

# Johann Sebastian Bach



**Chorale Prelude *In dulci jubilo***  
**BWV 729 for Organ (2 Manuals)**  
arranged for 5-part String Orchestra  
**Full Score**  
edited by Alan Bonds

## PREFACE

### About the Chorale Prelude

Bach wrote more than 200 examples of the chorale prelude – a type of composition based on a Lutheran chorale. They form a thread which runs throughout Bach's career. The genre had a history stretching back to Pachelbel, Buxtehude and Samuel Scheidt. One of its various possible functions was to introduce a chorale to be sung by a church congregation, or it may have been played as an interlude between verses. The Lutheran chorale itself was central to Bach's work, multiple examples being included in his 200–300 church cantatas and his Passions.

It has been suggested that *Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her* BWV700 and *Gott, durch deine Güte* BWV724 may be among Bach's very earliest works.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

In music, a chorale prelude or chorale setting is a short liturgical composition for organ using a chorale tune as its basis. It was a predominant style of the German Baroque era and reached its culmination in the works of J.S. Bach, who wrote 46 (with a 47th unfinished) examples of the form in his *Orgelbüchlein*, along with multiple other works of the type in other collections.

Function:

The precise liturgical function of a chorale prelude in the Baroque period is uncertain and is a subject of debate. One possibility is that they were used to introduce the hymn about to be sung by the congregation, usually in a Protestant, and originally in a Lutheran, church. This assumption may be valid for the shorter chorale preludes (Bach's setting of 'Liebster Jesu, wir sind hier, BWV 731, for example), but many chorale preludes are very long. It could be the case that these were played during extended ceremonial in church or in cathedrals.

Style:

Chorale preludes are typically polyphonic settings, with a chorale tune, plainly audible and often ornamented, used as *cantus firmus*. Accompanying motifs are usually derived from contrapuntal manipulations of the chorale melody.

Notable composers of chorale preludes during the Baroque period include Dieterich Buxtehude, Johann Pachelbel and Johann Sebastian Bach. After this period, the form fell out of favour and virtually none were written by subsequent composers, such as Stamitz, J C Bach, Haydn and Mozart, until examples from the late 19th century, including works by Johannes Brahms and Max Reger.

Baroque period: Among the old masters who wrote chorale preludes is Samuel Scheidt. His *Tabulatura Nova*, containing several such works, was published in 1624. Sweelinck is also typical of the early Baroque period. Chorale preludes also appear in the works of Dieterich Buxtehude and Georg Böhm. Over 40 chorale preludes by Buxtehude have survived to this day.

Johann Pachelbel's compositions are another example of the form, with many of his chorale preludes elaborating upon Protestant chorale melodies.

The best-known composer of chorale preludes is Johann Sebastian Bach. His earliest extant compositions, works for organ which he possibly wrote before his fifteenth birthday, include the chorale preludes BWV 700, 724, 1091, 1094, 1097, 1112, 1113 and 1119.



N dulci iubilo, Nu sun-  
ge wij io io/ Then all tingh för oß förs  
mo ligger in präsepi o, Och som Solen  
stjerner  
stjerner/ matris in gremio: Alpha es &  
ω, Alpha es & ω.  
O Iesu paruule för tigh är migh so we/  
Tröst migh i mitt sinne O puer optime,  
Lätt migh tin godheet sinne O princeps gloria,  
Trahe me post te, trahe me post te.  
O Patris charitas, O Nati lenitas,  
Wij wore plat förderffuadh per nostra crimina,  
Nu haßuer hä oß förwårffuadh cælorú gaudia,  
Eya wore wij thâr / Eya wore wij thâr.  
Vbi sunt gaudia Ther sungen man / Eya /  
hwar Englanar sunga noua cantica,  
Och sielanar springa in regis curia,  
Eya wore wij thâr / Eya wore wij thâr.

The melody as published in the 1582 Finnish music collection *Piae Cantiones*. In 1545 Martin Luther had added an extra verse and it is likely Bach used this version.

## In dulci iubilo

(In modern notation)

"a joyous song about the infant Jesus"

*Piae Cantiones* (1582)



From Wikipedia:

*"In dulci jubilo"* (Latin for "In sweet rejoicing") is a traditional Christmas carol. In its original setting, the carol is a macaronic (mixture) text of German and Latin dating from the Middle Ages. Subsequent translations into English, such as J. M. Neale's arrangement "Good Christian Men, Rejoice" have increased its popularity, and Robert Pearsall's 1837 macaronic translation is a mainstay of the Christmas Nine Lessons and Carols repertoire. J. S. Bach's chorale prelude based on the tune (BWV 729) is also a traditional postlude for Christmas services.

#### History and translations

The original song text, a macaronic alternation of Medieval German and Latin, is thought to have been written by the German mystic Heinrich Seuse circa 1328. According to folklore, Seuse heard angels sing these words and joined them in a dance of worship. In his biography (or perhaps autobiography), it was written:

Now this same angel came up to the Servant (Suso) brightly, and said that God had sent him down to him, to bring him heavenly joys amid his sufferings; adding that he must cast off all his sorrows from his mind and bear them company, and that he must also dance with them in heavenly fashion. Then they drew the Servant by the hand into the dance, and the youth began a joyous song about the infant Jesus ...

The tune, Zahn No. 4947, first appears in Codex 1305, a manuscript in Leipzig University Library dating from c. 1400, although it has been suggested that the melody may have existed in Europe prior to this date. In print, the tune was included in *Geistliche Lieder*, a 1533 Lutheran hymnal by Joseph Klug. It also appears in Michael Vehe's *Gesangbuch* of 1537. In 1545, another verse was added, possibly by Martin Luther. This was included in Valentin Babst's *Geistliche Lieder*, printed in Leipzig. The melody was also popular elsewhere in Europe, and appears in a Swedish/Latin version in the 1582 Finnish songbook *Piae Cantiones*, a collection of sacred and secular medieval songs."

## ABOUT THIS TRANSCRIPTION

The original chorale is included for pure interest - it could be played before the Prelude - either in unison or by a solo instrument.

.Alan Bonds  
[abonds@swiftdsl.com.au]  
Perth, Western Australia,  
May 2024

Chorale prelude on  
**In dulci jubilo**  
BWV 729

J.S. Bach

Andante con moto (♩ = ca 110)

The first system of the musical score features five staves: Violin 1 (Vn1), Violin 2 (Vn2), Viola (Vla), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabasso (Cb.). The music is in the key of D major (two sharps) and 3/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Andante con moto' with a quarter note equal to approximately 110 beats per minute. The first four measures show a steady harmonic accompaniment in the lower strings and woodwinds, while the violins play a simple melody. In the fifth measure, the upper strings (Vn1 and Vn2) and the Viola and Violoncello (Vc.) enter with a more active melodic line, while the Contrabasso (Cb.) continues with the harmonic accompaniment.

The second system continues the piece. The Violin 1 (Vn1) and Violin 2 (Vn2) parts feature a more complex melodic line with eighth-note patterns. The Viola (Vla) and Violoncello (Vc.) parts provide a steady harmonic accompaniment with quarter notes and eighth-note patterns. The Contrabasso (Cb.) part continues with the harmonic accompaniment, featuring a mix of quarter and eighth notes.

The third system shows the continuation of the melodic and harmonic themes. The Violin 1 (Vn1) and Violin 2 (Vn2) parts have a more active role, with the Violin 1 part featuring a melodic line with eighth-note patterns. The Viola (Vla) and Violoncello (Vc.) parts continue with the harmonic accompaniment, while the Contrabasso (Cb.) part provides a steady bass line.

The fourth system concludes the piece. The Violin 1 (Vn1) and Violin 2 (Vn2) parts feature a final melodic flourish with eighth-note patterns. The Viola (Vla) and Violoncello (Vc.) parts continue with the harmonic accompaniment, while the Contrabasso (Cb.) part provides a steady bass line.

First system of a musical score in G major (one sharp). It consists of five staves. The top staff is the vocal line, starting with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4 and B4, and a quarter rest. The second staff is the first piano part, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The third staff is the second piano part, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The fourth and fifth staves are the bass line, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

Second system of the musical score. It consists of five staves. The top staff has a whole note G4. The second staff has a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The third staff has a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The fourth and fifth staves have a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Third system of the musical score. It consists of five staves. The top staff has a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The second staff has a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The third staff has a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The fourth and fifth staves have a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The system concludes with a double bar line.

Fourth system of the musical score. It consists of five staves. The top staff has a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The second staff has a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The third staff has a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The fourth and fifth staves have a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, and B4. The system concludes with a double bar line.

System 1 of a musical score in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves: two treble clefs and three bass clefs. The music features a variety of note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and ties. The first staff has a melodic line with a long note in the first measure. The second staff has a more active line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic support with sustained notes and moving bass lines. The fifth staff continues the bass line with a mix of quarter and eighth notes.

System 2 of the musical score, continuing from the first system. It also consists of five staves. The first staff features a melodic line with a long note and a trill-like figure. The second staff has a more active line with eighth and sixteenth notes. The third and fourth staves provide harmonic support with sustained notes and moving bass lines. The fifth staff continues the bass line with a mix of quarter and eighth notes. The system concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs in the first and second staves.