

II - VENUES

Early on, the Denton Bach Society found a congenial home. The St. Paul Lutheran Church in Denton welcomed the group to use its sanctuary, for rehearsals as well as for concerts. At that time, Director Charles S. Brown was organist at the church, and the pastor, Alton Donsbach, was enthusiastic about the development of this group. For the next nineteen years, St. Paul would be the Society's home base.

St. Paul Lutheran Church is a unique architectural landmark on North Elm Street near downtown Denton. While this church is certainly not a Baroque style structure, its nontraditional interior and subdued lighting lent an appropriate ambience for performing early period music. And the sanctuary provided a favorable acoustical environment for the choir and orchestra.

Richard Edyvean, long-time choir member and former president of the Society, praised the church as an auditorium in a statement in Vivace!, the Society's newsletter. Said Edyvean, "It is one of the finest performance spaces in Denton. The live quality of the room and the almost perfect reverberation makes the combination of small orchestra and vocals a perfect concert experience." Although space was rather cramped, the close proximity of performers and audience provided an intimate setting that fostered musical rapport between the two groups. It was a sympathetic venue for experiencing this early classical music, for confirmed devotees as well as for patrons still developing their appreciation of Bach.

The Denton Bach Choir moved about in the Denton community and beyond, however, performing in other churches and in various secular settings. While fifty-one of the Society's eighty-seven concerts were held at St. Paul Lutheran Church, thirty-six were presented elsewhere. Eighteen concerts took place in other Denton churches, and seven were held in churches in Fort Worth and Dallas, and one was in St. Peter Episcopal Church, McKinney.

Two programs were given at the De Golyer Estate in Dallas, and the program with The Arlington Choral Society was presented in Irons Recital Hall on the campus of the University of Texas at Arlington.

The Woman's Club Building, the Center for Visual Arts, and several auditoriums on the University of North Texas campus in Denton also have served as performance sites.

In the last two decades, the City of Denton has made considerable progress in the adding of facilities for various artistic endeavors. Renovation of the Campus Theatre, on West Hickory Street, by the Greater Denton Arts Council was one such enterprise, and it was completed just in time for the

Denton Bach Society to open its twentieth anniversary season there on October 15, 1995.

This new auditorium accommodates approximately two hundred persons. While larger than St. Paul Lutheran Church, this new hall is small and appropriately designed as to retain a sense of intimacy for future musical concerts.

The Campus Theatre will furnish much needed space for various Denton community organizations and functions. For the Denton Bach Society, it will provide, for the first time, an office for a physical location of its headquarters. This in turn will lend the Society a stronger sense of stability and expansion in the community.