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The Lexington Bach Choir takes this opportunity to thank Bank of the Bluegrass for making our concert debut in the 2nd Annual Bach Marathon possible. With their generous support we have been able to secure professional orchestra players to present one of the first cantatas ever written by Johann Sebastian Bach.

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INTRODUCING



## LEXINGTON BACH CHOIR

SOLI DEO GLORIA

Richard Sowers, Artistic Director



## ABOUT US

**I**n honor of the incomparable musical gifts and spiritual insight of Johann Sebastian Bach, the mission of the Lexington Bach Choir is to perform with artistic excellence distinguished choral masterworks for people who seek to dignify the human spirit.

I began studying and singing Bach's music at a young age under the inspiring tutelage of such notable teachers, conductors, and scholars as Donald Hustad, Fletcher Smith, Melvin Dickinson, Gerhard Herz, Alan Harler, and Julius Herford. These distinguished mentors convinced me that learning Bach's music is never easy, performing it will always be one of the greatest challenges of my career, and presenting it to the general public will require a tireless commitment to artistic and musical integrity.

In deference to this, and because of the highest respect I hold for these artist-mentors, I am forming the Lexington Bach Choir with a tireless commitment to artistic and musical integrity. Except for the extraordinary Louisville Bach Society, there is no other such Bach choir in Kentucky. I continue to audition and recruit gifted singers from our region who possess the musical skill and artistic aptitude to perform Bach's music with distinction. Our fledgling company of 12 singers represents about one-half of the total number of singers we will eventually seek.

This region is home to many fine colleges and universities that graduate exceptional voice majors every year. Many of these singers are members of The Lexington Singers, the Lexington Chamber Chorale, Musick's Company, and other such premier choirs. Upon moving here in 2003, I was surprised to learn that Lexington did not have a Bach choir. In my first year as Dean of the American Guild of Organists, I helped organize the first Bach Marathon with Cliff Cason at Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church. The marathon was such a success that we decided to make it an annual event. Organizing a Bach choir seemed a natural extension of the enthusiasm surrounding the Bach Marathon. And now, the Lexington Bach Choir is poised to fill this essential musical niche in our community.

Many of our singers have studied voice in the surrounding universities under some of the finest voice teachers in the state. Our singers have spent many years perfecting their craft. We strive to exemplify vocal beauty, artistry, and musical refinement. We meticulously prepare and present the finest music ever conceived by humankind. We want our performances to reveal the abstract meanings of a complex and spiritually compelling musical language as only J.S. Bach and composers like him have created. Most importantly, as Bach intended and recorded in his cantatas, we sing to the glory of God alone:

*Soli Deo Gloria*

Richard Sowers  
artistic director and founder

## ARTISTIC STAFF



**RICHARD SOWERS** is the founder and artistic director of the Lexington Bach Choir. He currently serves as Director of Music at Southern Hills United Methodist Church in Lexington, Kentucky, and is Dean of the Lexington Chapter of The American Guild of Organists. He has served Abington Presbyterian Church near Philadelphia where he was also music director and conductor of the Abington Symphony Orchestra and Oratorio Chorus. For six years he served as choirmaster for Christ Episcopal Church in Bowling Green, KY, and for more than ten years as Director of Choral Activities and Assistant Professor of Music at Lindsey Wilson College. Sowers is the former music director and conductor of The Louisville Chorus, and founder and music director of the Columbia Choral Society and Orchestra. Early in his career he sang in 17 productions with the Kentucky Opera Association and was an apprentice under its founder, artistic director and conductor Moritz von Bomhard. A fellowship grant recipient from the National Opera Institute in Washington, D.C. Sowers worked as a marketing director, associate director, and artistic director for opera companies in Syracuse, Rochester, Indianapolis, Connecticut, Orlando, and Memphis. He has been a soloist with the Louisville Bach Society, won first place in the Kentucky district Metropolitan Opera Auditions, and for four seasons sang the title role in "The Stephen Foster Story" in Bardstown, Kentucky and Tokyo, Japan. He holds the Master of Music from the University of Louisville School of Music, attended Indiana University Music School as an Associate Voice Instructor, and did his doctoral studies in conducting at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music as a Graduate Teaching Assistant. Voice teachers and coaches have included Fletcher Smith, Walter Cassel, Eileen Farrell, John Alexander, Gary Kendall, Dalton Baldwin, Rose Bampton, and John Wustman. Artistic mentors include Moritz Bomhard, Melvin Dickinson, Gerhard Herz, Alan Harlar, Julius Herford, Anton Coppola, Elmer Thomas, Earl Rivers, and Teri Murai. He resides in Lexington with his wife Marla, a public school music teacher, and their sons William and Andrew.



**JOHN LINKER** is the Associate Artistic Director of the Lexington Bach Choir. He serves as Organist-Choirmaster of the Church of the Good Shepherd (Episcopal) in Lexington, KY. He leads a vibrant choir program of professional and volunteer singers. A native of Princeton, Illinois, John received a Bachelor of Music degree from Northern Illinois University (DeKalb) in 1997 where he studied organ with Robert Reeves and Richard Hoskins, and a Master of Music degree from the Chicago Musical College of Roosevelt University in 2003, an organ and harpsichord student of David Schrader. Linker is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music where he is an organ student of Roberta Gary. At CCM Linker has served as staff accompanist for the University Men's Chorus, and has performed with the CCM Chorale, Chamber Singers, and as organ soloist with the CCM Philharmonic. Linker was the first place winner in the annual Strader Organ Competition at CCM in 2004. Linker is also the former Dean of the Lexington AGO, and serves as Registrar and Associate Editor of the AGO newsletter. John lives in a small 80-year old bungalow home on a quiet street with his piano, harpsichord, and two, overweight cats, Nigel and Pierre.

# SINGERS



**SHAUNTINA PHILLIPS**, alto, is a Visiting Professor of Voice at Centre College in Danville, KY. She holds a BM degree in applied voice from the University of Kentucky and the MM from University of Tennessee. She studied voice with Phyllis Jenness and Everett McCorvey, and is currently studying with Daniel Weeks at the University of Louisville. Ms. Phillips is also a flutist, choral conductor, and enjoys ballroom dancing in her spare time

**MARLA SOWERS**, soprano, is a public school music teacher at James Lane Allen Elementary in Lexington. A graduate of Morehead State University studying under James Ross Beane (former music director of The Lexington Singers), Marla earned an MM in applied voice. She has sung the role of Jeannie in the Stephen Foster Story, and performed with Kentucky Opera, Syracuse Opera, and Orlando Opera companies, and as soloist with the Louisville Chorus and Columbia Choral Society. Marla is also the director of the children's Chapel Choir at Southern Hills UMC.



**MEG STOHLMAN**, soprano, is a first year graduate student in voice performance at the University of Kentucky. A native of Santa Rosa, California, Meg graduated from the Air Force Academy and served on active duty in the Air Force for 5 years in Arizona, Korea, and Germany. She separated from the military in 2004 to pursue a second bachelor's degree in Music Education, which she completed in 2006 at Sonoma State University, CA. Meg has sung in numerous ensembles around the world.



**ADRIENNE SCHRAM**, soprano, is a senior vocal performance major at University of Kentucky studying under Dr. Noemi Lugo. She has participated in many UK opera productions such as Suor Angelica, Madame Butterfly, La Traviata and sang The Queen of the Night in UK's production of The Magic Flute by Mozart. She spent a month in Rome, Italy with Operafestival di Roma and performed the operas The Marriage of Figaro and Suor Angelica.

**JOHN LINKER**, tenor, is the Associate Artistic Director of LBC. In addition to singing in the tenor section, John serves as accompanist for sectional rehearsals. He is the organist-choirmaster at Church of the Good Shepherd (Episcopal) where he leads a vibrant choir program of professional and volunteer singers. He is former Dean of the American Guild of Organists, and currently serves on the Executive Committee as Registrar and Associate Editor of the AGO newsletter.



**SUSAN CAREY**, alto, is a secretary at Shriner's Hospital for Children. Since moving to Lexington in 1975, Susan has played the organ and piano for churches, elementary, high school and university students for KMEA events, musicals, concerts and recitals extensively. She studied voice at the University of Michigan, Anderson University, and Transylvania University and continued singing as a member of the Lexington Singers and Georgetown Choral Society. Susan also sings with Musick's Company.



**DIANE TIMMONS**, alto, is a well-known Lexington Baroque singer, having sung in choirs as a soloist and section leader for many years. She and husband John Rose perform regularly in the band SPACECRAFT. She also plays dumbek, flutes and keyboards for the American Tribal Style belly dance troupe "Rakadu Gypsy," and folk music with Carla Gover of Zoe Speaks. When Diane isn't performing, she is raising her two children, Claire and Dylan, tending a vegetable garden, and knitting fanciful hats.

**OWEN SAMMONS**, bass, is an applied voice major in his junior year at University of Kentucky studying with Everett McCorvey. He sings with the University of Kentucky Chorale, and has been studying voice privately for over 4 years. Owen is also a pianist and organist, and has choral and handbell conducting experience.



**JOHN STEGNER**, bass, was a choral music educator for 34 years in Montgomery, Rowan, and Fayette County schools. His choirs ranked "Best in Class" at national and international choral festivals, and received "Distinguished" ratings at KMEA region and state. In demand as clinician and adjudicator, he directed all-district and honor choirs nationally and internationally. Director of Music at Broadway Christian Church, John oversees the Adult Worship Choir, Men's and Women's Ensembles, Teen Choir. He and wife Debbie reside in Clark County with their four children.



**TOM DRURY**, tenor, studied applied voice at the University of Kentucky under Phyllis Jenness and Everett McCorvey. He has performed regularly in choruses throughout Lexington including New Voices, Anglicantors, and as section leader at the Church of the Good Shepherd. Following high school, Tom sang with the Pleasant Hill Singers at Shaker-town. He is employed with the United States Postal Service and is pursuing a career in civil service.

**ZACH ULLERY**, bass, is a graduate of the University of Kentucky (summa cum laude) with a BME in voice and organ. He sang in the Men's Choir, Choristers, Chorale, and was active in the ACDA student chapter as president and vice-president. He is Assistant Organist at Church of the Good Shepherd-Lexington where he accompanies and directs two adult choirs, a boy's and girl's choir, children's choir, and Orff ensemble. He is a 2000 graduate of Mason County High School in Maysville, KY where he was valedictorian.



**ELIZABETH WOLFE**, rehearsal accompanist, is Visiting Piano Professor at Centre College and Asbury College. A graduate of the University of Louisville School of Music with an MM in applied piano where she studied with Lee Luvisi. Elizabeth is the organist-choirmaster at St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Versailles. She has previously served as organist for Southern Hills UMC, St. John's Episcopal in Versailles, Trinity Episcopal and Our Savior Lutheran in Danville.

Elizabeth and her husband Richard live in Lawrenceburg where they are raising their three children.

## TRANSLATIONS

### Cantata BWV 131

*"Out of the Darkness I Cry to Thee, O Lord"*  
*"Aus der Tiefen rufe ich, O Herr, zu dir"*

Composed in Mühlhausen in 1707 as a memorial service for a fire on May 30.  
Text based on Psalm 130 and texts of 2 verses of the chorale *canti firmi*  
from a hymn by Bartholomäus Ringwaldt, 1588.

1. CHORUS: Out of the darkness I cried out, Lord, to Thee. Lord, O harken to my calling; incline thine ear unto my voice and hear my supplication.

2. ARIOSO: *Bass and Soprano*

*Bass:* If thou, Lord, do mark our iniquities, our failings, who then can face Thee?

*Soprano:* Have pity on my heart's distress, and take from me this burden; for of thy Cross and bitterness, this is the precious guerdon.

*Bass:* For with you there is forgiveness, that we may fear Thee.

*Soprano:* That I may not in deep despair, engulfed by sins too base to bear, be evermore confounded.

3. CHORUS: I wait for the Lord, yes, my soul is waiting, I am hoping in his word.

4. ARIA-DUET

*Soprano:* Here my soul is waiting for the Lord.

*Alto:* A miserable sinner am I, what grievous sin besets me; my evil deeds I testify, with which my conscience frets me; so by thy blood I fervent pray, all my faults be washed away, as did David and Manassah.

5. CHORUS: Israel, hope ye in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy and full redemption with him, from all of his iniquities and transgressions.

### Motet BWV 225

*"Singet dem Herrn ein Neues Lied"*  
*"Sing to the Lord a new Song"*

Composed in 1726-27 for the New Year or  
the Birthday of the Elector of Saxony

1. Sing to the Lord a new song, let the congregation of believers praise Him. Israel rejoices in Him that made him. The children of Zion are joyful under their King. Let them praise his name in the dance; let them play to Him on the timbrel and harp.

—Psalm 149, V. 1-3

2. CHORALE: Choir 1 — As a father is merciful to his young infants, so is the Lord to us all, as long as we fear Him purely like a child. He knows our frailty, knows we are but dust, like the grass and flower and leaf under the rake.

ARIA: Choir 2 — God, continue to care for us, for without You all our affairs come to nothing. Be our shield and light, and if our hope does not deceive us. You shall continue to be so.

3. Praise the Lord for his acts. Praise Him in his great might.

—Psalm 150, V. 2

## HELP US GROW

**W**e are looking for a few good men and women to serve on our Board of Directors. We need people who may have built their own successful business, who know the myriad challenges of initiating a "start up" company, and who have the personal resources to help us meet our objectives.

We need "can do" people who are experienced in fund-raising, marketing, publicity, advertising, legal, or accounting, and can provide such services through their company or network of business associates. We need incisive individuals who are tenacious, creative, innovative, original thinkers, influential, problem-solvers, and humble leaders.

If you are one of these people, and believe in our mission, we need you on our Board of Directors. Please contact me at (859) 321-5622. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss how, together, we can move the Lexington Bach Choir forward. —Richard Sowers

## AUDITIONS

### THE CHOIR

Lexington Bach Choir is an auditioned choir of classically trained singers. Our goal is to recruit 24-28 such singers.

### COMMITMENT

LBC singers are committed to: a) attend all rehearsals regularly and punctually, b) prepare the music in advance of each rehearsal, c) perform in scheduled concerts and command performances throughout the year.

### REHEARSALS

Rehearsals are held each Tuesday evening from 7 PM to 9 PM at Southern Hills United Methodist Church.

### ATTRIBUTES

Candidates should be: a) classically trained singers, adept in art song, lieder, cantata, or oratorio, b) excellent music readers, c) experienced in advanced choral techniques

### AUDITIONS

Auditions are scheduled by appointment. Candidates shall sing two contrasting solo pieces representing art song, German lieder, or an aria from a cantata or oratorio. One piece shall be slow and sustained, the other piece should have extensive melisma. One piece should be in English, the other German. An accompanist will be provided.

### TO SCHEDULE AN AUDITION

*Simply contact:*

Richard Sowers, *Artistic Director*  
ph: 859-321-5622  
e-mail: [rsowers@insightbb.com](mailto:rsowers@insightbb.com)