



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE BACH SOCIETY OF SAINT LOUIS ANNOUNCES 83RD CONCERT SEASON

Performance highlights include the annual *Christmas Candlelight Concert* and *Bach's St. John Passion*

ST. LOUIS (August 18, 2023) – Today, **The Bach Society of Saint Louis (BSSL) Executive Director Melissa Payton** announced the performances for its 83rd season. Season highlights include the season opener, **Eternal Light** showcasing Howard Goodall's masterpiece *Eternal Light: A Requiem*; the annual **Christmas Candlelight Concert**, a St. Louis tradition since 1951 at 560 Music Center featuring award-winning soprano Josefien Stoppelenburg; **Bach's St. John Passion**, a moving concert at the First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood; and the season finale concert **The Heart of Bach, Choral Motets and Organ Chorales** which includes breathtaking chorales and captivating solos, interwoven with audience participation. Tickets for all performances are available online at bachsociety.org.

"Every season presents us with the opportunity to fulfill our mission of sharing the amazing and timeless music of Bach with our St. Louis audience and explore new and exciting works. I'm excited to begin this season with a beautiful requiem in English as well as Latin by the English film composer Howard Goodall," shared Music Director and Conductor A. Dennis Sparger.

The Bach Society opens the season with **Eternal Light** on **Sunday, October 22, 2023**, at the **First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood**. Led by Music Director and Conductor, A. Dennis Sparger featuring The Bach Society Chorus and Orchestra, *Eternal Light* will be an emotional journey like no other. Highlighting Howard Goodall's masterpiece *Eternal Light: A Requiem*, this concert promises to be an awe-inspiring experience. Alongside, BSSL will showcase choral favorites by renowned composers such as Ola Gjeilo, Jean Sibelius and Olaf Christenson. The concert will feature soprano Hannah De Priest, tenor Dan Frazure and baritone Tyler Duncan.

The 83rd season continues with the **Christmas Candlelight Concert** on **Saturday, December 9, 2023**, at 2 P.M. and 7 P.M. This treasured St. Louis tradition has delighted audiences since 1951. Guests are invited to come together with their loved ones, sing heartwarming carols and enjoy the enchanting ambiance of the Candlelight Processional. The holiday concert will showcase the Bach Society Chorus and Orchestra with award-winning soprano Josefien Stoppelenburg. A new

venue for this event, both concerts will take place at 560 Music Center on the campus of Washington University in St. Louis.

“Our Christmas concert includes lovely settings of familiar carols plus Handel’s Gloria for virtuoso soprano and strings, featuring the Dutch soprano Josefien Stoppelenburg,” said Music Director and Conductor A. Dennis Sparger.

On Sunday, March 10, 2024, The Bach Society will return to the stage to present **Bach's St. John Passion at First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood**. *Bach's St. John Passion* weaves the narrative of Christ's last days with an intricate tapestry of profound emotions, transcendent harmonies and soaring melodies. Led by Music Director and Conductor, A. Dennis Sparger, featuring The Bach Society Chorus and Orchestra, the concert features an international collection of Baroque soloists including tenor Steven Soph as the Evangelist, bass Stephen Morscheck singing the words of Jesus, soprano Emily Donato, countertenor Jay Carter, tenor Gene Stenger and baritone Elijah Blaisdell.

“We’re excited to celebrate the 300th Anniversary of the very first performance of Bach’s St. John Passion with a fresh, new presentation of our own with The Bach Society Chorus and Orchestra. We’ll conclude the season performing several of Bach’s motets at Peace Lutheran Church – a new venue for us – that offers beautiful acoustics for some of Bach’s most heartfelt pieces” shared Executive Director Melissa Payton.

The Heart of Bach, Choral Motets and Organ Chorales at Peace Lutheran Church on **Sunday, May 19, 2024**, will wrap up the season. This brilliant collection of sacred music has stood unwavering through the ages as they’ve enjoyed an uninterrupted performance history. The concert showcases Bach’s motets performed by the Bach Society Chorus and captivating organ solos, interwoven with audience participation and accompanied by cello and bass.



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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

Howard Goodall's Eternal Light

The Bach Society of Saint Louis Chorus and Orchestra

First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood

Sunday, October 22, 2023, 3 p.m.

Christmas Candlelight Concert

The Bach Society of Saint Louis Chorus and Orchestra

560 Music Center

Saturday, December 9, 2023, 2 p.m. & 7 p.m.

Bach's St. John Passion

The Bach Society of Saint Louis Chorus and Orchestra

First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood

Sunday, March 10, 2024, 3 p.m.

The Heart of Bach, Choral Motets and Organ Chorales

The Bach Society of Saint Louis Chorus

Peace Lutheran Church

Sunday, May 19, 2024, 3 p.m.

ABOUT BACH SOCIETY OF SAINT LOUIS.

The Bach Society of Saint Louis (BSSL) was founded in 1941 and is now in its 83rd season as St. Louis' oldest continuous choral society. BSSL is dedicated to performing [choral works](#) by Johann Sebastian Bach and other classical and contemporary composers. Under the direction of [Dr. A. Dennis Sparger](#), BSSL delivers a varied and exciting season to an ever more diverse public. The organization's mission is to provide stimulating and enriching musical and educational experiences for audiences and performers in the tradition of Johann Sebastian Bach. Each season, BSSL provides free concert tickets, education concerts, and masterclasses to area high school and college students. BSSL has a robust education program that offers free events and support to local teachers and students including the Young Artist Scholarship Program, Bach & Jazz, Finding Your Voice Program and more. Learn more at bachsociety.org.

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