

# CANTATA for Reformation Sunday

## *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott BWV 80*

Johann Sebastian Bach  
(b.1685 Eisenach; d.1750 Leipzig)

Composed: Weimar, 1715 for the 3rd Sunday in Lent, "Oculi" (BWV 80a).  
Revised and expanded: Leipzig, around 1730 for Reformation Day (BWV 80b).  
BWV 80 is a reworking of cantatas BWV 80a and BWV 80b, between 1735-1740.

### I. Chorale

Text: Martin Luther (1483-1546): *Ein feste Burg*, Verse 1

**Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott,  
ein gute Wehr und Waffen;  
Er hilft uns frei aus aller Not,  
die uns itzt hat betroffen.  
Der alte böse Feind,  
mit Ernst ers itzt meint,  
groß Macht und viel List  
sein grausam Rüstung ist,  
auf Erd ist nicht seinsgleichen.**

*A mighty fortress is our God,  
a good defence and weapon;  
He freely helps us out of all distress,  
that now has affected us.  
The old evil enemy,  
earnestly now plots against us,  
great might and much cunning  
are his cruel armor,  
on earth He has no equal.*

### II. Aria

Text: Salomon Franck (1659-1725), Martin Luther: *Ein feste Burg*, Verse 2

Aurora Deeds, *soprano*

Timothy Flynn, *bass*

Joshua Lauretig, *oboe d'amore*

Alles, was von Gott geboren,  
ist zum Siegen auserkoren.

*All, that is born of God,  
is destined for victory.*

**Mit unser Macht ist nichts getan,  
wir sind gar bald verloren.  
Es streit' vor uns der rechte Mann,  
den Gott selbst hat erkoren.**

*By our might nothing is accomplished,  
Soon we will be lost.  
The right man fights for us,  
whom God himself has chosen.*

Wer bei Christi Blutpanier  
in der Taufe Treu geschworen,  
siegt in Christo für und für.

*Those who by the bloodstained banner of Christ  
have sworn faithfulness in baptism,  
gain victory in Christ for ever and ever.*

**Fragst du, wer er ist?  
Er heißt Jesus Christ,  
der Herre Zebaoth,  
und ist kein andrer Gott,  
das Feld muss er behalten.**

*Do you ask who he is?  
He is called Jesus Christ,  
the Lord of Sabaoth,  
and there is no other God,  
He shall hold the field of battle.*

Alles, was von Gott geboren,  
ist zum Siegen auserkoren.

*All, that is born of God,  
is destined for victory.*

### III. Recitative

Text: Salomon Franck

Timothy Flynn, *bass*

Erwäge doch, Kind Gottes, die so große Liebe,  
da Jesus sich  
mit seinem Blute dir verschriebe,  
womit er dich zum Kriege wider Satans Heer  
und wider Welt, und Sünde, geworben hat!  
Gib nicht in deiner Seele  
dem Satan und den Lastern statt!  
Laß nicht dein Herz,  
den Himmel Gottes auf der Erden,  
zur Wüste werden!  
Bereue deine Schuld mit Schmerz,  
dass Christi Geist mit dir sich fest verbinde!

*Only consider, child of God, how great His love,  
since Jesus himself  
with his blood has given his pledge for you,  
by which for the war against Satan's army  
and against world, and sin, has enlisted you!  
Do not give any place in your soul  
to Satan and vices!  
Do not let your heart,  
God's heaven on earth,  
become a desert!  
Repent your guilt with grief,  
so that Christ's spirit may be firmly united with you!*

### IV. Aria

Text: Salomon Franck

Aurora Deeds, *soprano*

Komm in mein Herzenshaus,  
Herr Jesu, mein Verlangen!  
Treib Welt und Satan aus  
und lass dein Bild in mir  
erneuert prangen!  
Weg, schnöder Sünden Graus!

*Come into my heart's house,  
Lord Jesus, my desire!  
Drive world and Satan out  
and let your image within me  
renewed shine forth!  
Away, loathsome horror of sin!*

### V. Chorale

Text: Martin Luther: *Ein feste Burg*, Verse 3

**Und wenn die Welt voll Teufel wär  
und wollten uns verschlingen,  
so fürchten wir uns nicht so sehr,  
es soll uns doch gelingen.  
Der Fürst dieser Welt,  
wie saur er sich stellt,  
tut er uns doch nicht,  
das macht, er ist gericht',  
ein Wörtlein kann ihn fällen.**

*And if the world were full of devils  
and they wanted to devour us,  
then we would not be very afraid,  
we should still succeed.  
The Prince of this world,  
however grimly he presents himself,  
can do nothing against us,  
already he is judged,  
a little word can cut him down.*

## VI. Recitative

Text: Salomon Franck

Benjamin, Lawson, *tenor*

So stehe dann  
bei Christi blutgefärbten Fahne,  
o Seele, fest und glaube,  
dass dein Haupt dich nicht verlässt,  
ja, dass sein Sieg  
auch dir den Weg zu deiner Krone bahne!  
Tritt freudig an den Krieg!  
Wirst du nur Gottes Wort  
so hören als bewahren,  
so wird der Feind gezwungen auszufahren.  
Dein Heiland bleibt dein Hort!

*So take your stand then  
by Christ's bloodstained banner,  
o soul, firmly and believe,  
that your leader will not forsake you,  
yes, that His victory  
will also pave the way to your crown!  
March joyfully to war!  
If only God's word  
is both heard and kept by you,  
then your enemy will be forced to withdraw.  
Your saviour remains your stronghold!*

## VII. Duet

Text: Salomon Franck

Maria Parker, *mezzo-soprano*

Benjamin Lawson, *tenor*

Anna Mattix, *oboe taille*

Gretchen Fisher, *violin*

Wie selig sind doch die,  
die Gott im Munde tragen;  
doch selger ist das Herz,  
das ihn im Glauben trägt.  
Es bleibet unbesiegt  
und kann die Feinde schlagen  
und wird zuletzt gekrönt,  
wenn es den Tod erlegt.

*How blessed are those  
who bear God in their mouths;  
but more blessed is the heart,  
that bears God in faith.  
Such a heart remains undefeated  
and can strike the enemies  
and will in the end be crowned,  
after death has been defeated.*

## VIII. Chorale

Text: Martin Luther: *Ein feste Burg*, Verse 4

**Das Wort sie sollen lassen stahn  
und kein Dank dazu haben.  
Er ist bei uns wohl auf dem Plan  
mit seinem Geist und Gaben.  
Nehmen sie uns den Leib,  
Gut, Ehr, Kind und Weib,  
laß fahren dahin,  
sie habens kein' Gewinn;  
das Reich muss uns doch bleiben.**

*They shall pay no heed to God's word  
and have no thanks for it.  
He is indeed with us on the field of battle  
with his Spirit and his gifts.  
If they take our body  
wealth, honor, child and wife  
let them be taken away,  
they gain nothing by this;  
The kingdom must still remain ours.*

## BWV 80

The grand reformation cantata BWV 80 “Ein’ feste Burg” has a complex history. It began life in Weimar as a chamber scale cantata for the first Sunday in Lent called “Oculi.” The reading for that Sunday is the passage from Luke where Christ throws out the devil. He himself is accused of being the devil and replies with the famous passage about a house divided against itself. The monumental struggle between good and evil brought forth a muscular and powerful libretto from Salomo Franck. This original version began with an aria for bass and strings in which an oboe played a highly ornamented version of “Ein’ feste Burg.” It continued with a secco recitative and soprano aria with continuo and a secco recitative for tenor and a duet for alto, tenor, violin and oboe da caccia. It ended with a four-voice harmonization of the second verse of “Ein’ feste Burg.”

Some time early in his tenure in Leipzig, Bach expanded this cantata. There was no music at Thomaskirche during Lent, and the Reformation day festivities were a grand event in Leipzig. He added a large motet style movement using the first verse of the chorale, added a soprano, and presumably cut the oboe into the bass aria, using the text for the second verse of the chorale. After the soprano recitative and aria he added a large chorale movement with strings and chorus in octaves. The final chorale harmonization was modified to fit the last verse of the chorale instead of the first. There are many extent period scores of the piece. At some time 3 oboes were added to the unison chorale, along with somewhat primitive trumpet and drum parts composed by Bach’s eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann Bach. There are versions of both the opening motet and the unison chorale movement. Even when these versions are sorted out, there are certain anomalies, particularly in the first motet. For all of its problems and the several layers represented in the score, there is no doubt that this is one of the most important and magnificent of Bach cantatas. It is in a sense the ultimate Lutheran piece, the grand climax of Lutheran music. “Ein’ feste Burg” has always been Luther’s most famous chorale, and it is one of his best.

Bar-form chorales [A-A-B form] are actually not too common in Luther, but here he not only has written the arch-typical bar-form piece, but uses the form ingeniously to lay out his text. The battle between Jesus and Satan, which is here whipped into a frenzy, is not only fought out in this hard-hitting and tough text, but is fought out in the oppositions inherent in the form. The *Stollen* [literally ‘stanza’ - the repeated first phrase of the chorale] are almost always reserved for a description of the righteous Christian. The *Abgesang* [literally ‘aftersong’ - the ‘B’ phrase] is usually a description of the forces of Satan. The last phrase, which in characteristic bar-form fashion recapitulates the end of the *Stollen*, describes the triumph over Satan. This is not always the case, but it happens in enough verses that it is clear that the opposition of good and evil was on his mind when he set the words in this chorale.

The motet chorus is a magnificent achievement. In a genre in which Bach was the absolute master, this is probably the greatest motet chorus. It is laid out on very broad lines. There are certain almost arbitrary decisions that the performer will have to make before taking on this piece. The chorale tune is presented in long notes by the two oboes in unison. This is in canon with the pedal of the organ and the string bass.

The texture of the actual motet is quite complicated: there are four voices plus an independent continuo line. In addition there are the trumpet parts written by W. Friedemann Bach. It is fashionable nowadays to leave them out [which is the case for this performance]. One suspects that they were written at the instruction of J.S. Bach. The battle between good and evil is brilliantly articulated. In the *Stollen* the lines and the text of both phrases in each version of the “A” section are broadly mixed together. There is a conscious breadth and lack of differentiation between these two phrases. We only know where we are in the form by the canon between the oboes and low bass. The *Abgesang* on the other hand is tightly and clearly phrased. Each line of text is clearly defined not only in the canon but also in the voices and continuo. The harmony becomes progressively more chromatic, and reaches a hair-raising pitch in the penultimate phrase. The last phrase not only recapitulates the last phrase of the *Stollen*, but also the breadth of its delivery at the beginning of the movement.

It was a brilliant and daring gesture for Bach to put a movement before the first movement of his [Lenten] “Oculi” cantata. But the breadth and majesty contrasts wonderfully with the energy and liveliness of the Weimar movements. This bass aria is one of Bach best pieces from Weimar. A *concerto grosso* type figuration for all of the strings is played against bravura scale passages in the voice. Most scores print both the oboe and the soprano versions of the chorale melody. They probably were never played together, for the two versions produce some interesting heterophony. In Weimar Bach made some of his most interesting advances in recitative writing. Here, at the end of the *secco recitative* [free form recitative with solo and continuo] #3, the text speaks of being bound and united with Christ’s soul. Bach sets up a pattern of imitation between the voice and the [organ and cello] continuo, particularly the three-note motive on the words “Christi Geist.” The two are bound together by the canonic writing.

The soprano aria is the first really intimate and lyrical thing in the cantata. Franck comes up with a lovely metaphor, “come into the house of my heart.” Over and over again in these Weimar cantatas Franck finds an every day image that is just right for the idea that he is expressing. The music is floating and ethereal. Particularly striking is the opening line of both the continuo and voice that seems to float down from heaven. Even the more aggressive sides of the text are miniaturized, very much in keeping with the child’s voice.

The Leipzig unison chorale bursts in impressively. One spot, a big octave doubling of the string melody seems particularly ungainly. There are problems with the doubling oboe parts, also. It is a magnificent movement; and the only example of extended unison chorus writing in Bach gives the piece a particular congregational feel.

The piece returns back to two Weimar movements. As wonderful as the unison chorale is, something is lost from the Weimar version of having the piece remain quiet through the soprano and the alto-tenor duet. The tenor *recitative* again has an extended and impressive *arioso* section, this time with florid passagework on the words “my Savior is my shield.” The gorgeous duet for alto, tenor, violin and oboe taille [alto oboe] is a heavenly picture of being in a state of grace. Bach has been using tonic-dominant oppositions all during the cantata up to this point. Here he avoids the dominant and prefers the sub-dominant. The passivity of the subdominant also reminds us that the cantata is coming to a close. Here is an effect much more in common with classical rather than Baroque music. Bach writes a duet for

alto and tenor for the first time here. Already there is a sign of the psychological complexity and ambiguity of that combination.

This is a quality that would be present throughout his career. The combination of violin and oboe da caccia is inspired. The dark fruity tones of the oboe taille combine wonderfully with the violin, which is kept mostly in the bottom part of its range. The counterpoint is at times quite elaborate, and the words are vividly characterized. One should notice how the two voices join together on the same low G at the end on the words “Tod erlegt [death’s defeat].”

Bach made some adjustments in the four-voice chorale in Leipzig to fit a different verse of the text. This is, in a way the ultimate Bach chorale harmonization. It is so well known, and is in virtually every Protestant hymn book in the world that it has become every person’s idea of what “*Ein’ feste Burg*” is.

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[http://www.emmanuelmusic.org/notes\\_translations/notes\\_cantata/n\\_bwv080.htm](http://www.emmanuelmusic.org/notes_translations/notes_cantata/n_bwv080.htm),

Edited for Holy Trinity’s performance by Justin Pomietlarz.

### Chamber Orchestra

Gretchen Fisher, *violin*  
Shannon Levine, *cello*  
Joshua Lauretig, *oboe d'amore*

Rebecca Torres, *violin*  
Edmond Gnekow, *bass*  
Paul Schlossman, *oboe d'amore*

Derek Chazen, *viola*  
Kristen Pomietlarz, *organ*  
Anna Mattix, *oboe taille*

### Holy Trinity Chancel Choir

Justin T. Pomietlarz, conductor 2003

Mary Kay Atlas, *soprano* 1984  
Jennifer Carden, *soprano* 2019  
Daniel Culross, *tenor* 2005  
Timothy Flynn, *bass* 2002  
Emily Kaufmann, *soprano* 2014  
Shannon Levine, *soprano* 2013  
Maria Parker, *alto* 2013  
Anne Schneider, *alto* 1987  
Roger VanDette, *tenor* 1996

Michael Blaschke, *tenor* 2015  
Karen Cialone, *alto*, 1991  
Aurora Deeds, *soprano* 2010  
John Georger, *bass* 2008  
Carolyn Lansom, *alto* 2008  
Stefanie Lizauckas, *soprano* 2005  
Ronald Pellnat, *bass* 1971  
Thane Schulz, *tenor* 1996  
Darold Wobschall, *bass* 1957

Cris Campana, *soprano* 1997  
Susan Cosentino, *alto* 2019  
Colleen Flynn, *soprano* 2004  
Holly Holdaway, *soprano* 2005  
Benjamin Lawson, *tenor* 2019  
Ryan Lockwood, *baritone* 2019  
Kristen Pomietlarz, *alto* 2017  
Julie Tunstall, *soprano* 2008  
Jennifer Yap, *soprano* 1998

### About our Soloists

**Aurora Deeds**, *soprano*, is currently serving as a lecturer at SUNY College at Fredonia as she finishes her doctoral degree at the University of Iowa. She earned her Undergraduate and Graduate Degrees in Vocal Performance from SUNY Fredonia in 2008 and 2010. Her most recent roles have included Fiordiligi in *Così fan Tutte*, Nella in *Gianni Schicchi*, La Suora Infermiera in *Suor Angelica*. Her operatic repertoire also includes Mimì in Puccini’s *La Bohème*, the Queen of the Night in Mozart’s *Die Zauberflöte*, and Violetta in scenes from Verdi’s *La Traviata*. She has served as a soprano soloist throughout her career. Her most recent concert performances include Salieri’s *Mass in D Major*, Bach’s *Cantata No. 79*, Mozart’s *Requiem*, Beethoven’s *Choral Fantasy*, and Vivaldi’s *Domine Deus*. In addition to operatic and concert performances, Aurora teaches private voice lessons.





**Timothy Flynn**, *bass*, is a 2005 graduate of SUNY Fredonia, where he received his BA in Voice Performance. Since moving to Buffalo in 2006, Tim has been very active in the Buffalo music scene. He is now in his 13<sup>th</sup> season singing with the Chancel and Chapel choirs of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church as section leader. In March of 2016, Tim sang the role of *Pontius Pilate*, in Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion*, performed as a collaboration with the Choirs of Holy Trinity and SUNY Fredonia and the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also appeared in Opera Sacra's productions of "*Joan of Arc at the Stake*," "*Dialogues of the Carmelites*," "*MASS*" by Leonard Bernstein, and "*The Play of Herod*." He has also performed with the Harmonia Chamber Singers over a span of five seasons. In 2015, Tim appeared on stage as part of the chorus for *The Rolling Stones*' Buffalo tour stop. His current voice instruction is with Dr. Margaret Kuhl. Tim currently works for Ingram Micro as a Sales Representative.



**Benjamin Lawson**, *tenor*, is a soon to be graduate of SUNY Fredonia looking to pursue a career in arts administration and classical voice. Musical credits include baritone in Chelsea Opera's 2017 production of *Bending Toward the Light*, ensemble with the Fredonia Hillman Opera, and tenor with the Fredonia Chamber Choir. In addition to performing, Ben enjoys writing and producing his own music as well as possesses an avid fandom for all things Star Wars. Ben would like to thank Holy Trinity for their overwhelming support and providing him the opportunity to share wonderful music with the Buffalo community.



**Maria Parker**, *mezzo-soprano/alto*, is a full-time licensed clinical social worker and certified trauma therapist. She recently opened her own private practice and works with adults to help them work through and heal from a vast range of mental health concerns and stressors. She earned a Bachelors with honors from the University of Pittsburgh in both Psychology and Music in 2011 and her Masters in Social Work from the University of Buffalo in 2013. She started taking private voice lessons from Mr. Robert Vehar in 2004, continued her practice in college privately with Mr. Richard Teaster until 2011 and has since been studying voice with Dr. Margaret Kuhl.



Maria has performed as a professional soloist since 2008 in many concert works including Bach *Cantata* No. 4, 23, 79 and 182, Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Haydn's Mass No. 9 "*Paukenmesse*," Copland's *In the Beginning*, Telemann's *Magnificat*, and Cary Ratcliff's *Ode to Common Things*. Most recently she performed in Fredonia's Bach and Beyond Festival as the solo alto choir member and the second witch for Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. In January, she will be performing as the mezzo-soprano soloist for the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra in their production of Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Maria has performed with various choral groups and orchestras as a soloist including Ars Nova, Camerata di Sant'Antonio, Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus, Buffalo Chamber Players, Musica Sacra, Buffalo Master Chorale and the Lutheran Chorale of the Niagara Frontier. She has had the opportunity to tour internationally with multiple vocal groups since 2009 including performing in six different regions of China. She has been a member and soloist with the Vocális Chamber Choir since January 2012 and is a member and soloist with the Women of Vivaldi.



## MUSIC at HOLY TRINITY 2019 - 2020

Sunday	11/3/2019	6:30 PM	Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra
** Sunday	12/8/2019	7:00 PM	3rd Annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols with University at Buffalo Choirs Claudia Brown, conductor
** Friday	12/13/2019	6:00 PM	Congregational Dinner and Christmas Pageant
*** Tuesday	12/24/2019	9:45 PM 10:30 PM	Christmas Eve Pre-Service Music with Full Choir Christmas Eve Festival Service with Full Brass
Sunday	1/26/2020	4:00 PM	BNYC Concert
*** Sunday	2/23/2020	10:30 AM	Orchard Park Chorale David Curtis, conductor (Transfiguration Sunday)
** Friday	3/6/2020	7:30 PM	The Genevans from Geneva College, PA David Smith, conductor
** Sunday	3/15/2020	4:00 PM	Vocalis; James Burritt, conductor (w/ Amherst Chorale)
*** Sunday	3/29/2020	10:30 AM	Lent 5: Jake Runestad Sunday The Chancel Choir welcomes internationally celebrated composer Jake Runestad to Holy Trinity, featuring works with Chamber Orchestra
Easter Triduum:			
*** Thursday	4/9/2020	7:00 PM	Maundy Thursday Service with Full Choir
*** Friday	4/10/2020	7:00 PM	Good Friday Service with Full Choir
*** Sunday	4/12/2020	9:45 AM 10:30 AM	Easter Sunday Pre-Service with Full Choir Easter Sunday Festival Service with Full Brass
Sunday	5/17/2020	4:00 PM	BNYC Concert
** TBA	TBA	TBA	Chancel Choir Concert: "Byrd and Bach" Byrd's "Mass for 4 Voices" Bach's Motet "Jesu, meine Freude"
** Sunday	6/7/2020	10:30 AM	Bach: Cantata 176 (Trinity Sunday), with Chamber Orchestra
Sunday	6/7/2020	3:00 PM	BPO Chorus; Adam Luebke, conductor
***	Special music during Worship Service		
**	Music at Holy Trinity Sponsored concert/event		
	Other musical event happening at Holy Trinity		