

May 6, 2026
1pm

St. Paul's Chapel
Broadway & Wall Street

Trinity Choir
Soloists from the Choir



On Wednesdays this spring, Bach at One begins with a glorious Eastertide offering in Trinity Church, then returns home to the intimacy of historic St. Paul's Chapel.

Join us as some of the country's leading interpreters of Baroque music — Trinity Baroque Orchestra, Trinity Choir, and Trinity organist Avi Stein — continue Trinity Church's century-old tradition of free midday concerts.

From meditative cantatas to intricate motets to compositions by influential Bach predecessors, contemporaries, and modern heirs, the beloved series anchors our spring season in joy.

TRINITY CHOIR

Soloists from the choir

Adrienne Hyde, *viola da gamba*

Avi Stein, conductor, organ, and harpsichord

PROGRAM

Fürchte dich nicht, BWV 228

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

Hymn to Saint Cecilia, op. 27

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

Sonata in D Major, BWV 1028

Bach

Adagio

Allegro

Andante

Allegro

Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing

Herbert Howells (1892–1983)

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden, BWV 230

Bach

About today's program

Bach's gloriously virtuosic motets are staples of the Trinity Choir repertoire. Today, listeners will hear *Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden* and *Fürchte dich nicht* — a lineup that balances beauty and power. These pinnacles of choral composition will be complemented by two 20th-century masterworks: Herbert Howells' moving homage to John F. Kennedy, *Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing*, written in the wake of the president's assassination; and Benjamin Britten's evocative and fantastical ode, *Hymn to Saint Cecilia*, op. 27, written during his stay in New York while World War II raged.

Fürchte dich nicht, BWV 228

Translations by Pamela Dellal

Chor

Fürchte dich nicht, ich bin bei dir; weiche nicht, denn ich bin dein Gott; ich stärke dich, ich helfe dir auch, ich erhalte dich durch die rechte Hand meiner Gerechtigkeit.

Chor; Choral

Fürchte dich nicht, denn ich habe dich erlöset; ich habe dich bei deinem Namen gerufen, du bist mein.

Herr, mein Hirt, Brunn aller Freuden!
Du bist mein,
ich bin dein,
niemand kann uns scheiden.
Ich bin dein, weil du dein Leben
und dein Blut,
mir zu gut,
in den Tod gegeben.
Du bist mein, weil ich dich fasse
und dich nicht,
o mein Licht,
aus dem Herzen lasse!
Laß mich, laß mich hingelangen,
wo du mich
und ich dich
lieblich werd umfassen.
*Isaiah 41:10 (mov't. 1); Isaiah 43:1, and Paul
Gerhardt 1653 (mov't. 2)*

Chorus

Do not fear, I am with you; do not recoil, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, and help you as well, I sustain you with the right hand of my righteousness.

Chorus; Chorale

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name, you are Mine.

Lord, my Shepherd, fount of all joy!
You are mine,
I am Yours,
no one can part us.
I am Yours, since Your life
and Your blood,
for my sake,
You have given to death.
You are mine, since I seize You
and do not,
O my light,
let you out of my heart!
Let me, let me arrive there,
where You
and I
will lovingly embrace each other.

Hymn to Saint Cecilia, op. 27

Text by W. H. Auden (1907–1973)

Soloists: Elizabeth Bates and Shabnam Abedi, *soprano*; Pamela Terry, *alto*; Nickolas Karageorgiou, *tenor*; Neil Netherly, *bass*

In a garden shady this holy lady
With reverent cadence and subtle psalm,
Like a black swan as death came on
Poured forth her song in perfect calm:
And by ocean's margin this innocent virgin
Constructed an organ to enlarge her prayer,
And notes tremendous from her great engine
Thundered out on the Roman air.

Blonde Aphrodite rose up excited,
Moved to delight by the melody,
White as an orchid she rode quite naked
In an oyster shell on top of the sea;
At sounds so entrancing the angels dancing
Came out of their trance into time again,
And around the wicked in Hell's abysses
The huge flame flickered and eased their pain.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

I cannot grow;
I have no shadow
To run away from,
I only play.

I cannot err;
There is no creature
Whom I belong to,
Whom I could wrong.

I am defeat
When it knows it
Can now do nothing
By suffering.

All you lived through,
Dancing because you
No longer need it
For any deed.

I shall never be
Different. Love me.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

O ear whose creatures cannot wish to fall,
O calm of spaces unafraid of weight,
Where Sorrow is herself, forgetting all
The gaucheness of her adolescent state,
Where Hope within the altogether strange
From every outworn image is released,
And Dread born whole and normal like a beast
Into a world of truths that never change:
Restore our fallen day; O re-arrange.

O dear bright children casual as birds,
Playing among the ruined languages,
So small beside their large confusing words,
So gay against the greater silences
Of dreadful things you did: O hang the head,
Impetuous child with the tremendous brain,
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain,
Lost innocence who wished your lover dead,
Weep for the lives your wishes never led.

O cry created as the bow of sin
Is drawn across our trembling violin.
O weep, child, weep, O weep away the stain.
O law drummed out by hearts against the still
Long winter of our intellectual will.
That what has been may never be again.
O flute that throbs with the thanksgiving breath
Of convalescents on the shores of death.
O bless the freedom that you never chose.
O trumpets that unguarded children blow
About the fortress of their inner foe.
O wear your tribulation like a rose.

Blessed Cecilia, appear in visions
To all musicians, appear and inspire:
Translated Daughter, come down and startle
Composing mortals with immortal fire.

Take Him, Earth, for Cherishing

Text by Aurelius Prudentius Clemens (348–c.413)

Translated by Helen Waddell (1889–1965)

Take him, earth, for cherishing;
To thy tender breast receive him.
Body of a man I bring thee,
Noble even in its ruin.

Once was this a spirit's dwelling
By the breath of God created.
High the heart that here was beating.
Christ the prince of all its living.

Guard him well, the dead I give thee,
Not unmindful of his creature
Shall he ask it: he who made it
Symbol of his mystery.

Comes the hour God hath appointed
To fulfil the hope of men.
Then must thou, in very fashion,
What I give, return again.

Not though ancient time decaying
Wear away these bones to sand,
Ashes that a man might measure
In the hollow of his hand:

Not though wandering winds and idle,
Drifting through the empty sky,
Scatter dust was nerve and sinew,
Is it given to man to die.

Once again the shining road
Leads to ample Paradise;
Open are the woods again
That the serpent lost for men.

Take, O take him, mighty leader
Take again thy servant's soul,
Grave his name, and pour the fragrant
Balm upon the icy stone.

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden, BWV 230

Translations by Pamela Dellal

Chor

Lobet den Herrn, alle Heiden,
und preiset ihn, alle Völker!
Denn seine Gnade und Wahrheit
waltet über uns in Ewigkeit.
Alleluja!
Psalm 117

Chorus

Praise the Lord, all nations,
and praise him, all peoples!
For his grace and truth
rules over us for eternity.
Alleluia!



TRINITY CHOIR

With peerless interpretation of both early and new music, Trinity Choir has redefined the realm of 21st-century vocal music, breaking new ground with artistry described as “blazing with vigour . . . a choir from heaven” (*The Times*, London). Critics have praised the choir’s performances as “thrilling” (*The New Yorker*), “musically top-notch” (*The Wall Street Journal*), and “simply superb” (*The New York Times*).

The choir was recently featured in several world-premiere oratorios and operas: Andrew Yee’s *Trans Requiem*, Paola Prestini’s *Silent Light* at National Sawdust, Luna Pearl Woolf’s *Number Our Days* at the Perelman Performing Arts Center, and Benedict Sheehan’s *Akathist*, which was recorded alongside NOVUS, Downtown Voices, Artefact Ensemble, and Trinity Youth Chorus, and nominated for a 2025 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance. Other recent highlights: Trinity’s yearly performances of Handel’s *Messiah* (with soloists from the choir); a production of Craig Hella Johnson’s *Considering Matthew Shepard; Shall We Gather at the River*, directed by Peter Sellars, and Tyshawn Sorey’s *Monochromatic Light (Afterlife)*, at the Park Avenue Armory; PROTOTYPE Festival’s production of Huang Ruo’s *Angel Island; Broken Chord* at BAM (created by Gregory Maqoma and Thuthuka Sibisi); a concert in the inaugural Refuge series at the Perelman Performing Arts Center; Handel’s *Theodora* at Caramoor; Julia Wolfe’s *Anthracite Fields*; “Notes From Ukraine” at Carnegie Hall; a concert of Bach cantatas at Salle Bourgie in Montreal; and collaborations with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s and the American Modern Opera Company.

Trinity’s longstanding commitment to new music has fostered collaborations with composers including Julia Wolfe, Du Yun, Ellen Reid, Trevor Weston, Mary Kouyoumdjian, Paola Prestini, Luna Pearl Woolf, Ralf Yusuf Gawlick, and Elena Ruehr. Trinity Choir is featured on recordings of three Pulitzer Prize-winning works: Julia Wolfe’s *Anthracite Fields*, Du Yun’s *Angel’s Bone*, and Ellen Reid’s *prism*.

SOPRANO

Shabnam Abedi
Elisse Albian
Elizabeth Bates
Aine Hakamatsuka
Madeline Apple Healey
Ellen Robertson
Elena Williamson

ALTO

Catherine Hedberg
Clifton Massey
Jonthan May
Pamela Terry

TENOR

Timothy Hodges
Nickolas Karageorgiou
Scott Mello
Stephen Sands
David Vanderwal

BASS

Paul Chwe
MinChul An
Matthew Goinz
Steven Hrycelak
Thomas McCargar
Brian Mextorf
Neil Netherly
Jared Swope

AVI STEIN, CONDUCTOR, ORGAN, AND HARPSICHORD

Avi Stein is the organist and chorus master at Trinity Church and on the faculty of The Juilliard School, where he teaches continuo accompaniment, vocal repertoire, and chamber music. *The New York Times* described Stein as “a brilliant organ soloist” in his Carnegie Hall debut.

Stein is the artistic director of the Helicon Foundation and has directed the International Baroque Academy of Musiktheater Bavaria and the young artists’ program at the Carmel Bach Festival. He has conducted a variety of ensembles, including Tafelmusik, Philharmonia Baroque, Opera Lafayette, the Portland Baroque Orchestra, the Bang on a Can All-Stars, and the Opéra Français de New York.

Stein conducted Henry Purcell’s *Dido and Aeneas* at Juilliard in a production that traveled to London’s Holland Park and the Royal Opera House at the Palace of Versailles. Another production at Juilliard, Luigi Rossi’s *Orfeo*, was named one of the best performances of 2021 by *The New York Times*. He was featured on the 2015 Grammy Award-



winning recording for Best Opera by the Boston Early Music Festival. Stein studied at Indiana University, the Eastman School of Music, and the University of Southern California, and he was a Fulbright Scholar in Toulouse, France.

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Organist & Chorus Master

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