

= Du Friedefürst , Herr Jesu Christ , BWV 116 =

Du Friedefürst , Herr Jesu Christ (You Prince of Peace , Lord Jesus Christ) , BWV 116 , is a church cantata written by Johann Sebastian Bach in 1724 in Leipzig for the 25th Sunday after Trinity . He led the first performance it on 26 November 1724 , concluding the liturgical year of 1724 .

The cantata is based upon Jakob Ebert 's hymn " Du Friedefürst , Herr Jesu Christ " . It matches the Sunday 's prescribed gospel reading , the Tribulation from the Gospel of Matthew , in a general way . The hymn 's first and last stanza are used unchanged in both text and tune : the former is set as a chorale fantasia , the latter as a four @-@ part closing chorale . An unknown librettist paraphrased the inner stanzas as alternating arias and recitatives . Bach scored the cantata for four vocal soloists (soprano , alto , tenor , bass) , a four @-@ part choir and a Baroque instrumental ensemble of natural horn , enforcing the soprano in the hymn tune , two oboes d 'amore , strings and basso continuo .

= = History and text = =

Bach wrote the cantata in 1724 for the 25th Sunday after Trinity as part of his second annual cycle of mostly chorale cantatas . The prescribed readings for the Sunday were from the First Epistle to the Thessalonians , the coming of the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4 : 13 ? 18) , and from the Gospel of Matthew , the Tribulation (Matthew 24 : 25 ? 28) . The cantata text of an unknown author is based exclusively on Jakob Ebert 's hymn in seven stanzas (1601) . The librettist of Bach 's chorale cantata cycle is not known , but Bach scholar Christoph Wolff notes that " he must have worked closely with Bach " and names as " the most likely candidate " Andreas Stöbel , a co @-@ rector of the Thomasschule . The first and last stanza in their original wording are movements 1 and 6 of the cantata , stanzas 2 to 4 were transformed to movements 2 to 4 of the cantata , and stanzass 5 and 6 were rephrased for movement 5 . The hymn is in a general way related to the gospel .

Bach led the first performance of the cantata on 26 November 1724 , which was that year the last Sunday of the liturgical year . The parts show that Bach performed it at least once more but not until after 1740 .

= = Scoring and structure = =

Bach structured the cantata in six movements . The text and tune of the hymn are kept in the outer choral movements , a chorale fantasia and a four @-@ part closing chorale , which frame a sequence of alternating arias and recitatives . Bach scored the work for four vocal soloists (soprano , alto , tenor , bass) , a four @-@ part choir and a Baroque instrumental ensemble of natural horn (Co) enforcing the soprano in the hymn tune , two oboes d 'amore (Oa) , two violins (VI) , viola (Va) and basso continuo . The title page of the autograph score reads : " Dom : 25 post Trinit . / Du Friede Fürst Herr Jesu / Christ ect . / à / 4 Voc : / Tromba / 2 Hautb : d 'Amour / 2 Violini / viola / con / Continuo / di / Sign : / J.S.Bach " .

In the following table of the movements , the scoring follows the Neue Bach @-@ Ausgabe . The keys and time signatures are taken from Alfred Dürr , using the symbol for common time (4 / 4) . The continuo , playing throughout , is not shown .

= = Music = =

= = 1 = =

The opening chorus , " Du Friedefürst , Herr Jesu Christ " (You Prince of Peace , Lord Jesus Christ) , is a chorale fantasia , the soprano singing the cantus firmus , supported by the horn . The composer of the tune is not known . It appeared in a hymnal by Bartholomäus Gesius in 1601 , and is similar to " Innsbruck , ich muß dich lassen " .

The melody is embedded in an orchestral concerto with ritornellos and interludes , dominated by the concertante solo violin . The treatment of the lower voices is varied within the movement . In lines 1 and 2 and the final 7 they are set in homophonic block chords . The Bach scholar Klaus Hofmann notes that the salutation " Du Friedefürst , Herr Jesu Christ , wahr ' Mensch und wahrer Gott " (You prince of peace , Lord Jesus Christ , true man and true God) thus receives weight . In lines 3 and 4 the lower voices begin in vivid imitation before the entrance of the cantus firmus . In lines 5 and 6 their faster movement contrasts to the melody .

== 2 ==

The alto aria , " Ach , unaussprechlich ist die Not " (Alas , the agony is unspeakable) , is accompanied by an oboe d 'amore as an equal partner , expressing the soul 's terror imagining the judgement . Hofmann notes that " Bach has captured the expression of deep sadness in the music with all the tools of his trade : sighing figures , suspensions and augmented , diminished or chromatic melodic intervals : the harmony is full of dissonances . "

== 3 ==

The recitative for tenor , " Gedenke doch , o Jesu " (Yet consider , o Jesus) , begins as a secco recitative , but the idea " Gedenke doch , o Jesu , daß du noch ein Fürst des Friedens heißest ! " (Yet consider , o Jesus , that you are still called a Prince of Peace !) , close to the theme of the cantata , is accompanied by a quote of the chorale tune in the continuo .

== 4 ==

Rare in Bach 's cantatas , three voices sing a trio . In the text " Ach , wir bekennen unsre Schuld " (Ah , we recognize our guilt) , they illustrate the " wir " (we) , confessing and asking forgiveness together . The voices are accompanied only by the continuo .

== 5 ==

The recitative for alto , " Ach , laß uns durch die scharfen Ruten " (Ah , then through the harsh rod) , is a prayer for lasting peace , accompanied by the strings and ending as an arioso .

== 6 ==

The closing chorale , " Erleucht auch unser Sinn und Herz " (Illumine our minds and hearts as well) , is a four @-@ part setting for the choir , horn , oboes and strings .

= Selected recordings =

The listing is taken from the selection on the Bach @-@ Cantatas website . Choirs and orchestras are roughly marked as large by red background , such as the large " Bach " -groups of the 1950s ; instrumental groups playing period instruments in historically informed performances are highlighted green under the header Instr ..