



THROUGH TRUTH WE TRIUMPH – FROM MARTIN LUTHER TO J.S. BACH

Honoring the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Crescendo's first concert of its 2017-18 season celebrates the legacy of Martin Luther—his own revolutionary music and words in settings of German Renaissance and Baroque motets, choruses and chorales. All of the works performed are based on eight of Luther's most famous chorales and span a time period of 200 years. Included are works by Johann Sebastian Bach, Luther, Schutz, Telemann, Praetorius, Walther, and others.

The efforts of reformer Martin Luther sparked religious and political reform in Germany creating the Lutheran branch of Protestantism. So that congregants could understand and have an emotional connection to what they heard in church services, Luther translated the New Testament and the words of the religious service into German. Recognizing that music is a powerful element in faith and community, he not only translated and wrote entirely new lyrics for hymns, but also composed tunes that were inspired by both existing church hymns and folk melodies.

In the two centuries after the Reformation, many composers incorporated Luther's melodies into their works, culminating with those of Johann Sebastian Bach. Artistic Director Christine Gevert remarks that: "Bach was drawn to Luther's chorales because Luther was an extraordinarily gifted poet and an outstanding melody writer. For Bach, Luther's music reflected the connection between the human and the divine, between mankind and God's universe, all of which inspired Bach to displays of contrapuntal artifice and grandiose formal design. Luther and Bach both shared the view that music is a direct way to God. In Bach's words, 'Music is an agreeable harmony for the honor of God and the permissible delights of the soul.' In Luthers', 'Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world.'"

We hope audience members will enjoy this fascinating exploration of the development of chorale-based music between Luther's and Bach's time. The concert program will feature a variety of styles and textures—from simple chorale settings to elaborate polyphonic cantata choruses, and in between, Renaissance motets, duets and double-choir compositions. Works by Bach will include portions of his "Reformation Cantata" BWV 80 and Cantatas BWV 4, 38 and 126.

The Crescendo Chorus and Vocal Ensemble, sopranos Jennifer Tyo (Lakeville) and Sarah Fay (New Milford), and tenor Philip Anderson (New York) will be accompanied by Chris Belluscio (Boston), natural trumpet and cornetto, Emily Hale (Boston), baroque violin, Hideki Yamaya (New Haven), theorbo, Jane Hershey (Boston), viola da gamba and violone, and Michael Sponseller (Boston), organ. Founding Artistic Director Christine Gevert will conduct.

The performances will be 6pm, Saturday, October 28 at Saint James Place, 352 Main St., Great Barrington, MA and 4pm, Sunday, October 29 at Trinity Church, 484 Lime Rock Rd, Lakeville, CT Tickets are \$35 general seating, \$60 preferred seating and \$10 for under 18. Discounted passes for the series of the five season concerts are also available. For more information and to buy tickets, go to <http://worldclassmusic.org> or call 860-435-4866.