

BRUCE E. LUDWICK, JR., ORGAN

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2026, AT 4:00PM

«Toccata septima» from *Apparatus musico-organisticus* Georg Muffat
(1653–1704)

Sonata VI, Op. 65, No. 6 Felix Mendelssohn
(1809–1847)
I. Chorale—Andante sostenuto—Allegro molto
II. Fuga
III. Finale

Allein Gott in de Höh sei Ehr: Chorale, Contemporary Influences, and the Master
I. Chorale, BWV 260 (J.S. Bach, 1685-1750)
II. Chorale Partita, B.7, partial (J.G. Walther, 1684-1748)
III. Two Chorale Preludes, (G.P. Telemann, 1681-1767)
IV. Ornamented Chorale, French influence, BWV 662 (J.S. Bach)
V. Virtuoso Trio, Italian influence, BWV 664 (J.S. Bach)

Erbarm dich mein, o Herre Gott, BWV 721 J.S. Bach

Präludium und Fuge über den Namen «B-A-C-H», S.260 Franz Liszt
(1811–1886)

THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PAUL

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

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ABOUT THE MUSIC

A wonderful lecture at the 2026 American Guild of Organists National Conference by George Stauffer, and subsequent reading of his book on the organ works of J.S. Bach, helped me to theme this recital. The Anna Catharine Grace Memorial Pipe Organ, Noack Organ Company Opus 164, will be five years old this December 8th, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The instrument is often considered (rightfully) as “French”, as it focuses on 17th-20th Century French organ building practice. However, it was always conceived as an “eclectic” instrument: one that realizes almost all organ repertoire authoritatively, often authentically. After thinking about Dr. Stauffer’s work and considering the role of **Johann Sebastian Bach** (or, as my late teacher Gerre Hancock always called him, “the father of us all”) in organ music, I thought it would be useful to program a recital that showed: 1) some of Bach’s lesser-known influences (especially as many know North German composers were a chief early influence, while Vivaldi is probably the greatest influence), 2) Bach’s diverse expression, as he synthesized various styles and “tried them on”, and 3) the influence Bach had on later composers, either explicitly (as in the name, with Liszt’s composition) or more subtly (as in Mendelssohn’s). J.S. Bach was ultimately a Central German composer who had cosmopolitan influences even while not traveling much outside of his region. We first hear **Georg Muffat**’s longest work, **Toccata Septima**. This multi-sectional piece owes a great deal to Muffat’s heritage, which was extremely varied (Scottish-German-French) with an emphasis on the latter. After Bach’s initial exposure to Central and North German models, he became very familiar with French ones: till the end of his life, he observed the ornamental practice of French music as given by d’Anglebert in his table of ornaments. As mentioned above, this influence would eventually be eclipsed by the Italians, but Bach’s work is greatly inspired by French music. Muffat explicitly stated his wish that his “multicultural” music (as we would call it today) would build bridges between people. I have registered this piece is a mostly French manner, especially in the outer movements, as this instrument realizes these registrations particularly well. We hear an initial French overture, followed by variations of passagework. A chorale-style bridge gives way to a fugue on the Cromorne stop (ours is a copy of the stop by Clicquot in the Cathedral of Poitiers), and then the final quadruple (!) fugue is given in the style of a *grand jeu*, the reed chorus of the French Classical organ. It is thrilling! Notice the pedal figures very minimally in this piece, as Muffat wrote for instruments that usually had a rudimentary, limited pedalboard. **Felix Mendelssohn** arguably did more than any other composer to re-popularize the works of J.S. Bach after a period when they were considered gauche and old-fashioned. Mendelssohn had a stellar reputation all over Europe, but especially in his home country of Germany and England. The English publishing house Novello famously commissioned him to compose a set of “sonatas”; the finished products are masterpieces that have never left the organ repertoire since their composition, but they are not sonatas in a structural sense. **Sonata VI** is a set of variations on the German chorale *Vater unser im Himmelreich*, a paraphrase of The Lord’s Prayer. At the outset, the piece is really a chorale partita in the tradition of Bach (and before him Böhm and Pachelbel). The unadorned melody appears surrounded by passagework in two variations, while another plays the choral in the hands with a motorhythmic pedal part. There is a smooth transition into a toccata that shifts the melody between voices amidst arpeggios and chordal punctuation. A fugue based on the chorale follows, and the piece is concluded with a *pastorella* movement. It is beautiful, it’s a little unorganized, and it’s 100% Mendelssohn. J.S. Bach had particular affection for the chorale *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Her* (a chorale paraphrase of the *Gloria in excelsis*).

He sets it in myriad styles, including an ornamented, soprano-melody chorale that depends heavily on French influence, and a trio that is thoroughly Italianate and arguably his most beautiful composition (among many beautiful examples) in this form. The chorale is not explicitly present until the last 30 seconds of the piece, when it makes a surprise entry in the pedal to clear up any confusion. This piece is presented alongside Bach's harmonized chorale and works by Johann Gottfried Walther (Bach's cousin and contemporary) and G.P. Telemann (n.b. Pachelbel's settings are well-known, too). These are contemporary works, but of much lesser technical demands. Bach's **Erbarm dich** is presented as an example of something totally different: Bach trying out new modes of expression. In his early career, we hear a startling variety of musical forms and ideas: the young composer was clearly trying to find a way and did have many original ideas. Sometimes, as in this case, he struck gold. This is one of the simplest and most moving chorale settings he composed, a metrical translation of Psalm 51 (the *Miserere*, "Have mercy on me, O God"). It had such an influence that we hear Brahms writing penitential chorale settings many years later with similar figurations as an obvious homage. There are also more explicit references to Bach, such as, well, when you name your piece **Prelude & Fugue on the name of B-A-C-H!** **Franz Liszt's** showpiece is a very odd piece structurally when you consider its name refers to a specific form. It's Liszt, so virtuosity is to the forefront, but it is also an inspired piece of great emotion. Clearly inspired by earlier composers like Mendelssohn, it would set a model for Reger, Karg-Elert, and many other Germanic composers, but is a bit cleaner texturally. The name itself comes from the spelling of the musical notes B-A-C-H ("b" is b-flat in German nomenclature, while "h" is b-natural). As you'd expect, that chromatic theme is pervasive. It's a bit easier to listen to than describe this tour-de-force! While all of these pieces were written for thoroughly German instruments (the earlier ones identical to what J.S. Bach played; Mendelssohn's very similar, albeit with a bit more color; Liszt's with the logical extension of Bach's preference for many color stops), they adapt easily to the colorful resources of the Anna Catharine Grace Memorial Pipe Organ. Please enjoy this recital and pray for the many donors of this wonderful instrument in a space designed for this music—all for the Glory of God!

—Notes by the recitalist

Bruce E. Ludwick, Jr. is Director of Music and Organist at the Cathedral of Saint Paul, a position he has held since 2013. He also serves as musician for diocesan liturgies for the Catholic Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama. Previously, he served in a similar position at St. Gabriel the Archangel Church in St. Louis, Missouri, Ludwick has served Roman Catholic, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalian, and Church of the Brethren congregations in Missouri, Texas, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania, and has concertized in these states as well. Nationally, he has served as organ and choral faculty or organist for many conventions and workshops. A native West Virginian, Ludwick earned the M.Mus in Organ Performance with Emphasis in Sacred Music at the University of Texas at Austin where he studied with the late Gerre Hancock, Organist and Master of the Choristers *Emeritus*, St. Thomas Church, 5th Ave. He earned the B.Mus in Organ Performance and Music Education from West Virginia University as a student of William Haller. He benefited from long-term organ study with the late David Craighead and Alan Lewis; his conducting study was with Kathleen Shannon. Bruce lives in Birmingham with his wife, Erin, and sons Joseph, Peter, Thomas, and Maximilian.

THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT PAUL, BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA
The Anna Catharine Grace Memorial Pipe Organ
 Noack Organ Company Opus 164

II - GREAT

Double Diapason	16'
Open Diapason	8'
Viola	8'
Harmonic Flute	8'
Chimney Flute	8'
Principal	4'
Open Flute	4'
Twelfth	2 ² / ₃ '
Fifteenth	2'
Seventeenth	1 ³ / ₅ '
Fourniture II	1 ¹ / ₃ '
Mixture IV	1'
Cornet III	2 ² / ₃ '
Trumpet	8'
Tremolo	

I - CHOIR

Quintaton	16'
Diapason	8'
Gedackt	8'
Viola	8'
Unda Maris	8'
Principal	4'
Chimney Flute	4'
Nasard	2 ² / ₃ '
Fifteenth	2'
Nachthorn	2'
Tierce	1 ³ / ₅ '
Larigot	1 ¹ / ₃ '
Mixture III-IV	1'
Clarinet	16'
Cornopean	8'
Cromorne	8'
Chamade (TC)	8'
Tremolo	

III - SWELL

Bourdon	16'
Diapason	8'
Harmonic Flute	8'
Gamba	8'
Celeste	8'
Stopped Diapason	8'
Prestant	4'
Traverse Flute	4'
Octavin	2'
Mixture IV	2'
Bassoon	16'
Harmonic Trumpet	8'
Oboe	8'
Vox Humana	8'
Harmonic Clarion	4'
Tremolo	

PEDAL

Subbass	32'
Contrabass	16'
Subbass (ext.)	16'
Bourdon (from SW)	16'
Open Bass	8'
Stopped Flute	8'
Octave	4'
Contre Bassoon	32'
Bombarde	16'
Trombone (ext.)	16'
Bassoon (from SW)	16'
Trumpet (ext.)	8'
Clarion	4'