*, Haydn *Nelson Mass*, Mozart *Requiem*, and Brahms *Ein Deutsches Requiem*. He has also been a guest artist with Luminescence Chamber Singers and Adhoc Baroque, and has performed at the Canberra International Music Festival with the Song Company, Bach Akademie Australia, Luminescence Chamber Singers and Clarion.

Andrew's particular interest lies in Early music, nurtured through fourteen years as a member of Melbourne's acclaimed Ensemble Gombert, directed by John O'Donnell, with whom he toured Europe (2004, 2006, 2015) and North America (2009). As a guest artist with The Song Company under Roland Peelman, he appeared many times in both concert and recording, including a critically acclaimed solo-voice recording of Schütz *Der Schwanengesang* in the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall in 1996. More recently, Andrew has turned his Early-music interest to the production of high-quality performing editions of little-known Franco-Flemish Renaissance polyphony, with a particular focus on the works of the Netherlandish composer Pierre de Manchicourt (c.1510–1564). Queen's Phoenix — a Sydney-based eight-voice ensemble that he co-founded with Brooke Shelley — released a recording of these editions in 2021, and was invited to perform at the 2022 Festival of Voices in Hobart.

Over the past decade, Bach has featured increasingly prominently in Andrew's singing career. As bass soloist with Canberra Bach Ensemble and the Sydney Cantata Project, and a founding member of Bach Akademie Australia, Andrew has performed more than fifty cantatas, two Lutheran masses, St John and St Matthew Passions, and the Christmas, Easter and Ascension Oratorios. Later this month, in the lead-up to Canberra Bach Ensemble's performance at Bachfest in Leipzig, he has been invited to be the bass soloist at the monthly Cantata Service at the Westerkerk in Amsterdam, and while in The Netherlands he will be undertaking vocal coaching with internationally renowned Baroque specialist, Peter Kooij.

CBE Choir

Sopranos

Greta Claringbould
Chantelle Henderson
Sylvan Lawrenz
Jade McFaul
Gabriel Pender
Brooke Shelley
Rachel Walker

Altos

Susanah Bishop
Elizabeth Chalker
Hilary Howes
Jaki Kane
Astrid Lane
Robyn Mellor
Maartje Sevenster

Tenors

George Brenan
Peter Campbell
Frank den Hartog
James Porteous
Andrew Verspaandonk
Richard Walker

Basses

Andrew Fysh
Nick Horn
Jonathon Lee
Martin Magill
Joshua Verspaandonk
Luke Willard

CBE Orchestra

Violin

Stephen Freeman
Lauren Davis
Shannon Luk
Claire Phillips
Tanya Boag

Violoncello

Clara Tenniswood
Gabriel Frømyhr

Violone

Kyle Ramsay-Daniel

Transverse Flute

Jennifer Brian
Dante Costa

Oboe/d'amore/da caccia

Aaron Reichelt
Jane Downer

Baroque Bassoon

Joshua Cass

Organ Continuo/ Répétiteur

Anthony Smith

Horn

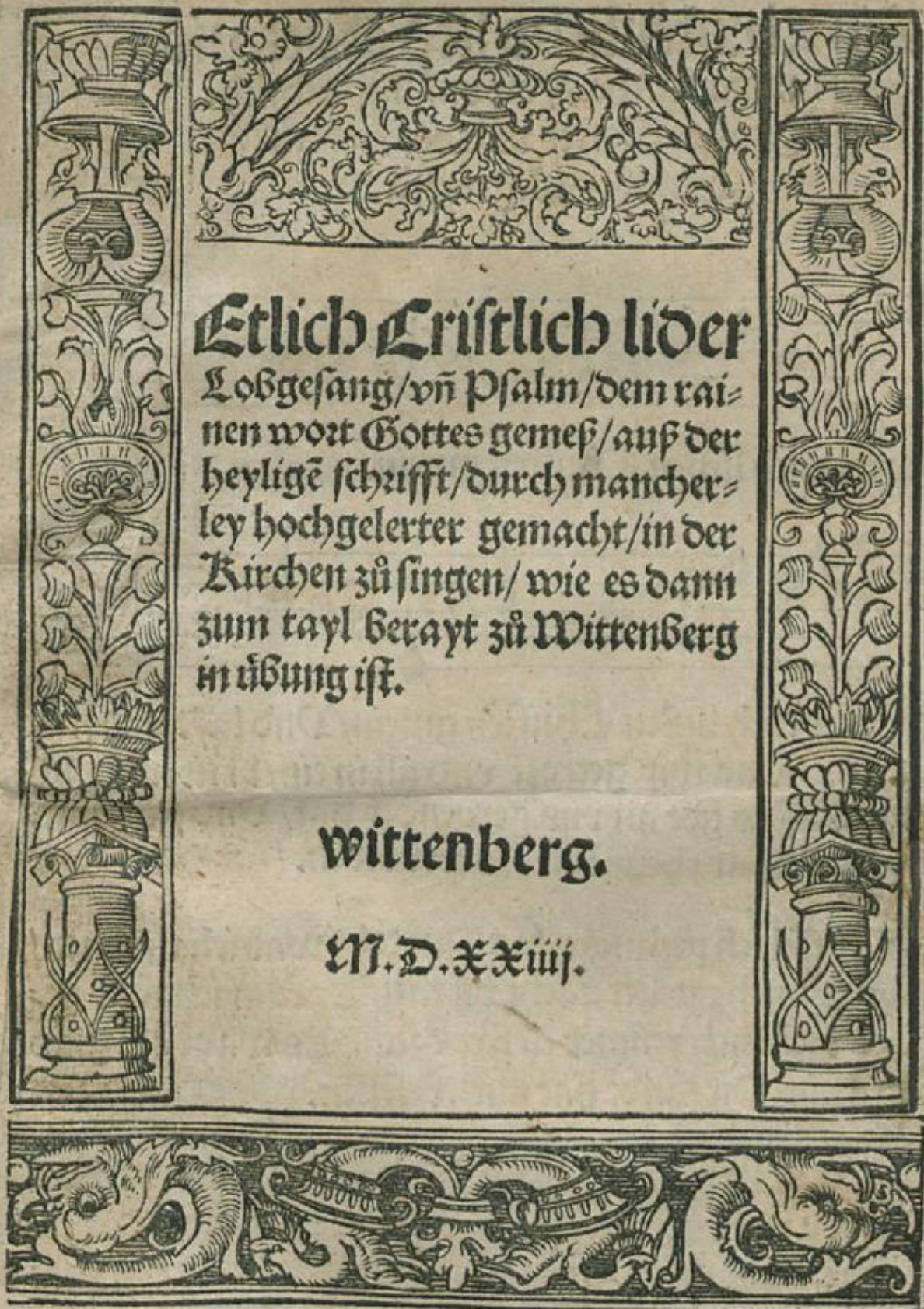
Simon Wolnizer

Viola

Odette Bruinzeel
Thayer Preece-Parker

www.canberrabachensemble.com

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With thanks to Tim Lamble and ArtSound FM



Front cover of *Etlich Cristlich lider* (Some Christian Songs)
also known as the *Achtliederbuch* (The Eight-Song Book)
This is the first Lutheran hymnal, published in Wittenberg in 1524.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Lutheran_hymnal

