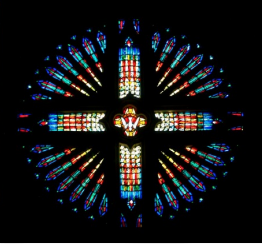




Bach 2018-2019 48th Year Cantata Vespers

www.bachvespers.org



Grace Lutheran Church
River Forest, Illinois
Sunday afternoons
Lecture at 3:00 p.m.
Prelude at 3:45 p.m.

October 28, 2018

Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild, BWV 79

God the Lord is sun and shield

Welcome to Grace Lutheran Church

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

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.



Reformation Sunday
October 28, 2018 † 3:45 p.m.

EVENING PRAYER



PRELUDE

Orchestral Suite in D Major, BWV 1068

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750)

Overture
Air
Gavotte I–II–I
Bourrée
Gigue

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.**



☐ Joy-ous light of glo - ry: ☑ of the im - mor - tal Fa - ther;



heav - en - ly, ho - ly, bless - ed Je - sus Christ.



We have come to the set - ting of the sun, and we look to the eve - ning light.



We sing to God, the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it: You are wor - thy of



be - ing praised with pure voic - es for - ev - er. O Son of God,



O Giv - er of life: The u - ni - verse pro - claims your glo - ry.



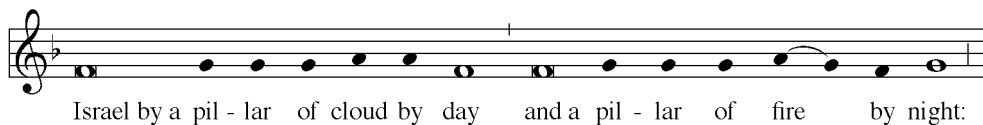
☐ The Lord be with you. ☑ And al - so with you.



☐ Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. ☑ It is right to give him thanks and praise.



☐ Blessed are you, O Lord our God, king of the universe, who led your people



Israel by a pil - lar of cloud by day and a pil - lar of fire by night:

Enlighten our darkness by the light of your Christ; may his Word be a lamp
to our feet and a light to our path; for you are mer - ci - ful,
and you love your whole cre - a - tion, and we, your crea - tures, glo - ri - fy you,
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it. **☩** A - men

✠ PSALMODY ✠

We sit.

PSALM 141

*Women sing parts marked **I**. Men sing parts marked **II**. All sing parts marked **☩**.*

☩ 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.



I Set a watch be-fore my mouth, O Lord, and guard the door of my lips.



II Let not my heart in-cline to an-y e-vil thing; let me not be oc-cu-



pied in wick-ed-ness with e-vil-do-ers. I But my eyes are



turned to you, Lord God; in you I take ref-u-ge. Strip me not of my life.



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



I as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A-men.



III Let my prayer rise be-fore you as in-cense;



the lift-ing up of my hands as the eve-ning sac-ri-fice.

Silence for meditation is observed, then:

PSALM PRAYER

L Let the incense of our repentant prayer ascend before you, O Lord, and let your lovingkindness descend upon us, that with purified minds we may sing your praises with the Church on earth and the whole heavenly host, and may glorify you forever and ever.

C Amen.

Nun danket alle Gott,

Now thank we all our God,

Der große Dinge tut an allen Enden;

Who does great things here and everywhere;

Der uns von Mutterleibe an

Who from our mother's womb

Lebendig erhält und tut uns alles Guts.

Maintains our lives and gives us all good things.

Er gebe uns ein fröhliches Herz,

May he give us a happy heart,

Und verleihe immerdar

And grant us evermore

Friede zu unsrer Zeit in Israel,

Peace in our time in Israel,

Und daß seine Gnade stets bei uns bleibe,

And that his grace abide always with us,

Und erlöse uns, so lang wir leben.

And deliver us, as long as we live.

Alleluia.

Silence for meditation is observed, then:

COLLECT

☞ Almighty God, gracious Lord,
we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age.
Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people.
Keep them steadfast in your word,
protect and comfort them in times of trial,
defend them against all enemies of the gospel,
and bestow on the church your saving peace;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

☞ Amen.

The offering is gathered.

VOLUNTARY: Two Variations on *Lobe den Herren*

Lisa Shoemaker-Lohmeyer
(b. 1956)

The offering assists in defraying costs of the Bach Cantata Vespers ministry.

Please make checks payable to Grace Lutheran Church.

Your generosity is appreciated.

At the conclusion of the introduction we stand.

HYMN: Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

Concertato by Michael D. Costello
(b. 1979)



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly
Choir 3 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de -
4 Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me a -



a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and sal -
reign - ing and, as on wings of an ea - gle, up - lift - ing, sus -
fend you; sure - ly his good - ness and mer - cy shall dai - ly at -
dore him! All that has life and breath, come now with prais - es be -



va - tion! Let all who hear now to his tem - ple draw
tain - ing. Have you not seen all that is need - ful has
tend you. Pon - der a - new what the Al - might - y can
fore him! Let the a - men sound from his peo - ple a -



near, join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
been sent by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?
do if with his love he be - friend you.
gain. Glad - ly for - ev - er a - dore him!

Text: Joachim Neander, 1650–1680; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1829–1878, alt.
Music: LOBE DEN HERREN, *Erneuertem Gesangbuch*, Stralsund, 1655

✠ WORD ✠

We sit.

READING: 2 Thessalonians 2:3–8

Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the lawless one is revealed, the one destined for destruction. He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, declaring himself to be God. Do you not remember that I told you these things when I was still with you? And you know what is now restraining him, so that he may be revealed when his time comes. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but only until the one who now restrains it is removed. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth, annihilating him by the manifestation of his coming.

℣ The Word of the Lord.

☩ **Thanks be to God.**

READING: Revelation 14:6–8

Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth to every nation and tribe and language and people. He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

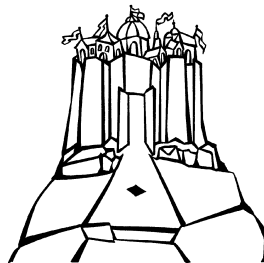
Then another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.”

℣ The Word of the Lord.

☩ **Thanks be to God.**

HOMILY

The Rev. Nancy M. Raabe



*Translation of the German text and notes corresponding to each movement are below.
Background notes for the cantata are found on pages 26 and 27 in this worship folder.*

1. Chorus

Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild.

God, the Lord, is sun and shield.

Der Herr gibt Gnade und Ehre,

The Lord grants mercy and honor,

Er wird kein Gutes mangeln lassen den Frommen.

He lets the righteous lack for no good thing.

Bach captures the spirit of the festival in one of his most impressive cantata choruses. The movement features a splendid orchestration with voices joining in the presentation of memorable melodies that are often cast in complex constructions. It begins with a statement of the first theme by the horns (today we use cornets) over an accompaniment of throbbing timpani and energetic chordal lines of the strings and woodwinds. The second theme, which begins with several firmly repeated notes, appears in voice after voice in the form of a fugue for woodwinds and strings. These then are joined shortly by the horns, which ultimately play the first theme simultaneously with the fugal theme of the other instruments.

The choir enters singing *Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild* in short phrases of new chordal and imitative material while the instruments sound themes one and two again. Soon the voices join the instruments in an intricately worked-out development of the second theme. Finally, everyone combines in a less complex, but more impressive section that contains touches of previous material while moving towards a magnificent conclusion. The text, which expresses undoubting acclamation, is taken from Psalm 84:11.



2. Aria (Alto)

Gott ist unsre Sonn und Schild!

God is our sun and shield!

Darum rühmet dessen Güte

Therefore our thankful souls,

Unser dankbares Gemüte,

Praise his goodness,

Die er für sein Häuflein hegt.

With which he tends his little flock.

Denn er will uns ferner schützen,

For he also will protect us,

Ob die Feinde Pfeile schnitzen

Whether enemies sharpen arrows

Und ein Lästerhund gleich billt.

And an evil hound should howl.

The words of Psalm 84 are slightly paraphrased to begin and conclude this lovely duet in 6/8 meter for alto and oboe. The florid line of the oboe and the graceful melody of the singer match each other nicely. The gentle spirit of the music is altered chromatically somewhat to convey the thought of the sharp arrows of the foes and the “evil hound” of the last line of the text. [*Lästerhund* could also be translated “the dog Blasphemy (should howl).”]



3. Chorale

Nun danket alle Gott

Now thank we all our God,

Mit Herzen, Mund und Händen,

With heart and mouth and hands,

Der große Dinge tut

Who does great things for us,

An uns und allen Enden,

Here and everywhere;

Der uns von Mutterleib

Who from our mother's womb,

Und Kindesbeinen an

And childhood on, has done

Unzählig viel zugut

For us countless good things,

Und noch itzund getan.

Both now and for all time.

All instruments join in a setting of the chorale *Nun danket alle Gott* (Now Thank We All Our God, LBW 533). The choir sings the first stanza of the hymn by Martin Rinkart (1586–1649) set to a tune by Johann Crüger that first appeared in 1647. The chorale harmonization is one of Bach's simplest, but it is made especially remarkable because of the addition of the first theme from the opening chorus that is played by the horns as a counter melody to the chorale. Along with many other Lutheran chorales of earlier centuries this melody was a favorite of Bach, one that he utilized in other choral and organ works. In some circles the original hymn is considered the premier Lutheran song of praise and thanks for God's blessings.



4. Recitative (Bass)

Gottlob, wir wissen

Praise God, we know

Den rechten Weg zur Seligkeit;

The right way to salvation;

Denn, Jesu, du hast ihn uns durch dein Wort gewiesen,

For, Jesus, you have shown it to us through your Word.

Drum bleibt dein Name jederzeit gepriesen.

Thus is your name forever praised.

Weil aber viele noch

But there are many still

Zu dieser Zeit

Who at this time

An fremdem Joch

Must labor under foreign yoke

Aus Blindheit ziehen müssen,

Out of blindness.

Ach! so erbarme dich

Ah, so have mercy

Auch ihrer gnädiglich,

On them graciously,

Dass sie den rechten Weg erkennen

That they recognize the right way

Und dich bloß ihren Mittler nennen.

And call you alone their mediator.

A simply accompanied recitative in which the soloist expresses thanks to God for showing the believer the path to blessedness and prays for compassion on those who “labor under foreign yoke,” that is, those who are linked to unbelievers.



5. Aria (Soprano & Bass)

Gott, ach Gott, verlass die Deinen

God, oh God, abandon your own

Nimmermehr!

Nevermore!

Lass dein Wort uns helle scheinen;

Let your word shine on us brightly;

Obgleich sehr

Although enemies

Wider uns die Feinde toben,

Rage against us mightily,

So soll unser Mund dich loben.

So shall our mouths praise you.

In a lengthy duet accompanied by violins playing in unison the singers implore God not to leave his people. The voices move together mostly in sweet parallel intervals. Only occasionally does one singer sing a passage imitative of the other. The independent violin line forms a filigree of arpeggios and prominent leaps that perfectly complement the singers' flowing lines.

6. Chorale

Erhalt uns in der Wahrheit,

Keep us in your truth,

Gib ewigliche Freiheit,

Give us eternal freedom,

Zu preisen deinen Namen

To glorify your name

Durch Jesum Christum. Amen.

Through Jesus Christ. Amen.

The closing chorale confidently expresses core thoughts of the Reformation in a prayer that we remain true to the faith and offer praise to God through Christ Jesus. The text is the last stanza of a hymn by Ludwig Helmbold (1575) set to a tune of Nikolaus Selnecker (1587). A variant of the triple-meter melody, but not the text, is still found in *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941), 122. Bach sets the chorale for six voices—the usual four-voice choir with doubling instruments, plus a two-voice descant for the horns undergirded by timpani.



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

☐ In peace, let us pray to the Lord. ☑ Lord, have mer - cy.

After each petition:

☐ ...let us pray to the Lord.

☑ Lord, have mer - cy.



The litany continues:

- L** For the faithful who have gone before us and are at rest, let us give thanks to the Lord.



The litany concludes:

- L** Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Silence is kept, then:

- L** Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.



- L** 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.

C 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

☐ Let us bless the Lord. ☑ Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

☐ The almighty and merciful Lord,
 the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless ☑ A - men
 and pre - serve you.

HYMN: A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Concertato by Michael D. Costello

1 A might - y for - tress is our God,
 2 No strength of ours can match his might!
Choir 3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land
 4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide,

 a sword and shield vic - to - rious;
 We would be lost, re - ject - ed.
 all threat - 'ning to de - vour us,
 no thanks to foes, who fear it;

 he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod
 But now a cham - pion comes to fight,
 we trem - ble not, un - moved we stand;
 for God him - self fights by our side

 and wins sal - va - tion glo - rious.
 whom God him - self e - lect - ed.
 they can - not o - ver - pow'r us.
 with weap - ons of the Spir - it.



The old e - vil foe, sworn to work us woe,
 Ask who this may be: Lord of hosts is he!
 This world's prince may rage, in fierce war en - gage.
 If they take our house, goods, fame, child, or spouse,
 with dread craft and might he arms him - self to fight.
 Je - sus Christ, our Lord, God's on - ly Son, a - dored.
 He is doomed to fail; God's judg - ment must pre - vail!
 wrench our life a - way, they can - not win the day.
 On earth he has no e - qual.
 He holds the field vic - to - rious.
 One lit - tle word sub - dues him.
 The king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*, 1978
 Music: EIN FESTE BURG, Martin Luther, 1483–1546

Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress

DISMISSAL

L Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

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The Rev. Nancy M. Raabe, homilist

Choir of Grace Lutheran Church
The Rev. Michael D. Costello, cantor
Timothy Spelbring, organist

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Sarah Ponder, mezzo soprano
Douglas Anderson, baritone

Donna Port and Ann Anderson, flutes
Christine Janzow Phillips and Meg Busse, oboes
Dianne Ryan, bassoon

Greg Fudala, Mary Galime, Christian Anderson, and Candace Horton, trumpets

Kelly Langenberg, horn
Tim Coffman and Brad Payne, trombones
Jim Langenberg, tuba
Kyle Bellin, timpani

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Mark Agnor, Carol Yampolsky, and Lou Torick, violins 2
Naomi Hildner and Dave Moss, violas
Vicky Mayne, cello
Douglas Johnson, double bass
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Thank you for your continued support of this ministry, for your attendance at the services, and for your prayers. *Soli Deo Gloria!*

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BIOGRAPHIES



Michael D. Costello, director, has served as Cantor at Grace since June 2008. He has served as a church musician in several parishes and as a pastor at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Columbia, South Carolina. A native of Pennsylvania, he graduated from Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory, North Carolina, and from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, South Carolina. He has published choral and organ works with several publishers, is Artistic Director of Chicago Choral Artists, and serves on the Board of Directors for Lutheran Music Program.



Douglas Anderson, baritone, is a long-standing member of Grace Lutheran Church and its choir. He has been a soloist in Grace's Bach Cantata Vespers since 1978 and has also been a frequent soloist with Chicago's Music of the Baroque. Dr. Anderson has appeared with many Chicago area ensembles and has performed several times in Evanston's Bach Week Festival. Dr. Anderson is a neurosurgeon and professor at Loyola University Medical Center in Maywood. He is married to Ann, who often performs as flutist at Grace. They are the parents of four adult children, all of whom have studied music.



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



Becky Coffman, principal violinist, Becky Coffman is currently a member of the Chicago Sinfonietta and assistant professor of violin and viola at Concordia University. Before moving to Chicago, Ms. Coffman was a member of the Louisville Orchestra, Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra and played several years with the Indianapolis Symphony. She holds degrees in violin performance from DePauw University and Indiana University, studying with Herman Berg, Henryk Kowalski and Tadeusz Wronski. Ms. Coffman returned to Indiana University for post-graduate studies in viola with Abraham Skernick and Csaba Erdelyi. In addition to her post at Concordia, Ms. Coffman is Associate Organist at Ascension Church in Oak Park, where she also directs the school's string program.





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, Sarah holds an outreach position with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where she works with at-risk youth as well as recording 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.



Nancy M. Raabe, homilist, has been the pastor at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Marshall Wis., since January 2018. She specializes in incorporating music and the liturgical arts into worship services. Pastor Raabe is an author, worship leader, and composer of church music. Her piano, organ, vocal, choral works and books have been published by Augsburg Fortress, Choristers Guild, MorningStar Music, Concordia, Hope Publishing, Lutheran University Press, and Northwestern. In 1997, Nancy and her husband, Bill, endowed an award to recognize excellence in compositions of sacred music. The Raabe Prize is given biennially by the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians. Bill and Nancy Raabe have commissioned about eighty hymn settings, concertatos, anthems, and other music for the church at large. Pastor Raabe is a graduate of Pomona College and Trinity Lutheran Seminary. She was the pastor at Atonement Lutheran Church, Beloit, Wis. from 2016 to 2018. Previously she served the ELCA as an Associate in Ministry at Luther Memorial Church, Madison, Wis. Nancy also served as a music minister at several congregations in Ohio and Wisconsin.



Bach 2018-2019 48th Year
Cantata Vespers

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November 18 **Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland** *Now come, Savior of the nations*
BWV 62
 David W. Wegner, Grace Lutheran Church and School, River Forest, Ill., homilist
 Scott M. Hyslop, St. Lorenz Lutheran Church and School, Frankenmuth, Mich., organist

BACKGROUND OF THE CANTATA

Gott der Herr ist Sonn und Schild was written for the Festival of the Reformation in 1725. Although the festival was not formally established among Lutherans for at least one hundred years after Martin Luther's death in 1546, in the intervening years the celebration of the reforms instituted by him had been commemorated annually in various ways and on various dates. In 1667, the 150th anniversary of Luther's posting of the controversial *Ninety-five Theses* on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, the Saxon Elector in German designated October 31 as the date to celebrate.

The commemoration of the religious reformation in Germany has always centered on the scriptural foundations of church teaching, practice, and institutional reform established by Luther. At first the day was observed as an opportunity to give thanks to God for the preservation of the true Word and for deliverance from foes of the faith. As time passed, in regions where Lutheranism was dominant, it became an important public and religious occasion, during which the chief tenets of faith clarified by Luther were extolled; often the distinctions between the Roman Catholic and Lutheran beliefs and practices were also emphasized. (Even today, many in America can remember when Reformation Day provided Lutherans with a special opportunity to give voice to these divisive distinctions.) Since the sixteenth century interest in the observance has waxed and waned, but the four centennials of 1617, 1717, 1817, and 1917, as well as the intervening semi-annual celebrations, were particularly significant.

At St. Thomas Church in Leipzig Reformation Day was observed with extended festive services of Holy Communion and prayer led by the Superintendent Pastor and Cantor Bach. Besides the assigned prayers, readings, and a sermon, many of the items of the liturgy were performed in special musical settings. These festive services with their elaborate musical components were especially impressive for the population in a day when the Lutheran church was often the place to be to hear the best and latest fine music of the time.

At the beginning of the service after the organ prelude a Reformation Day *Introit* motet was sung, followed by concerted settings of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria in excelsis* performed by the choir with instrumental participation. A setting of the *Gloria in excelsis* as the hymn "All Glory Be to God on High" (LBW 166) and the Creed as the hymn "We All Believe in One True God" (LBW 374) were sung by the congregation, although the Creed may have also been chanted in German. The cantata for the day was performed before the sermon, and both of these elements were based on the Reformation Gospel text still in use in some Lutheran churches today. A concerted setting of the great Christian canticle of praise, the *Te Deum* (not normally found in a Holy Communion service), was sung with trumpets and drums.



Among other hymns included in the service were such grand classic chorales as “O God, Our Lord, Thy Holy Word” (*The Lutheran Hymnal* 266), “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in your Word” (LBW 230), “Now Thank We All Our God” (LBW 533), and “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” (LBW 228).

The cantata for today was first performed on Reformation Day, October 31, 1725, in Leipzig as part of Bach’s third complete annual cycle of cantatas. The Epistle for the day was 2 Thessalonians 2:3–8, with its exhortation to remain steadfast in the faith. The Holy Gospel was Revelation 14:6–8, which points out the need to fear and glorify God in the face of the Judgment. Reference is also made in the Gospel to “fallen Babylon,” which could have been interpreted to mean foes of the Christian, although it was more likely interpreted by Lutherans as a reference to the Roman Catholic Church itself.

Bach must have been fond of this cantata, for he used the music of the opening chorus and the soprano and bass duet to form two movements of the *Gloria in excelsis* in his *Mass in G major* (BWV 236).

The six movements of the cantata text, compiled by an unknown author, interpret the message of the Holy Gospel, emphasize the praise and thanks due to God for the strength of his love and faithfulness, and make a plea for God’s continued guidance and protection.

The cantata is scored for 2 horns (today we use cornets), 2 oboes, 2 flutes, strings (2 violins, viola, cello), *basso continuo* (keyboard and bass), soprano, alto, and bass solos, and choir.

Carlos Messerli



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