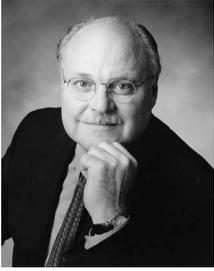


# David Ashley White Named 2015 Raabe Prize Winner



The Association of Lutheran Church Musicians is pleased to announce that David Ashley White is the recipient of the **2015 Raabe Prize for Excellence in Sacred Composition** for his choral submission, *Spirit, Moving Over Chaos*.

**David Ashley White**, Moores School of Music Professor of Composition, with degrees from the University of Houston (B.M. and M.M.) and the University of Texas at Austin (D.M.A.), served as Director of the Moores School from 1999-2014, during which time he held the Margaret M. Alkek and Margaret Alkek Williams Endowed Chair. His secular and sacred compositions are widely performed and published, and he has received numerous commissions from various organizations, schools, churches and individuals. His vocal and instrumental music is recorded on several commercial labels, including *Zephyr—Echoes from the American Cathedral*, a selection of White's sacred music, sung by the St. Paul's Choir, Houston, and *The Blue Estuaries*, performed by the Houston Chamber Choir. On the Gothic label is *Praise the Spirit*, sung by the Palmer Church Choir, Houston, containing a number of White's anthems, motets, service music, and hymns. *As you set out for Ithaka*, published on the Albany label, contains a selection of his secular music, performed by students and faculty from the Moores School.

White's hymns are found in a number of denominational books, including the Episcopal Church's *The Hymnal 1982* and its supplement, *Wonder, Love, and Praise*; *The United Methodist Hymnal* and its supplement, *The Faith We Sing*; the United Church of Christ in Japan; Great Britain's *Worship Songs Ancient and Modern*, and the recently published *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal* (2013). Four volumes of his hymns are published by Selah Publishing Co., most recently *I'll Sing and Joyful Be* (2014).

White is an active member of the Houston arts community, serving on boards that include a mayoral appointment to the Houston Arts Alliance. He has just been appointed composer-in-residence at Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church in Houston, his home parish. In addition, he has been designated the Distinguished Composer by the American Guild of Organists for its upcoming national convention to be held in Houston in 2016, where his anthem, *With a Shining Like the Sun* for mixed chorus, brass, timpani, organ and congregation, will be premiered.

The selection committee, headed by Dr. Zebulon Highben of Muskingum University, included the following comments regarding *Spirit, Moving Over Chaos*:

"The committee found the piece to be well-crafted, compositionally interesting, creative and "fresh" (though that word is overused) while still growing out of the assembly's song. To quote one committee member, this piece "...with its aleatory, Lydian/ Mixolydian, hexatonic character, engages the music of our time, and its text...fits the poetry of our time too."

We appreciated the fact that despite the work's musical complexity, it is based upon a unison vocal line. Theologically, this resonates with Bonhoeffer's thoughts about the significance of unison singing (*Life Together*). Practically, this means that even small church choirs could potentially use this piece, and (theoretically) the tune could also be taught to the assembly. The committee was also pleased that *Spirit, Moving Over Chaos* adds to the Pentecost choral-liturgical repertoire, which is fairly scant compared to other major feasts."

With a total of 63 scores to examine this year, the selection committee chose to give honorable mention to two additional composers: Jonathan Kohrs of Chicago, IL, for his *Divine Service/Holy Communion*, set for congregation and piano with optional flute, oboe, clarinet, string synthesizer, vibraphone, and bass; and Alfred Fedak of Albany, NY, for his *You Hold All Souls in Life*, scored for SATB a cappella choir. *Spirit, Moving Over Chaos* will be performed at the 2015 biennial conference of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians in Atlanta in July 2015.



The Raabe Prize for Excellence in Sacred Composition is awarded every two years for a single musical work, published or unpublished and written within the last five years, that reflects a larger history of excellence on the part of the composer. Dr. William and Nancy Raabe of Milton, WI endowed this prize to recognize and encourage significant accomplishments in composition contributing to the body of sacred music for the church in the Lutheran heritage.