Johann Sebastian Bach and the Lutheran Understanding of Music
by Robin A. Leaver

Johann Sebastian Bach was as much a musical theologian as a theological musician. Although there has been some resistance in musicological circles to the suggestion that there are distinctive theological dimensions to Bach’s music, the connection between theology and music has a long history in Lutheran tradition.  

There are certainly difficulties in speaking about music in theological terms that are not restricted to musicians and musicologists, who tend to regard theology as an extra-musical dimension that has little or nothing to do with the essence of music itself. Pastors and theologians have their own difficulties, such as their propensity to regard music as an optional extra to worship that, while it might have certain propaganda possibilities, lacks theological substance. But neither point of view represents the essential nature of pre-nineteenth-century Lutheran theology and practice, before they were diluted by the twin forces of Pietism and the Enlightenment. Nor do such views represent either Luther’s theology of music or his musical understanding of theology.

Luther’s Understanding of Music and Theology

Throughout Luther’s many and varied writings there are numerous statements regarding the theological nature of music, and there are a good many studies in which they are gathered together and discussed, such as those by Oscar Söhngen, Walter Buszin, Carl Schalk,  to name but a few. Some recent writers, such as Karl Honemeyer, Joyce Irwin and Matthias Silesius Viertel, have argued that such interpretations of Luther are suspect. Honemeyer and Irwin have suggested that since Luther’s statements on music form but a small proportion of his total literary output, the construction put upon them by Söhngen and others distorts their true
significance. But this deconstructionist viewpoint has not received widespread endorsement and the scholarly consensus continues to reiterate the traditional view that Luther’s references and allusions to music, and their implications, are more significant than these recent critics have suggested. It must be conceded, however, that not all Luther’s references to music are positive. But when the context of each of these statements is investigated it usually reveals that the criticism is not of music *per se* but of its use, or rather abuse, such as in the unreformed Mass, which for Luther was a theological issue. Thus to suggest that Luther’s positive statements with regard to music, and his theological references to music, are minimal and peripheral in his theological writings is to run counter to the evidence. However, notwithstanding Söhngen’s important contribution, there is as yet no fully comprehensive study of Luther’s theology of music, nor of how it was perceived and understood in subsequent generations. But the outlines of this tradition, together with some of its detail, need to be explored in order to understand the context within which Bach developed his theological approach to musical composition.

Many of Luther’s statements about music can be found in the *Tischreden*, the Table-Talk, a collection of verbatim reports of the Reformer’s conversations at table and elsewhere, recorded by various students and colleagues, mostly during the last twenty years of his life. The whole collection was eventually edited and published by Johann Aurifaber in 1566. It is a large folio volume of approaching 1,300 pages and structured according to basic Lutheran dogmatic theology under 82 loci, such as “The Word of God or Holy Scripture,” “Creation,” “The Trinity,” “Law and Gospel,” and so forth. It is significant indeed to find that the 69th locus is “Von der Musica,” and under this heading one finds such striking statements concerning music as the following:

I am not satisfied (says D.M.L.) with him who despises music, as all fanatics do; for music is an endowment and gift of God, not a human gift. It also drives away the devil and makes people cheerful; one forgets all anger, unchasteness, pride, and other vices. I place music next to theology and give it the highest praise. And we see how David and all saints put their pious thoughts into verse, rhyme, and song [Gesang]...
But Luther's statements about music are not confined to the *locus* on music in the *Tischreden* but are found scattered throughout the volume under various loci, therefore demonstrating that for Luther the closeness of music to theology was not just a clever thing to say but was essential to his theological methodology. For him music provided a hermeneutic by which fundamental theology was to be expounded. Thus, under the *locus* "Law and Gospel," on the same page of Aurifaber's edition of the *Tischreden,* there are two significant passages in which Luther uses music to expound the distinction between law and gospel, which is of fundamental importance to both Luther's and Lutheran theology. In the first he likens the gospel to music in performance and the law to musical notation on the page:

> The Gospel is the same as the bfa bmi as it is performed [that is, *musica ficta,* the unwritten adjustments in pitch made by musicians in performance], the other pitches [Claves, that is, written pitches] are the Law. And the same as the Law obeys the Gospel so must the written pitches submit to the bfa bmi.  

This reveals that Luther had a sophisticated understanding of the nature of music: the law of music, as enshrined in written notation on the page, must be tempered by grace in performance by the singers and players as they make the music live. Luther recognizes that the difference between written notation and its actual performance is exactly analogous to the theological differentiation between law and gospel.

The second passage is similar:

> What is Law does not make progress, but what is Gospel does [i.e., the Law is static but the Gospel is dynamic, or, the Law is negative and the Gospel positive]. God has preached the Gospel through music, too, as may be seen in the songs of Josquin, all of whose compositions flow freely, gently, and cheerfully, are not forced or cramped by rules, and are like the song of the finch.

The reason that Luther aligns music with theology is that it has the primary function of proclaiming the gospel, or, to use the later Latin formula, music is the *viva voce evangellii,* the living voice of the Gospel. From Luther's theological understanding of music various strands of theory and practice developed within the Lutheran church. Two had far-reaching implications: one concerned
pedagogics in church and school; and the other homiletics of pulpit and music gallery.

Music and Theology in Church and School

The close connection between music and theology in Luther's thought had practical implications for education in the emerging Lutheran church: if music is this important then it should be part of the basic curriculum in parish schools. Again in the Tischreden the following is found:

Music I have always loved. He who knows music has a good nature. Necessity demands that music be kept in the schools. A schoolmaster must know how to sing; otherwise I do not look at him. And before a youth is ordained into the ministry, he should practice music in school.¹³

This is a truly remarkable statement: a teacher must be able to sing, and seminarians must have practical experience of music in the school system before they can be ordained. It was a maxim that had practical consequences for Lutheran churches and schools for at least the next two centuries. It became customary for pastors and teachers to study music as well as theology, and for church musicians to study theology along with music.¹⁴ Luther and his colleagues modified the choral tradition of the medieval school system and insisted that the teaching of music in these reformed institutions should have a primary importance, since through them the music of the church was both promoted and undergirded.¹⁵

One such institution was the St. Thomas School in Leipzig which detailed the content and extent of the teaching and practice of music in its published regulations of 1634, 1723 and 1733.¹⁶

Many Lutheran teachers were also church musicians, such as the Krebs family, father and three sons, who all studied with Bach. The father, Johann Tobias Krebs, the elder, studied organ with Bach in Weimar between 1714 and 1717 before becoming church organist and school rector (headmaster) in Büttstädt. All of his three sons were successively taught by Bach in Leipzig: the eldest son, Johann Ludwig—one of the most gifted of all Bach’s students—went on to
study philosophy at Leipzig university before becoming organist in Zwickau in 1737, then organist in Altenburg from 1756; the youngest son, Johann Carl, succeeded his father as rector of the school in Büttstädt, where his father was also town organist, and became assistant organist when his father's eyesight began to fail; the middle son, Johann Tobias, the younger, also one of Bach's organ students, studied theology at Leipzig university before becoming conrector first in Chemnitz (1746), then in Grimma (1751), where he became rector of the school in 1763. This middle son was not only an organist and educator, like his father and brothers, but also a theologian, publishing books of criticism and interpretation of the language and content of the New Testament, with special reference to the writings of Josephus and early Judeo-Christian connections.

This close association between music and theology, initiated by Luther, manifested itself in Lutheran tradition by pastors and theologians who were also competent musicians. Numerous examples could be given; the following are representative. Nikolaus Seinecker (1530-1592), professor of theology and pastor of the Thomaskirche, Leipzig, one of the primary authors of the Formula of Concord (1577), was first a church organist (at the age of 14) before ordination, and was the composer of many hymns, both melodies as well as texts. Lucas Oslander (1534-1604), church historian, biblical commentator, and court preacher in Stuttgart, also produced four-part settings of the basic corpus of Lutheran chorales, Fünffzig Geistliche Lieder und Psalmen [Fifty Spiritual Songs and Psalms], published in Nuremberg in 1586, which created the simple note-against-note, so-called "cantional," style that came into almost universal use thereafter. Nikolaus Stenger (1609-1680), who was first cantor, later preacher, and ultimately professor of theology in Erfurt, produced a music textbook, edited the Erfurt hymnal, and published collections of his sermons. The noted hymn-writer, Johannes Olearius (1611-1684), senior court preacher and superintendent in Weissenfels, in addition to published theological works in Latin and German, including an extensive Bible commentary, also wrote a modest treatise on singing. "The Father of American Lutheranism," Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711-1787), was an accomplished organist as well as a pastor (ordained in Leipzig in 1739), who not only taught Luther's
Small Catechism to children in Pennsylvania in the early 1740s, but also taught them how to sing.23

On the other hand, Lutheran cantors were not only church musicians, they were also teachers in the schools attached to the churches they served. Further, their teaching responsibilities were not confined to music matters alone. In most Latin schools the cantor and the other teachers were expected to know in detail the content of the basic theological textbook used in such schools: Leonard Hutter’s Compendium Locorum Theologicorum Ex Scripturis sacris, & libro Concordiae . . . Facultate Theologica Lipsiensis & Wittenbergensi approbatum [Compendium of Theological Loci drawn from Sacred Scripture and the Book of Concord . . . Approved by the Theological Faculties of Leipzig and Wittenberg], originally published in Wittenberg in 1610.24 Hutter’s compendium was an epitome of, and an introduction to, Lutheran confessional theology (with a particular stress on the Augsburg Confession, its Apology, and the Catechisms), and although usually taught by the school rector and conrector, the cantor was expected to be familiar with its catechetical questions and answers, because he was required to teach the substance of Luther’s Small Catechism as part of his duties. For example, in the regulations of the Thomasschule in Leipzig published in 1634 it was specifically stated that the cantor’s responsibilities included the teaching of Luther’s Small Catechism on Saturday mornings,25 a duty that was still a requirement when Bach became the Thomascantor in Leipzig in 1723. Further, it was also the responsibility of the cantor to provide music for the regular Sunday vespers services at which it was customary to include the Catechismus-Examen, expositions of one or other parts of the Small Catechism.26 Generations of Lutheran composers thus provided catechism-music that accompanied this confessional teaching: among the earliest was Catechesis numeris musicis inclusa (Nuremberg, 1559), a collection of mostly freely-composed three-part vocal settings of the main parts of the catechism in Latin, composed by Mattheus Le Maistre, Saxon electoral Kapellmeister in Dresden;27 and among the most profound are organ chorale preludes on Luther’s catechism hymns28 found in Bach’s Clavierübung III of 1739, for which Bach composed two settings of each chorale melody, one
long and one short, corresponding to Luther's two catechisms. But there are many other examples of such catechism music, perhaps the most intriguing being the catechism *quodlibet*, that is, a single vocal work in which five or six melodies of catechism hymns are heard in counterpoint to each other, the ingenuity of the musical form demonstrating the theological unity of the teaching of the catechism. Here the musical form was used to express a theological reality that could not be as effectively expressed by words alone.

The fact that Lutheran school teachers and cantors were intimately involved with fundamental theology in their day-to-day work meant that before they were confirmed in appointments they had to undergo a *viva voce* theological examination, and also, like the clergy, had to give written assent to doctrine as defined and expounded in the *Book of Concord*, the anthology of Lutheran confessional writings. Thus when the city council had finally decided that Johann Sebastian Bach should be their next cantor in Leipzig, he was first examined by Johann Schmid, professor of theology in the university, on or before 8 May 1723, on which date the professor reported to the Leipzig Consistory that the cantor-elect "Mr. Jo. Sebastian Bach replies to the questions propounded by me in such wise that I consider that the said person may be admitted to the post of cantor in the St. Thomas School." This examination covered basic biblical and theological knowledge, quite detailed and widely compassed, and certainly no formality. Almost exactly a year before, Conrad Küffner, the cantor-elect of Zwickau, went through a similar examination process. There was nothing wrong with his musical abilities, indeed, his audition, the direction of concerted music on Cantate (Fourth Sunday after Easter, 3 May 1722), was accorded "great applause." But the Leipzig Consistory could not confirm Küffner as the new cantor in Zwickau because Dr. Schmid—the same professor who examined Bach a year later—reported that the candidate could not answer satisfactorily basic biblical and elementary theoretical questions. Küffner therefore would not be appointed cantor in Zwickau because, in addition to teaching and directing music in church, the position included the teaching of basic theology in the school, a task for which he was clearly ill-equipped. There was plainly no such problem with Bach, but he
did have to undergo a second examination a few days after the first. This time he was examined by Salomon Deyling, superintendent (senior pastor) and professor of theology in Leipzig, who had also countersigned Schmid’s certificate of examination a few days earlier. In a letter to the Consistory, dated 13 May 1723, Deyling states that Bach had subscribed to the *Formula of Concord*, and therefore to the theological position of the *Book of Concord* as a whole. The actual document that Bach signed on 13 May 1723 reveals that he subscribed to the *Formula of Concord* twice: once positively, endorsing Lutheran doctrines, and once negatively, denying non-Lutheran beliefs, which is how the *Formula of Concord* was written. The suggestion that this confessional subscription was of minimal significance runs counter to the climate of the time and, in fact, intensifies rather than diminishes Bach’s connection with Lutheran Orthodoxy. For Orthodox Lutherans confessional subscription was almost an article of faith, in contrast to the Pietists, who were not only critical of the church’s confessionalism but also argued against the necessity of such subscription. Thus at the beginning of his cantorate, Bach was not simply required to be a skillful musician but an able church musician with a specific level of competence in Lutheran confessional theology. The primary reason for this, as stated above, was that as cantor he was responsible for teaching basic theology in the St. Thomas School as well as directing the music of the principal churches of the city.

That there was a confessional aspect to the role of music in worship is exemplified in the change in the title of later editions of an influential *Gesangbuch* published in Frankfurt am Main that appeared a few years after the publication of the *Book of Concord*. The first edition was issued with the title: *Kirchen Gesäng Aus dem Wittenberischen und allen andern den besten Gesangbüchern . . . gesamlet* [Church Songs assembled from the Wittenberg and other best hymnals . . .] (Frankfurt: Wolff, 1569). But in later editions issued from 1584 the basic title was expanded to become *Kirchen Gesäng So bey der predigt deß Göttlichen Worts und außspendung der H. Sacrament in den Kirchen Augspurgischer Confession, gebräucht werden, Aus dem Wittenberischen und andern den besten Gesangbüchern gesamlet* [Church Songs as used in the churches of the Augsburg Confession
with the preaching of the divine Word and the distribution of the holy Sacrament, assembled from the Wittenberg and other best hymnals . . .]. The addition is significant and echoes Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession: "The church is the assembly of saints in which the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly." Singing was therefore closely associated with these two primary marks of the church, and confessional theology was seen to have important musical implications.

Music and Theology in Homiletic Partnership

If theology and music are interconnected, if musicians share in the teaching of theology, and if clergy are expected to have some musical background, then it is inevitable that there should be some overlap in the ministerial vocation of both musicians and clergy. This vocational interconnection was worked out in a variety of ways in Lutheran tradition. For example, it was underscored by the insistence that musicians should make the same subscription to the Lutheran Confessions as the clergy were required to do (see above), and also in the way that music was accorded homiletic functions akin to preaching.

Luther frequently made the link between music and preaching; the following constitute a representative sampling. In his exposition of Psalm 98, in his first series of lectures on the Psalms given between 1512 and 1515, he made the following comment: "To make music with hammered trumpets is to preach [predicare] the mystery of the kingdom of heaven and exhort to spiritual good things. To make music with the voice of the bronze horn is to preach [predicare] and to reprove our sins and evil." In his treatise of the Last Words of David (1543) he wrote:

When David uses the word sweet he is not thinking only of the sweetness and charm of the Psalms from a grammatical and musical point of view, of artistic and euphonious words, of melodious song and notes, of beautiful text and beautiful tune; but he is referring much more to the theology they contain, to the spiritual meaning . . . The Book of Psalms is a sweet and delightful song because it sings and proclaims [predigt] the Messiah even when a person does not sing
the notes but merely recites and pronounces the words. And yet the music, or the notes, which are a wonderful creation and gift of God, help materially in this, especially when the people sing along and reverently participate.”

In the *Tischreden* there are a number of such instances, including: “God has preached [praedicavit/ geprediget] the Gospel through music”; and “Music is God’s greatest gift. It has often so stimulated me and stirred me that I felt the desire to preach [predigen].” In his preface to Georg Rhau’s *Symphoniae iucundae* of 1538 he wrote:

It was not without reason that the fathers and prophets wanted nothing else to be associated as closely with the Word of God as music. Therefore we have many hymns and Psalms where message [sermo] and music [vox] join to move the listener’s soul . . . The gift of language combined with the gift of music was only given to man to let him know that he should praise God by proclaiming through music [sonora praedicatione] and by providing sweet melodies with words.

Perhaps Luther’s most extensive reflection on the connection between music and preaching is found in his letter to the composer Ludwig Senfl (4 October 1530)—a letter that was widely circulated during the sixteenth century and frequently cited in later literature:

. . . Indeed I plainly judge, and do not hesitate to affirm, that except for theology there is no art that could be put on the same level as music. Since except for theology [music] alone produces what otherwise only theology can do, namely, a calm and joyful disposition . . . This is the reason why the prophets did not make use of any art except music; when setting forth their theology they did it not as geometry, not as arithmetic, not as astronomy, but as music, so that they held theology and music most tightly connected, and proclaimed [dicentes] the truth through Psalms and songs.

Luther’s views were paraphrased and expanded others, beginning with Johann Walter, Luther’s composer-colleague and the first Lutheran cantor. In a poem published in 1538 Walter wrote:

Music and theology are the gift of God. God has finely clothed music in the outer-garment of theology. He has combined both in peace that none should claim the honor above the other. They are in friendship so closely connected that they are known as sisters.

. . .
Music abides with God eternally; all other arts are excluded. In heaven after Judgment Day only it will continue. . .
In heaven you will not need the art of grammar, fine logic, geometry, astronomy, no medicine, jurisprudence, philosophy, rhetoric, [but] only beautiful music. There will all his [God's] singers use this art alone.

A similar statement can be found in Grundlage einer Ehrenpforte (Hamburg, 1740), by Bach's contemporary Johann Mattheson, composer, music critic and theorist, pioneer music journalist and lexicographer in Hamburg:

Music is a noble art and a great embellishment for a noble spirit. All other arts and sciences will die with us. A lawyer cannot use his skill in heaven, for there will be no trials like in Speyer. Nobody in heaven will ask a doctor for a prescription or a purgative. But the things that theologians and musicians learned on earth they will also practice in heaven, that is, to praise God.

These words, however, are not Mattheson's; they are in fact a quote within a quote. Mattheson's Grundlage einer Ehrenpforte is a kind of biographical dictionary of notable musicians, and this quotation occurs within the section devoted to one Bernhard von Sanden. Sanden was not a musician but the Prussian Oberhofspre­diger (principal court preacher) who had delivered a sermon in Königsburg on the occasion of the installation of Johann George Neidhardt as Capellmeister, published as: Daß Kirchen-Musik, wenn solche wohl und christlich eingerichtet, eine Gabe Gottes sey, zu Gottes Dienst und Ehren zu brauchen (Königsburg: Zäncker, 1720). Mattheson's entry on Sanden is a summary of this Königsburg sermon in which quite a number of Sanden's quoted sources are repeated verbatim, and it is clear that Mattheson endorsed the views that he found there. The above quotation, which is closely parallel to the statements of Luther and Walter, is attributed to Johann Balthasar Schupp (1610–1661), theologian and ultimately pastor of the Jacobikirche in Hamburg. Thus the quotation of a quotation by Mattheson underlines the continuity of the connections between theology and music in later Lutheranism.

Johann Mattheson (1681–1764), the foremost Baroque music theorist and promoter of opera, was, like Bach, a devout Lutheran
who believed that the foundation of his art was theological and that the primary function of music was within the worship of the church. For example, in Der Musikalische Patriot of 1728 he wrote:

All the efforts of our composers, singers, and instrumentalists will be of not the least avail unless, without the slightest hypocrisy and with the true earnestness of David himself, they aim directly or indirectly at the honor and praise of God. They may sing or play in operas, they may explain and compose as much as they want—in the end all must be fixed, immutably, in the church.⁴⁹

Mattheson was an avid reader of the Bible, especially the psalms,⁵⁰ and the writings of Martin Luther.⁵¹ In his own writings he frequently explored the connections between music and theology.⁵² Although there have been recent discussions of various aspects of Mattheson’s voluminous literary output,⁵³ there is as yet no substantial investigation of Mattheson’s many writings with the aim of presenting a coherent assessment of his understanding of the connections between theology and music. But Mattheson and Bach, together with their contemporaries, shared the common Lutheran perspective on the connections between theology and music that ultimately derive from Luther and were reiterated again and again in subsequent generations.

The close connection between music and theology, and the consequential overlap of the ministries of preacher and musician, was a primary theme explored by later musicians and theologians. By the end of the sixteenth century it had become customary to refer to a passage in a writing by Justin Martyr that expressed the view that the Word of God is not only to be proclaimed by singing but also by instrumental music. Even though two important facts were unknown to these writers—that the source was “Pseudo-Justin” rather than Justin, and the citation was corrupted by a transcription error—the passage continued to be cited over the following centuries in Lutheran writings.⁵⁴ For example, the Justin connection is found in the commentary on the Psalms by the Wittenberg theologian Salomon Gesner (1559–1605): Commentationes in Psalmos Davidis . . . sub finem harum commentationum adjectus est libellus ejusdem autors quem ipse sub titulo Meditationis generalis Psalterij antea seorsim editit, first published in Wittenberg in 1605, with at least a further five editions
issued by 1665. At the end of the commentary Gesner appended Meditatio Psalteri, a discussion of various topics relating to the psalms. It is in this appendix that Gesner makes reference to Justin. Similar references to the Justin citation can be found in numerous later writings in which the concept was often expanded or elaborated. An important example is the passage in Michael Praetorius’s preface to his Polyhymnia Caduceatrix et Panegyrica (Wolfenbüttel, 1619); it includes the quotation from Justin, but with an effective word-play on cantio (song) and concio (sermon):

Consequently, for the completeness and certainty of church authority, and also for the completeness of worship, it is not only appropriate to have a CONCIO, a good sermon, but also in addition the necessary CANTIO, good music and song. Thus correct and true is the meaning of Justin: ρήμα γαρ ἐστιν Θεοῦ τὸ ενθυμούμενον καὶ ἀδόμενον καὶ ἀναχρούμενον. Verbum Dei est, sive mente cogitetur, sive canatur, sive pulsu edatur. “It is and remains God’s Word in the thinking of the mind, the singing of the voice, and also in the beating and playing upon instruments.”

Here Michael Praetorius asserts an unequivocal connection between cantor (musician) and concionator (preacher): both are bearers of the Word of God. Similarly the Limburger Kirchenordnung of 1666 contains the following paraphrase of the Justin passage:

God’s Word is accordingly, as expressed in the fine words of the old teacher Justin, conveyed in three different ways: 1) in teaching and preaching, 2) in prayer and song, 3) in music for organ, strings or [other] instruments.

Johann Mattheson also makes reference to the Justin source and in doing so, as Söhngen, suggests, places “preacher and cantor on the same level.” Much of the second volume of Mattheson’s music journal, Critica Musica is taken up with the text of a treatise on how to write good melodies, Die melodische Vorhof, by Heinrich Bokemeyer, cantor in Wolfenbüttel, which appears with Mattheson’s annotations that counter almost everything that Bokemeyer states. In section XVI Bokemeyer takes issue with composers who become “fledgling versifiers,” using self-made texts for their church music. Mattheson objects to this criticism, broadens the issue, and responds:
... a right-minded cantor, by the function of his holy vocation [Amt], proclaims in the same way as a preacher in the pulpit: for both promote God's Word. Verbum Dei est, sive mente cogitetur, sive canatur, sive pulsu edatur [the Word of God is uttered by the thinking of the mind, by singing, and by playing (lit. = striking)], as expressed in the words written by Justin Martyr. Vid. Gesneri Medit. super Psalter. cap. 27.

Later in life Mattheson again quoted the words of "Justin":

[Sanden] on p. 12 of his fine singular address [the 1720 Königsburg sermon], quotes thus from Justin Martyr, Quaest. 107. ad Orthod.: Verbum Dei est, sive mente cogitetur, sive canatur, sive pulsu edatur. It is and remains God's Word, whether it be carried in the thoughts of the heart, or by singing, or by playing. It is thus not secondary but primary. This may each Christian certainly believe: that God's Word can be no secondary matter.

Irwin draws the following conclusion: "Even if the power of music to preach the Word was sometimes implicit in Lutheran thought prior to the eighteenth century, my research leads me to conclude that Johann Mattheson was not the end of a line which placed the preacher and cantor on the same level but was the first to make such a claim explicit." But Mattheson is by no means the first to make explicit this connection between the similar functions of cantor and preacher: as he was ready to admit, many earlier writers, including Luther, had made explicit statements concerning the commonality of function on the part of preacher and cantor. This commonality was the natural outgrowth of Luther's insistence of the indissoluble connection between theology and music.

The connection between composing sermons and composing music was also underscored by the commonality of terminology applied to both activities by Lutheran theologians and music theorists. The classical categories of rhetoric had long been applied to homiletics. But, following the Reformation with its insistence on the primacy of the Word, such rhetorical categories were increasingly employed by music theorists to define and explain specific compositional techniques. If therefore both homiletics and music were structured and analyzed according to similar rhetorical concepts it was inevitable that theologians and musicians would draw attention to the analogous functions of preaching and performing, of preachers and musicians.
Bach as Musical Theologian and Theological Musician

In one sense, of course, Bach was not a “professional” theologian—he was neither a pastor nor a theology professor—but in another sense he was very much a professional “theologian,” since as a cantor it was his duty to teach the basic theology of the catechism and to be intimately involved in providing music to be heard within specific liturgical and homiletic contexts which presupposed distinctive theological contents. It is in his music that Bach demonstrates his theological acumen, as can be seen in the following representative examples.

The *Symbolum Nicenum* of what was to become known as the *B minor Mass* (BWV 232) is as much a significant theological statement as it is a profound musical one, symmetrically arranged around the center-point of the *Crucifixus*, literally the theological *crux* of Christian, Trinitarian theology.

The Kyrie movement (BWV 233a) composed in Weimar and later incorporated into the *Missa in F* (BWV 233) is another striking musical statement of Trinitarian theology. In the five-part texture the three-voice fugal Kyrie is framed by the German Agnus Dei, *Christe, du Lamm Gottes*, in the upper soprano part, and by the Kyrie from the end of Luther’s German litany (1529) in the bass. The Trinity is formally symbolized in the three-sectioned, three-voiced fugal counterpoint (SAT). The fugal theme of *Christe eleison* is an almost exact inversion of the theme of *Kyrie I*, and *Kyrie II* combines both themes (*Kyrie I* and *Christe*) in a double fugue. Again, this is as much a theological statement as a musical one. The three-fold structure of the liturgical Kyrie has traditionally been interpreted as an expression of Trinitarian faith, and, according to the Nicene Creed, the Son is “begotten from the Father” and the Holy Spirit proceeds “from the Father and the Son.” Here Bach contrives to expound this Trinitarian theology in the thematic material and musical form of this remarkable movement.

Bach does something similar at the end of the *Magnificat* (BWV 243), in the 19 measures at the beginning of the *Gloria*, before the music of the opening “Magnificat” returns for the remainder of the text of the *Gloria patri*. Trinitarian theology is expressed in three
sections, one for each Person, in which the voice entries are in triplets and parallel thirds. Further, the voice entries for “Gloria patri” progress from the lowest to the highest, with a pedal-point in the middle of the three measures of the bass part. “Gloria filio” has staggered voice entries, beginning with soprano I, which is now assigned the vocal pedal-point in the middle of these three measures, that is, the inversion of what appears in the bass part of the “Gloria patri.” Then for the “Gloria et Spiritui Sancto” the voices enter in a simple descending order, in five steps from soprano I to bass. Here again Bach gives musical form to Trinitarian theology: the Son is the image of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

In the six cantatas that together form the Christmas Oratorio (BWV 248) there are various allusions to the purpose for which Christ was born: he was born to die, hence the first and last chorale of the total work employ the melody Herzlich tut mich verlangen, otherwise known as the Passion Chorale. Again, in the final recitative of the Christmas Oratorio the four voices in turn (SATB) sing the same basic melodic form that Bach used for the words “Der Held aus Juda” that erupt toward the end of the aria Es ist Vollbracht in the St. John Passion—a fanfare signaling the triumph of the cross. Thus in the Christmas Oratorio Bach uses musical means to link together the doctrines of Incarnation and Atonement.

In a number of Bach’s other vocal works the theological distinction between law and gospel is expressed in musical form. In the St. John Passion (BWV 245) law is depicted in the strict counterpoint of Wir haben ein Gestz, and the grace of the gospel is expressed in the much freer imitative counterpoint of Ich folge dir gleichfals. Similarly, in the cantata Gottes Zeit (BWV 106) the demand of law, expressed fugally by “Es ist ein alte Bund,” is contrasted by the freedom of the gospel, “Ja, komm Herr Jesu” in which the soprano freely floats away, unencumbered by the basso continuo. But there are many other of examples of the way in which Bach expresses theological concepts with specific musical forms.71

Notwithstanding Irwin’s proposition, Bach cannot simply be dismissed as a mere musician without theological competence. Two contemporary professors of theology in Leipzig witness to the contrary. But in addition to their judgment of his theological knowledge
is the existence of his personal theological library. At his death Bach owned a significant collection of theological books which looks more like a pastor's working library rather than that of a musician.\textsuperscript{72} He had many volumes of sermons, Bible commentaries, studies of the Council of Trent, the Augsburg Confession, the Lord's Supper, and Baptism, as well as devotional writings. He owned two different collected editions of Luther's works, an additional volume of his Psalm commentaries, two editions of the \textit{Hauspostille}, and a copy of the \textit{Tischreden},\textsuperscript{73} in which could be found many of Luther's statements concerning the connections between theology and music, views that clearly influenced Bach's approach to composition.\textsuperscript{4}

Bach was indeed a lay theologian of some sophistication, someone who could be called a Doctor of Holy Scripture, according to Luther's judgment that anyone who could truly distinguish between law and gospel should be granted the title.\textsuperscript{5}

\textit{Excursus: The Misreading of Pseudo-Justin in Lutheran Writings on Music}

As this article has indicated, one of the most frequently cited passages found in Lutheran writings on music from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries is one that purports to be by "Justin," that is Justin Martyr. The work in question is the Pseudo-Justinian Greek document, known in Latin as \textit{Questiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos}, now generally accepted as a work by Theodoret of Cyrus in the fifth century. The passage in question in fact confirms the exact opposite of what the Lutheran writers were contending, though it does make a clear distinction between law and grace, which may have drawn them to the passage in the first place:

\textit{Question 107. If songs were invented by unbelievers as a ruse, and introduced to those under the Law because of their simple mindedness, while those under Grace have adopted better practices . . ., why have they used these songs in the churches as did the children of the Law?}

\textit{Response. It is not singing as such which befits the childish, but singing with lifeless instruments, and with dancing and finger clappers [κροτάλων]: wherefore the use of such instruments and other things appropriate to those who are childish is dispensed with in the churches and singing alone has been left over. . .}
Paul calls it [singing] a sword of the Spirit by which pious fighters for God are equipped against the invisible enemy. For it is and remains God’s Word, whether it is contemplated, sung or listened to, a protection against demons.76

The words in italic are those supposedly given in Greek by Michael Praetorius in 1619, who does not cite a source: Ρήμα γὰρ ἔστιν Θεοῦ καὶ ενθυμούμενον καὶ ἀδόμενον καὶ ἀκουόμενον.77 But when Praetorius’s text is examined it will be discovered that, apart from small variations, there is one substantial difference, the final participle is different from the original document: ρήμα γαρ εστίν Θεοῦ τό ενθυμούμενον καὶ ἀδόμενον, καὶ ἀναχρούμενον. In the original it reads ἀκουόμενον (to listen) rather than ἀναχρούμενον (to beat upon) as cited by Praetorius. The second term is almost certainly a transcription error, since the two words are similar. What is uncertain is when the error was made, but it seems to have occurred sometime before 1600. What is clear is that from a common source, as yet unidentified, in which the error was made, the later Lutheran tradition was developed, with various writers simply accepting the attribution “Justin,” repeating the error, and even expanding upon it. Thus not only Praetorius and the authors of the Limburgische Kirchenordnung in the seventeenth century, among others, and Mattheson in the eighteenth century, but also Hans-Joachim Moser and Oskar Söhngen78 in the twentieth century, who were content to perpetuate the tradition without verifying the source. What is important, even though it was based on a transcription error, is that there is this consistent strand within Lutheranism that has stressed the validity of instrumental music in proclaiming the Word of God.

NOTES

1. This substance of this article first appeared as “Johann Sebastian Bach: Theological Musician and Musical Theologian.” Bach the Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute, 31/1 (2000): 17–33, and was originally written as a response to the final chapter of Joyce L. Irwin’s book, Neither Voice nor Heart Alone German Lutheran Theology of Music in the Age of the Baroque (New York: Lang, 1993), 141–152, in which the author argued that Bach was simply “a musician” and “not a theologian.” The material presented here has been re-ordered, revised and expanded.


5. See, for example, Christoph Krummacher. *Musik als Praxis pretatis Zum selbstverstandnis evangelischer Kirchenmusik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 1994), especially the first chapter, “Zur Musikanschauung Martin Luthers und Philipp Melanchthons.”


7. In the preface Aurifaber states that his aim was to create a *Loci communes*—the term chosen by Melanchthon for his 1521 dogmatic theology—from the disparate writings of Luther he and others had assembled; ibid., fol. 1r.


9. Aurifaber. *Tischreden*, 172*. Of course, the structure of the *Tischreden* was created by Aurifaber rather than Luther, but it is in this form that later generations of Lutherans, including Bach, received these views of the Reformer.


12. In Luther’s Deutsche Messe of 1526 the proclamation of the Gospel at two different junctures of this liturgy is underscored by the use of the same musical hermeneutic: both the chanting of the Gospel lection of the day and the Words of Institution—which Luther regarded as proclamation rather than prayer—are given the same melodic formulae, following the model of the traditional passion tones; see further Robin A. Leaver. “Theo­logical Consistency, Liturgical Integrity, and Musical Hermeneutic in Luther’s Liturgical Reforms,” Lutheran Quarterly, 9 (1995): 117-138.


14. By the early eighteenth century the connection between music and theology in the education of clergy began to break down, as is confirmed by the following observation of Johann Mattheson (echoing Martin Luther, see note 13 above), published in 1739. “But how is a clergyman to judge these matters [of music and theology] if he knows nothing of music himself? . . . one might even say it would be a political duty that no servant of the Holy Word would be admitted who is who is inexperienced in music: especially those who are not at all ashamed to admit this in writings, but who rather pride themselves of their ignorance. For on the authority of St. Augustine, ignorance of music is an obstacle to true comprehension in interpretation of the Holy Writ. A well-read pastor who is well known through his writings once did not believe me when I told him, in a public library, that Augustine had written three books on music: but he, as well as a librarian standing near, laughed at me; until I presented them with proof. Perhaps there are not a few like these gentlemen. one of whom is a master but the other is a doctor”; Johann Mattheson’s Der vollkommene Capellmeister: A Revised Translation with Critical Commentary, trans, and ed. Ernest C. Harris (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1981). 127-128.

15. See Johannes Rautenstrauch. Luther und die Pflege der kirchlichen Musik in Sachsen (Leipzig 1907; reprint Hildesheim: Olms. 1970): Schalk. Paradigms of Praise. 28-30. Luther provided the theological principles for these parish schools: Melanchthon the basic cur­riculum: the composer Johann Walter, the polyphonic settings of liturgical music to be
learned in the schools and sung in the churches; and Georg Rhau published anthologies of music for school and church.

16. The three publications are given in facsimile in Die Thomasschule Leipzig zur Zeit Johann Sebastian Bachs: Ordnungen und Gesetze 1634, 1723, 1733, ed. Hans-Joachim Schulze (Leipzig: Zentral Antiquariat der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik. 1987). For example, under the heading “Von der Musik,” the 1733 Ordnungen states (p. 22): “Es haben unsere Vorvahren angeordnet, daß die Musik auf der Thomas-Schule getrieben, und von den dazugehenden Alummi in allen Stadt-Kirchen besorget werden soll.” (Our forefathers ordered that music should be studied in the Thomasschule so that the alumni should serve the musical needs of all the town churches [in Leipzig]).


18. The published writings of Johann Tobias Krebs, the younger, include: De vsv et praestantia romanæ historiæ in Novi Testamenti interpretatione libellvs (Lipsiae: Langenheimiana, 1745); Decretum Athenensis in honorem Hyrcani Pontificis M. Iudaorum factum commentario historico grammatico critico illustratum (Lipsiae: Langenheimiana, 1751); Commentatio historico philologia de provocatone d Pauli ad Cesarem (Lipsiae: Langenheimiana, 1753); Observationes in Novum Testamentum e Flavo Josepхо (Lipsiae: Wendlerum, 1755); Decreta Romanorum pro Judaeis facta e Josepho collecta et commentario historico-grammatico-critico illustrata (Lipsiae: Fritsch. 1768); De ratione Novi Testamenti e monibus antiquis illustrandi minus caute instituta prolusio declamationibus III (Lipsiae: Jacobaeer, 1777); Illustris Moldani rectors Opuscula academica et scholastica (Lipsiae: Jacobaeer, 1778).

19. These text and melodies were published in Selneckers Christliche Psalmen, Lieder, und Kirchengesang (Leipzig: Beyer. 1587).

20. Stender’s text book, Manuducto ad musicam theoreticam, das ist Kurzze Anleitung der Singekunst (Erfurt, 1635), was expanded in 1659 and reached a fourth edition by 1666; see Johann Nikolaus Forkel, Allgemeine Literature der Musik (Leipzig, 1792; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 2001). 308. The hymnal Stender edited was issued as Christlichenvernehmert und gehobertes Gesangbuch (Erfurt: Brand. 1663). Copies of two of Stender’s collections of sermons—his church year sermons, Credendorum et iacendorum Postilla (Erfurt, 1661) and his substantial series of sermons on the Augsburg Confession, Grund-Feste Der Augsburgischer Confession (Jena & Erfurt: Kempf & Birckner, 1649–1654)—were in Bach’s personal library; see Robin A. Leaver, Bachs theologische Bibliothek: Eine kritische Bibliographie (Stuttgart: Hänssler. 1983). Nos. 23 and 24.

21. This was included in his hymnal, Geistliche Singe-Kunst und ordentlich verfaßtes vollständiges Gesangbuch (Leipzig: Gross. 1671), issued as the second part of his Exemplarische Betkunst der Kinder Gottes, published the previous year.


Jacobs and G. F. Speiker (Philadelphia: Lutheran Book Store, 1868). The answer to Hutter’s first question, “Quid est Scriptura sacra” [What is Holy Scripture?], was based on Martin Chemnitz’s Examens concilii tridentini, originally published in Frankfurt, 1566–73; see Compendium, ed. Trillhaas, 1. and Compend, ed. Jacobs and Speiker, 2. Bach owned a copy of this substantial theological work by Chemnitz; see Leaver, Bachs theologische Bibliothek, No. 5.

25. See the 1634 Thomasschule Ordnung, sig H4’ in Thomasschule Leipzig: Ordnungen und Gesetze, ed. Hans-Joachim Schulze. There is a Thomasschule manuscript headed “Catalogus Lectionum,” also dated 1634 (now in the Bach-Archiv, Leipzig). It presents the weekly schedule in a different format and some of the details are at variance with the printed version, such as the information that the cantor taught Luther’s catechism on Fridays at 2.00 pm, whereas the printed Ordnung gives Saturdays at 7.00 am as the day and time for this duty. It is possible, therefore, that the manuscript represents the pre-1643 practice and the published form the minor modifications that were introduced that year.


27. The settings were of the Ten Commandments, Apostle’s Creed, Lord’s Prayer (which employs the traditional Pater noster chant), Christ’s baptismal command (Matt. 28: 19 and Mark 16: 16), Véba testamenti, and table blessings and thanksgivings (mostly psalm verses): see Matthew Le Maistre Catechesis and Gesenge, ed. Donald Gresch (Madison: A-R Editions, 1982). vili-xl, xv, xix–xx.


37. See, for example, Irwin, Neither Voice nor Heart Alone. 143.

38. See Valentin Ernst Loescher, The Complete Timotheus Verinus or A Statement of the

39. See Oswald Bill, Das Frankfurter Gesangbuch von 1689 und seine spateren Ausgaben (Marburg: Görich & Weierhauser. 1969), 39–42. The first edition noted its relevance for “Pfarherrn, Schulmeistern und Cantoribus” [pastors, schoolmasters and cantors], that the hymns should be sung by their congregations and choirs [“den Chor mit singen”]: from 1584 they are referred to as “Kirchen und Schuldienern” [church and school officials/servants]. It is interesting to note that a copy of the 1584 edition of the Frankfurt Kirchen Gesang was owned by Elias Herda (1674—1728), who became Cantor in Ohrdruf in 1698. He was therefore Johann Sebastian Bach’s teacher for two years, since the young Bach was then living with his older brother, Johann Christoph, after the deaths of their parents: see Martin Petzoldt and Joachim Petri. Johann Sebastian Bach, Ehre sei dir Gott gesungen. Bilder und Texte zu Bachs Leben als Christ und seinem Wirken für die Kirche (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 41.


43. WA Tischreden No. 1258 (see note 11 above.), and WA Tischreden No. 4441: “Musica optimum Dei donum Saepius ita me incitava et acuit, das zu predigen gewonne habe.”


45. LW 49: 428; WA Br. 5: 639: “Et plane ideo, nec pudet asserere, post theologiam esse nullam artem, quae musicae possit aequari, cum ipsa sola post theologiam id praestet, quod alloqui sola theologa praeest, schiet quatem et amnum laetum . Hinc factum est, ut prophetae nunc, a sic arte sint et ut musica, dum suam theologa non in geometram, non in arithmeticae, non in astronomiae, sed in musicam digessent, ut theologiam et musicam habere comunitissimas, veritatem psalm et cantus acerit.”

46 Sie ist mit der Theologie
Zugleich von Gott gegeben hie
Gott die Musik fein bedeckt
In der Theologie versteckt.
Er hat sie beid im Fried geschückt
Daß kein andern Ehr verruckt.
Sie sind in Freundschaft nahe verwandt.
Daß sie für Schwestern werden erkannt. (Lines 41–44)
Die Music mit Gott ewig bleibt.
Die andern Kunst sie all vertreibt.
Im Himmel nach den jüngsten Tag
Wird sie erst gehn in rechter Wag . .
Im Himmel gar man nicht bedarf
Der Kunst, Grammatik. Logik scharf,
Geometrie, Astronomie,
Kein Medizin, Jureterei,
Philosophie, Rhetorika.
Allem die schöne Musica.
Da werden all cantores sein,
Gebrauchen dieser Kunst allein (lines 145–151).


Walter’s lines 145–151 are closely paralleled in a lengthy poem, “Lob des Gesanges,” by Valentin Voigt, found in a manuscript, dating from between 1536 and 1537, in the library of Jena University:

Der Gesang bei Gott ewig ist
All ander Kunst vorgehet, das wißt,
Allem Gesang der bleibt all Frist
Im Himmel gar ohn alle List:
Itzt hat man nur Schatten davon,
Werd aufgeton / Schon
In Himmel so zarte.—
Man nicht bedarf in Himmel frei
Der Logik[,] Kunst, Grammaicei,
Geometrie, Astronomie,
Kein Medizin, Jureterei,
Allem die schöne Musica
Die bleibt allda / Ja
Im Himmel allfahrte . . .


Some years earlier Mattheson had drawn attention to this sermon, that it had stated that “vocal and instrumental music, as gifts of God, must be given back to God in his service” (“daß die Vocal- und Instrumental-Musik, als eine Gabe GOTTES, GOTT, in seinem Dienst. musse wieder gegeben werden”): Johann Mattheson. Der Musikalische Patriot, Welcher seine gründliche Betrachtungen, über Geist- und Welt Harmonien (Hamburg: [Mattheson], 1728). 13.

Mattheson. Der Musikalische Patriot, 9: “Alle Bemühungen unserer Componisten, Sänger und Instrumentisten ist von keiner Dauer; dafern sie nicht, ohne die geringste Heucherley, mit Davidischen recht Ernst, die Ehre und Lob Gottes zum Zweck hat: es sey nun mittelbahr, oder unmittelbahr. Singet und spielt in den Opern, infomirt und componirt so lange, als ihr wollet, endlich muss doch die Kirche einen festen Sitz geben”: trans. based on Beekman C. Cannon, Johann Mattheson Spectator in Music (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), 86. “Operas are the academies of music, as concerts are its grammar schools, but in the church is found its true calling, and in heaven its eternal place, yes, so to speak, its place and voice” (“Die Opern sind der Musik Academien: so wie die Concerte ihre Gymnasien; in der Kirche aber findet sie den rechten Beruf, und im Himmel ewigen Sitz, ja. so zu reden, Sitz und Stimme”): Johann Mattheson. Die neueste untersuchung der Singspiele, nebst beyfüger musikalischen Geschmacksprobe (Hamburg: Herold, 1744). 103–104.

Mattheson’s Untersuchung der Singspiele quotes Luther on the title-page—“The [musical] notes make the text live” (“Die Noten machen den Text lebendig”: WA Tischreden, No. 2545b.)—and the short work has many references to Luther (ibid., 18. 40. 52. 56. 78. etc). On 31 October 1717, Mattheson performed his oratorio, Der reformirende Johannes, in Hamburg cathedral. In it the significance of Luther’s reforms are recounted, the Reformer being interpreted as another John the Baptist; see Cannon. Mattheson, 53. 168. It is therefore difficult to understand Irwin’s statement, as part of her argument that Bach was a “non-theologian”: “Bach is more likely to have been influenced by his eighteenth century contemporaries [i.e. Mattheson] than by a long-lost teaching of Luther” (Irwin. Neither Voice not Heart Alone. 146.). On the contrary, Luther’s teaching was not “long-lost” and could be found quoted and expounded in Mattheson’s writings: thus if Mattheson influenced Bach then it would have been the opposite of what Irwin suggests.

Some of this is found in Der Musikalische Patriot (1728), but he regarded it only as a partial discussion. At the end of the volume he wrote: “The gentle reader will gather at a glance . . . the following facts . . . In my dissertation on Divine demands concerning the musica figuralis [polyphonic, contrapuntal music] I have not treated even half of the maternal, because all of the Prophets, all the Apocrypha, and all of the New Testament remained untouched . . .” (“Der geneigte Leser wird heraus . . . in einem Anblick ersehen . . . dass ich von der Dissertation über die Göttlichen Gebote, wegen der Figural-Musik lange nicht die Helffte abgehandelt habe, indem alle Propheten, Apocryphische Bücher und das gantze N. T. noch unberührt geblieben . . .”); Der Musikalisch Patriot. 357; trans. Cannon, Mattheson. 86–87. Many of Mattheson’s books published between 1745 and
1752 were devoted to exploring a Biblical understanding of music and the connections between theology and music; see Cannon, *Mattheson*, 204–211.


54. See the *Excursus* at the end of this article.


56. Ibid., 935.


62. The particular suggestion made by Irwin (Neither Voice nor Heart Alone, 147) that Luther’s understanding of vocation can have little significance for Bach (and, by implication Mattheson) is not borne out by the evidence. In Bach’s own copy of Abraham Calov’s *Deutsche Bibel*—essentially an edition of Luther’s writings arranged in biblical order—there are significant manuscript underlinings and markings made by the composer in passages from Luther that deal specifically with “Amt” (vocation). see Robin A. Leaver, J. S. Bach and Scripture *Glosses from the Calov Bible Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia. 1985), 121–122 and 149. see also the discussion in Renate Steiger, “Bach und die Bibel: Einige Anstreichungen Bachs in seiner Calov-Bibel als Selbstzeugnisse gelesen.” *Musik und Kirche*, 57 (1987): 119–126.


sue canatur, sue pulsu edatur. Es ist und bleibt Gottes Wort: es mag im Herzen bedacht; oder gesungen; oder gespielt werden: ist also kein Neben- sodern allemahl ein Hauptwerck. Das mag ein jeder Christ sicherlich glauben. Denn Gottes Wort kan kein Nebenwerck seyn."

65. Irwin. Neither Voice nor Heart Alone. 147.

66. In addition to the much-quoted sayings of Luther there are many other seemingly incidental statements that have a similar import, such as in a sermon preached in 1525 in which he declared that the Word of God is "to be preached and sung" (will gepredigt und gesungen sem): WA 17 II: 120.

67. See, for example, the statement in the Limburg Kirchenordnung (1666): "Der Heilige Geist als der himmlische Sing-Meister wirket nicht durch gepredigte oder gelesene Worte, sondern auch durchs Gebet und Gesang . . . [The Holy Spirit, as the heavenly singing-master, operates not only through the preached or read Word but also through prayer and song . . .]; cited in Strube, Spelleute Gottes, 59.

68. See for example, Steven M. Oberhelman, Rhetoric and Homiletics in Fourth-century Christian Literature Prose Rhythm, Onotonal Style, and Preaching in the works of Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991).


71. For a bibliography of discussions of the theological significance of Bach's compositions, see Theologische Bachforschung heute: Dokumentation und Bibliographie der Internationalen Arbeitsgemeinschaft für theologische Bachforschung 1976–1996, ed. Renate Steiger (Berlin: Galda & Wilch, 1998); see also the contribution of Michael Marissen in this issue of Lutheran Quarterly.

72. See Leaver, Bachs theologische Bibliothek, passim.

73. See Leaver, Bach theologische Bibliothek, No. 4.


75. See WA 36: 25.


77. The Greek is also given in Quasten, Music and Worship, 106, note 106.

78. Both Hans-Joachim Moser, Die evangelische Kirchenmusik in Deutschland (Berlin: Merseburger, 1955), 313, and Sohngen, Theologie der Musik, 183, cite Praetorius's word-play between concio and canto, with reference to Justin; and both refer to the material in the Limburg Kirchenordnung (1666) which they cite from Strube's Spelleute Gottes (Moser, 315–316, and Sohngen, 333).
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