

**Abstract :**  
**Halfway Between Oratorio and Opera:**  
**Early Moravians Love of Sacred Dramatic Music**

Imagine being in the Moravian settlement of Nazareth, Pennsylvania during January and February, 1797. The weekly concerts at the Nazareth Paedagogium included selections from Handel's *Messiah*, symphonies by Haydn, Eichner, Pleyel and Stamitz, Rolle's *Thirza und ihre Söhne* (divided over three weeks), Haydn's *Stabat Mater* (divided over two weeks) and the first section of Graun's *Der Tod Jesu*. This schedule of performances were recorded in the *Verzeichniss derer Musicalien welche im Concert sind gemacht worden, Nazareth, Pennsylvania, 1796 zum 1845*.

The early Moravians loved sacred dramatic music (musikalishes Drama). How do we know? Through the evidence in the *Register of Music Performed* and the working collections of printed and manuscript scores and parts left behind.

This paper will explore the components of sacred dramatic music -- both textually and musically; identify the context in northeastern Germany as transplanted to America; survey the repertoire found in Moravian Music Foundation collections in America and listen to excerpts of the music.

Barbara Strauss  
Catalog Project Manager  
Moravian Music Foundation at the Archie K. Davis Center  
457 South Church Street  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101  
Telephone: (336) 725-0651  
[barbara@moravianmusic.org](mailto:barbara@moravianmusic.org)

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