

THE SAINT MARK'S  
**MUSIC**  

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**SERIES**  
2024-2025



***All Bach on the  
Flentrop Organ***

Jonathan Moyer, organ

Friday, May 9, 7:30 pm

In-person and livestreamed from  
Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, Seattle

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

*Saint Mark's Cathedral acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the first people of Seattle, the Duwamish People, who are still here, and we honor with gratitude the land itself and the life of all the Coast Salish tribes.*

# *All Bach on the Flentrop Organ*

Jonathan Moyer, organ

## PROGRAM

### *Bach's Fantasy*

*Fantasia in G Major, BVW 572*

J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

*Fantasia super Jesu, meine Freude, BVW 713*  
(Fantasia on Jesus, my happiness)

*Ein Kindelein so löbelich, BVW 719*  
(A child so praise worthy)

*Wir Christenleut, BVW 1090*  
(We Christians)

*Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ, BVW 1102*  
(Prince of Peace, Lord Jesus Christ)

*Alle Menschen müssen sterben, BVW 1117*  
(All people must die)

*Fantasia in G Minor, BVW 542*

*O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig, BVW 1095*  
(Oh Lamb of God, innocent one)

*Machs mit mir, Gott, nach deiner Güt, BVW 957*  
(Do with me, God, according to your goodness)

*Christ, der du bist der helle Tag, BVW 1120*  
(Christ, You, who are the light of day)

*Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder, BVW 742*  
(Ah, Lord, I am but a poor sinner)

*Ach Gott und Herr, BVW 714*  
(Ah, God and Lord)

*Erbarm dich mein, O Herre Gott, BVW 721*  
(Have mercy on me, Oh Lord God)

*Prelude in E Minor, BVW 548*

*Christ lag in Todesbanden à 2 claviers et pédale, BVW 718*  
(Christ lay in the bonds of death, for two keyboards and pedal)

*Fugue in E Minor, BVW 548*

## Bach's Fantasy

I have long been fascinated by the genre of the keyboard “fantasy” (*fantasie* or *fantasia*). The word encompasses a broad spectrum of repertory, compositional process, and performative practice. It is simultaneously both the domain of the intellect and the passions.

In the sixteenth century we find some of the earliest examples of the word associated with keyboard music. Fray Tomás de Santa María's treatise *Arte de taner Fantasia* (1565) provides detailed instructions on how to improvise liturgical pieces according to set formulaic musical patterns. Its Italian counterpart *Il Transilvano* (1593) by Girolamo Diruta similarly details all manner of “fantastical” pieces such as the toccata, ricercar, canzona, hymn and magnificat versets that accentuate the action of the Mass. Genres such as the Italian *ricercar* and Spanish *tiento* became the standard for intellectual “fantasy” in contrapuntal music, while the *toccatà* demonstrated the “fantasy” of touch. Under the hands of composers like Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck, William Byrd, and Johann Jakob Froberger, *fantasias* became vast landscapes of both contrapuntal form and technical effects.

In the seventeenth century, *fantasias* blossomed into even larger forms in the art of the *stylus fantasticus*. “Fantasy” became a manner of performance that delights, shocks, and moves the listener. In the Lutheran tradition, organists created largescale *chorale fantasias* that explored not only the contrapuntal possibilities within a given melody but also the theological symbolism and emotional impact of its text. The ever-expanding range of tonal color in the organs of the time allowed performers to color their “fantasy” of composition with the “fantasy” of sound.

It is into this world of keyboard practice that Johann Sebastian Bach was born, and it was this practice of composing and performing that he expanded beyond anything ever imagined before. Today's program highlights not only Bach's usage of the genre of *fantasia* but also the way in which he applied the concept of *fantasia* into his multifarious oeuvre.

Likely composed during Bach's Weimar years (1708-1717), the **Fantasia in G Major, BWV 572** is more commonly referred to today by its French title *Pièce d'orgue* (prescribed by some of the earliest copies of the work). Nineteenth century editions of the work refer to it by the title *Fantasia*, likely taken from another eighteenth century source now lost. Regardless of its title, the work exudes the air of an improvisation with dazzling effect. Like many works in the “Buxtehudian” fashion, it begins – *Très vite-*

*ment* – with a single voice grabbing our attention as it dances around the full compass of the keyboard before ushering in the central portion of the work – *Gravement*, a towering five-voice counterpoint of ravishing harmony. Here we enigmatically encounter an unplayable B-natural below the lowest note of the pedalboard. Perhaps this was an acknowledgement of the French pedal boards of the time, some of which extended down to low A or even F; or could it just be *fantasy*? A long dominant pedal D builds towards a cadence that is cut short by a diminished seventh chord, serving as a doorway to the third and final section, *Lentement*. A mysterious chromatic counterpoint between pedal and arpeggiated figurations in the manuals descends towards a genteel cadence in G.

Throughout his life, Bach extended the effects of fantasy beyond his large scale contrapuntal works into the realm of the chorale. Both in miniature and large forms, we encounter a dazzling array of technical feats, contrapuntal texture, and emotive text-painting. Chorale settings such as these largely served as introductions to singing during Lutheran worship services. Today's program features chorales mostly from the early days of Bach's career in Arnstadt and Weimar. Some are associated with the *Neumeister Collection* and others are designated as miscellaneous.

The **Fantasia super Jesu, meine Freude, BWV 713** is divided into two contrasting parts. The first features a fugal structure based on a disjointed theme in which the chorale melody is interwoven with each successive phrase presented in a different voice. The second part of the chorale is marked *dolce* (“sweetly”) and transforms the music into a flowing triple meter. The lilting sigh motives may reflect the first verse of the chorale, “Gottes Lamm mein Bräutigam” (Lamb of God, my bridegroom), echoing the *Orgelbüchlein* setting of *O Lamm Gottes unschuldig*, BWV 618.

**Ein Kindelein so löblich, BWV 719** has also been attributed to Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706), but it lies well within the orbit of the Bach family as Pachelbel was a good friend and taught Johann Sebastian's brother Johann Christoph. The setting is largely characterized by imitative four-voice fugal counterpoint that treats only the first and final phrase of the long chorale melody.

**Wir Christenleut, BWV 1090** features a counterpoint of descending sixteenth-note scales that undergird the first two phrases of the chorale melody in the soprano. The second half features an abrupt shift to compound meter followed by marked dotted rhythms that reflect the resoluteness of the text: “Wer sich des tröst' und glaubet fest, soll nicht werden verloren.” (Those who trust and firmly believe will not be lost.)



**Du Friedefürst, Herr Jesu Christ, BWV 1102** is a duo of two voices that commences with a bassline in *basso continuo* style against an ornamented soprano line. In the second half of the chorale, marked *allegro*, the two voices merge and dance together in dotted rhythms and triplets.

**Alle Menschen müssen sterben, BWV 1117** opens with an exuberant three-voice counterpoint of running sixteenth notes against the chorale melody in quarter-notes. The continuous rhythmic drive accelerates into thirty-second notes which lead to an abrupt shift marked *adagio* as the work concludes with a chordal texture. Perhaps it demonstrates the fleeting nature of time. “Alle Menschen müssen sterben, Alles Fleisch vergeht wie Heu” (All people must die, all flesh withers like the grass).

Though no autograph of the **Fantasia in G Minor, BWV 542** survives, it appears mostly in copies separate from the fugue that is commonly performed with it. Only one eighteenth century source features the two works paired together. This monumental work encompasses the concept of “fantasy” in every sense of its meaning. In the fashion of the *stylus fantasticus*, it contrasts periods of flamboyant musical gesture against periods of restrained counterpoint. Bach pushes the boundaries of harmonic possibility beyond anything composed before its time. In one extraordinary passage, he wanders chromatically through a labyrinth of eight keys, spiraling through the circle of fifths towards an inevitable demise on a diminished seventh chord. “O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?”

From the *Neumester Collection*, **O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig, BWV 1095** is a simple and elegant harmonization of the passion chorale in four-part counterpoint with the melody in the soprano.

In **Machs mit mir, Gott, nach deiner Güt, BWV 957** Bach transforms the chorale melody into a buoyant sixteenth-note theme that he treats in three-part imitative counterpoint. The setting concludes with a four-part harmonization of the chorale.

**Christ, der du bist der helle Tag, BWV 1120** makes use of manual (keyboard) changes by means of dynamic markings of *forte* and *piano*. The musical texture contrasts homophonic chordal passages with imitative four-part counterpoint. The final phrase of the choral melody is taken in the pedal.

**Ach Herr, mich armen Sünder, BWV 742** begins with a solitary voice as if lamenting the subject of the passion chorale that is to follow. Against a simple accompaniment, the voice seems to whimper in short outbursts of melody.

**Ach Gott und Herr, BWV 714** commences with a meditative four-part prelude in the dissonant, Italian *durezza* style, poignantly coloring the affect of the penitential text. The chorale is then presented in canon between the soprano and tenor.

The striking simplicity of **Erbarm dich mein, O Herre Gott, BWV 721** invokes a state of deep contemplation as the long half-note tones of the chorale melody soar against a beating homophonic accompaniment. The early sixteenth century chorale is based on Psalm 51. “O God, be merciful to me according to thy great mercy; wash and make clean my iniquity; I know my sin and it grieves me.”

Analysis of the autograph score of the **Prelude and Fugue in E Minor, BWV 548** suggest that Bach composed it while in Leipzig between 1727 and 1736. The work stands as a monumental example of musical architecture and technical virtuosity of nearly symphonic dimensions. The prelude exudes the air of the great opening chorus of the *St. Matthew Passion*, which shares the same key. Emotive outbursts of sigh-motifs merge into a continuous flow of sixteenth-note counterpoint. These are contrasted by brief episodes of dotted rhythms. Ultimately, the brilliance of this music lies in its sonority and texture that are perfectly balanced with form.

The striking nature of the fugue’s chromatic theme (commonly referred to as “the wedge”) is its almost visual quality. In the form of a musical crucifix, the subject represents a polemic struggle between life and death. Following the fugal exposition, we are transported into a central section unlike anything found in Bach’s fugues. Waves of virtuosic scales are punctuated by occasional outbursts of the theme. The Herculean demands of the music engage the performer as a participant in the epic struggle.

As was often custom during the eighteenth century, I have chosen to present a chorale setting between the prelude and fugue. **Christ lag in Todesbanden à 2 claviers et pédale, BWV 718** likely predates BWV 548 by decades as it is written in the chorale fantasia style of the northern Hanseatic tradition. Lavishly ornamented melody contrasts sections of echoing manuals and tempo changes. Its key and textual relation to the theme of the resurrection suit the narrative quality of the prelude and fugue. Together they serve as a perfect example of how Bach merged the science of counterpoint and the wonder of the imagination in the fantasy of the mind.

Program notes by Jonathan Moyer

## ABOUT THE ARTIST



**Jonathan William Moyer** is the David S. Boe chair and associate professor of organ at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and organist of the Church of the Covenant in Cleveland, OH. He performs a vast repertoire spanning from the renaissance to the modern era, and has concertized throughout the United States, Europe, Japan, and Hong Kong. Notable recent concerts include Yale University, Segovia Cathedral (Spain), Cuenca Festival, St. Katharinen (Hamburg), St. Johannis (Lüneburg), Schwerin Cathedral, Marienkirche (Berlin), St. Jakobi (Lübeck), and Conventions for the American Guild of Organists and the Organ Historical Society. He has performed with numerous ensembles including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Tanglewood Festival Orchestra, Blue Water Chamber Orchestra of Cleveland, Richmond Symphony Orchestra, and the Oberlin Symphony Orchestra. He just completed a sabbatical exchange with Vincent Grappy in Blois, France, where he served as organist for the Cathedral of St. Louis and taught at the Conservatoire de Musique in Vierzon.

*The Baltimore Sun* said of his complete performance of the organ works of Olivier Messiaen, “Moyer revealed the composer’s musical genius as vividly as his spiritual richness, taking full advantage of the cathedral’s organ... Passages of rapt reflection were shaped with a keen sense of import.” His lauded CD *Voices of the Hanse*, recorded on the 1637 Stellwagen organ in Lübeck, Germany, released on Gothic Records features music from 17th-century North German sources. A second volume of Hanseatic music recorded in Eugene, Oregon, is set to be released later this year.

Recognized by the Oberlin Conservatory with the excellence in teaching award, Dr. Moyer guides his students to cultivate a deeply authentic musicianship rooted in excellence, historical awareness, beauty, and service. He has been a visiting lecturer in organ at the Hochschule für Musik in Lübeck, Germany, the Yale Summer Organ Academy, and the Interlochen School of the Arts, and has adjudicated both national and international competitions.

Dr. Moyer holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree and Graduate Performance Diploma in organ from the Peabody Conservatory of Music (Baltimore) as a student of Donald Sutherland and Gillian Weir, where he also completed a Master’s degree in piano as a student of Ann Schein. He earned an Artist Diploma in organ from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music as a student of James David Christie and Olivier Latry, and a bachelor of music degree in piano from Bob Jones University as a student of Laurence Morton. He studied further with organists Susan Landale, Marie-Claire Alain, Guy Bovet, and Michael Radulescu. He is represented by WindWerk Artists. Dr. Moyer resides in Shaker Heights, Ohio, along with his wife, organist, Dr. Kaori Hongo, and sons, Christopher Sho and Samuel Kazu.

*Cleveland Classical.com* described his playing: “Moyer skillfully chose registrations that showed the range of color the instrument can produce and suited them perfectly to the music at hand...It’s delightful to hear an organ recital where everything seems so right and the playing so much in the service of the instrument and the repertoire.”

2025

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**MUSIC**  

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**SERIES**

2026

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Capella Romana with Portland Youth Philharmonic's Camerata offer a sonic experience that stirs the soul and lifts the roof. Featuring Masses by Stravinsky and Bruckner, it's not just a concert— it's a cathedral of sound to move both heart and soul.

**Friday, October 24 at 7:30 pm**

Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

***Peace and Thanksgiving***

Skyros Quartet returns to Saint Mark's Music Series presenting music contemplating peace on earth and thanksgiving through string quartets by Ludvig van Beethoven and Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks in anticipation of Advent.

**Friday, November 21 at 7:30 pm**

Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

***Organ Plus***

Music for organ and trumpet will enliven Thomsen Chapel with works spanning the centuries, from the Baroque to Modern times, featuring Henry Lebedinsky on organ and Brian Shaw on trumpet.

**Saturday, January 17 at 7:30 pm**

**Sunday, January 18 at 3:00 pm**

Saint Mark's Thomsen Chapel

***Encountering the Divine***

Pianist Keith Kirchoff presents a program exploring the richness of the Christian faith through eight musical expressions and denominations, through works from Frescobaldi to Liszt, Messiaen to the present day.

**Sunday, February 22 at 3:00 pm**

Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

***Flentrop Organ Concert***

University of Washington Fritts Faculty Fellow, organist Stephan Price will perform a varied program by living composers, with his "absolutely superb" and "beyond exciting" artistry - a perfect match for the mighty Flentrop organ.

**Sunday, March 22 at 3:00 pm**

Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

***English Choir concert***

The Choir of Magdalen College from Oxford, England will bring their choral tradition which has been developed over a more than five-hundred years to Saint Mark's unique and resonant acoustic under the direction of Mark Williams.

**Wednesday, April 15 at 7:30 pm**

Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

***All Bach on the Flentrop Organ***

Renée Anne Louprette will perform Saint Mark's annual All-Bach concert. Described as "technically nimble and dynamic" and "among the greatest performers of our time" she has garnered acclaim for her recording of Bach Chorales.

**Friday, May 15 at 7:30 pm**

Saint Mark's Cathedral Nave

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## AND FOR THE MONTHLY *Organ by Night* SERIES

*Organ by Night* is offered on the third Sunday of each month following the Compline service, about 10:00 pm. Informal mini-concerts introduce listeners to the power and beauty of a real pipe organ. All are welcome in-person in the nave at Saint Marks, or to join the organist in the loft to get a feel for what playing an instrument of this size is really like. Organists are delighted to answer questions about the organ and the music following the performance.

### NEXT UP on SUNDAY, MAY 18 AT 10:00 pm

John Stuntebeck performing:

Andante Sostenuto from *Symphonie Gothique* by Charles-Marie Widor

*Concerto in G Major*, BWV 592, by J. S. Bach

*Variations on Ubi Caritas* by Denis Bédard

*Antiphon I*, Op. 18, No. 1 by Marcel Dupré

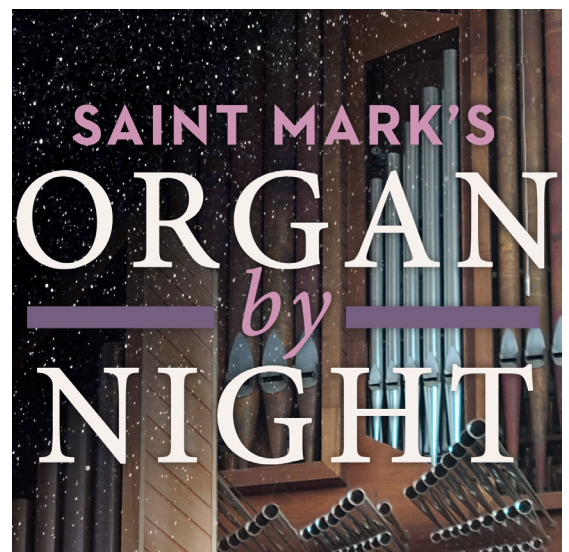
John Stuntebeck serves as the Associate Organist at Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral where he leads congregational singing, accompanies the choirs, and offers selections from the organ repertoire for church services throughout the liturgical year. John is passionate about liturgical improvisation and he provides musical creations inspired by the Gospels and the great hymn texts of the ages at many services at St. Mark's. In addition to being a church musician, John is an accomplished organist, pianist and accompanist who has performed in a wide variety of concerts of varying styles throughout the region around the Puget Sound. He earned the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the Ohio State University in Spanish linguistics in 2003 and received his Masters in Music in organ performance in 2009 from the University of Washington, studying with Carole Terry and Mel Butler. As well as being a professional musician, John works full time as a senior IT program/project manager at Kaiser Permanente.

### MORE UPCOMING *Organ by Night* CONCERTS:

JUNE 15 - Shari Shull

JULY 20 - Wyatt Smith

AUGUST 17 - Mark McDonald





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Saint Mark’s Music Series is grateful to the Seattle Chapter of the American Guild of Organists for their support of radio publicity for this concert.



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