

VI MESSERLI
MEMORIAL

Lectures

IN CHURCH MUSIC

OCTOBER 18-20, 2026

For All The Saints



REV. DIEN ASHLEY TAYLOR
MONDAY PLENARY



DANIEL SCHWANDT
MONDAY EVENING
HYMN FESTIVAL



KANTOREI OF CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
FORT WAYNE, KEVIN HILDEBRAND, CONDUCTOR



MARIN JACOBSON
TUESDAY PLENARY



CONCORDIA
UNIVERSITY
CHICAGO

Christ at the Center

INFO AND REGISTRATION
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Schedule

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2026

4:00 p.m.	Piano Solo and Four Hands Recital	Katrina Sudman and Vincent Catalano, piano	Chapel of Our Lord
Open Time	Personal planning time in Liturgical Choir Reference Library		Center for Church Music, Klinck Library, 2nd floor
7:00 p.m.	Choral Evening Prayer	Kantorei of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, IN Kevin Hildebrand, conductor	Chapel of Our Lord

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2026

8:00 a.m.	Choral Reading Session I (Unison, Two-part)		Gieschen Recital Hall
Open Time	Personal planning time in Liturgical Choir Reference Library		Center for Church Music, Klinck Library, 2nd floor
9:15 a.m.	<i>Through Toil and Tribulation: Christian Song in Grief and Tragedy "For ALL the Saints"</i>	Dien Ashley Taylor	Chapel of Our Lord
11:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer		Chapel of Our Lord
11:30 a.m.	Lunch and Exhibit Browsing		Koehneke Community Center (KCC) Band Room (Kretzmann Hall)
1:00 p.m.	Workshop Sessions I		
2:15 p.m.	Workshop Sessions II		
3:15 p.m.	Break and Exhibit Browsing		KCC and Band Room
3:45 p.m.	Choral Reading Session II (SATB)		Gieschen Recital Hall
5:15 p.m.	Banquet		Koehneke Community Center/Oak Park-River Forest Room
7:30 p.m.	Hymn Festival	Daniel Schwandt, organist	Grace Lutheran Church

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2026

8:00 a.m.	Choral Reading Session III (SATB or SAB)		Gieschen Recital Hall
9:15 a.m.	Glorify the Lord with me - Choral Methods for the Church Choir	Marin Jacobson	Chapel of Our Lord
11:00 a.m.	Morning Prayer		Chapel of Our Lord
11:30 p.m.	Lunch: Exhibit Browsing (Exhibits close at 1 pm)		KCC and Band Room
1:15 p.m.	Workshop Sessions III		
2:30 pm.	Workshop Sessions IV		
3:35 p.m.	Itinerarium		Chapel of Our Lord

Register [online](#).

Plenaries, Evenings & Presenters

MONDAY PLENARY



REV. DIEN ASHLEY TAYLOR

Rev. Dien Ashley Taylor serves as the Bishop and President of the Atlantic District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). He also is the Pastor of Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church in The Bronx, New York. In addition to these, he has served as the LCMS President's Voting Representative on the LCMS Board for National Mission, serving as that board's Vice-Chairman. A church musician, he has led people of all ages and many backgrounds in song in congregations, schools, and agencies of the Church.

Through Toil and Tribulation: Christian Song in Grief and Tragedy "For ALL the Saints"

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (St. John 16:33 ESV). Our Lord Jesus overcame the world and gives us peace, especially meaningful because He recognizes the reality of tribulation, grief, suffering, and loss in our sinful world. Thankfully, the Church is not at a loss at these times because of the peace that Jesus offers. Exploring intersections of tragedy and toil with the Church's song can provide a hope-filled framework for Godly grief.

MONDAY EVENING HYMN FESTIVAL



DANIEL SCHWANDT

Daniel Schwandt is the Cantor of Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, where he continues the rich tradition of organ and church music cultivated by his predecessors, Paul Manz, Mark Sedio, and David Cherwien. He also serves as University Organist and Lecturer in Music at the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music, where he teaches organ and harpsichord. Schwandt holds degrees from St. Olaf College and the University of Notre Dame, where his doctoral research focused on the life and organ works of David N. Johnson (1922–1987). His compositions are published by Augsburg Fortress, MorningStar Music Publishers, and GIA Publications.

TUESDAY PLENARY



MARIN JACOBSON

Marin Jacobson serves as Phyllis and Richard Duesenberg Chair in Lutheran Music, Director of Choral and Vocal Activities, and Director of the Bach Institute at Valparaiso University. A music educator, conductor, soprano, and composer, Dr. Jacobson is a frequent clinician. Choirs under her direction have toured throughout the United States and abroad.

Glorify the Lord with Me ~ Choral Methods for the Church Choir

As musical servants called to equip church choirs, we may empower choir members to develop their voices to the glory of God and in service of the congregation. This plenary session will offer accessible, practical rehearsal methods to foster a beautiful choral sound while enhancing the enjoyment and confidence of choir members.

Register [online](#).

Plenaries, Evenings & Presenters

SUNDAY 4:00 PM CONCERT



**KATRINA SUDMAN
& VINCENT CATALANO:
PIANO SOLO AND
FOUR-HANDS RECITAL**

Vincent Catalano and **Katrina Sudman** met in Rome in 2018 and formed a Classical four-hands piano duo. They trained there under Carlo Maria Dominici, the last pupil of Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli. They have performed throughout Chicago and appear frequently at Fourth Presbyterian Church in the Noonday Concert Series. They have also played numerous times in the Wednesday Concert Series at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in Milwaukee. The duo gave concerts in Washington D.C. at the Church of the Epiphany for their Tuesday Concert Series, and at Casa Italiana Sociocultural Center. They have also played in Detroit at The Basilica of Ste. Anne, the second-oldest continually operating parish in the United States. Their concert tours have also taken them to Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Minneapolis. Katrina serves as the director of the Preparatory and Community Music Program at Concordia-Chicago.

SUNDAY CHORAL EVENING PRAYER



**KANTOREI OF CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
FORT WAYNE, KEVIN HILDEBRAND, CONDUCTOR**

The Kantorei of Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne is an auditioned choir of students studying for the pastoral ministry. Founded in 1977 by Kantor Richard Resch, the choir continues to represent the seminary and proclaim the gospel via special services, recordings, and annual tours. The Kantorei, now directed by Kantor Kevin Hildebrand, most recently traveled to Arizona, New Mexico, and Michigan in early 2026.



Kevin Hildebrand is Kantor at Concordia Theological Seminary Fort Wayne. He completed his undergraduate education at Concordia University Chicago, holds master's degrees in music and theology from The University of Michigan and Concordia Theological Seminary, respectively, and currently is a doctoral candidate at Ball State University. He is an active composer and music editor, with numerous compositions for organ, choir, and instruments in print with several publishers. Kevin is the accompanist for the Fort Wayne Children's Choir Youth Chorale, and is also a frequent organ recitalist, hymn festival presenter, and workshop leader.

Register [online](#).

Workshops

Monday, Workshops I

Conversation with **Rev. Dien Ashley Taylor**

Beyond the Hymnals: Choosing Christian Song for the Lectionary | **Stephen P. Starke and Barry Bobb**

Building on last year's presentation for Series A, this workshop will explore the hymns of 17 Lutheran hymn writers (from the sainted to current college and seminary students) as they relate to the readings from Series B. A free copy (176 pp) will be given to each attendee. Useful for worship planners, pastors, church musicians, and composers.

Organ Reading Session | **David Porth**

This session will highlight recent organ music releases from various publishers. Participants will explore practical service music and new repertoire ideas that can enhance worship and support the church's song.

Handbells for Small Ensembles | **Anne Krentz Organ**

Are you interested in finding handbell music that requires as few as four ringers? This session will explore several volumes of Anne Krentz Organ's *Four by Four* series for handbells and piano, in addition to pieces by other composers. Participants will be invited to ring as well as listen.

Monday, Workshops II

Music, Worship, and Children | **Sean Daenzer, Sam Eatherton, Peter Reske**

Are you responsible for working with children in your church or school setting? Are you interested in the faith formation of children through singing? Do you try to make sure children are engaged in worship and have meaningful worship experiences? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then this workshop will give you resources that will help you in your work with children. Three Lutheran entities (Concordia Seminary, Concordia Publishing House, and the LCMS) have received significant grants from the Lilly Foundation for their Children in Worship Initiative. Sam Eatherton from Concordia Seminary, Peter Reske from CPH, and Sean Daenzer from the LCMS will explain their projects, give an update and how you can benefit.

Training Up the Next Generation: Teaching Beginning Organists in Your Parish | **Emily Woock**

In this session, we will look at a variety of resources available for teaching beginning organists. We will also discuss ways in which a congregation might encourage and support high school parishioners who express an interest in studying organ or someday becoming a director of parish music. We will also explore solutions to possible barriers, such as arranging practice times and the cost of shoes and music.

"With Voices United, Our Praises We Offer" The Story of The Lutheran Hymnal (1941) | **Elisabeth Urtel**

How was *The Lutheran Hymnal* developed by the member churches of the Synodical Conference? What factors led to the interest in a new hymnal? How was it received by the various church bodies of the Synodical Conference? What identity did it create for the members of the Synodical Conference? These and other questions and the lessons for our time will be explored in this session.

Early Music in Service Planning | **Emily Solomon**

As a liturgical composer, Johann Gottfried Walther used a wide variety of chorale tunes that are still well-loved today and many others that are now lesser known but are part of the rich heritage of Lutheran hymnody. Building on her 2025 presentation, organist and Schalk Scholar Emily Solomon will focus on the chorale preludes of Walther, particularly Volume 2 of the 1998 Breitkopf & Härtel edition. With an emphasis on practical and accessible applications, she will discuss and highlight examples of how repertoire written on both familiar and unfamiliar tunes can be effectively used throughout the liturgical year.

From the Center for Church Music...Music of Walter L. Pelz | **Mark Bender and Steven Wentz**

Acclaimed composer and organist Walter L. Pelz (1926–2026) contributed many organ and choral pieces for use in the church. In this session, we will explore familiar and some not-so-familiar pieces with an eye toward not only remembering his contributions to the church but also offering suggestions for their use in the service.

Register [online](#).

Workshops

CONTINUED

Tuesday, Workshops III

Nurturing the Maturing Voice | Marin Jacobson

For leaders of singers in their golden years, understanding vocal changes and identifying helpful responses can enable us to support choristers experiencing the vocal changes that accompany aging. This workshop will explore characteristics of the maturing voice, challenges and gifts, and helpful techniques to promote healthy singing, breath management, and tonal stability.

Beyond the Hymnals: Choosing Christian Song for the Lectionary | Stephen P. Starke and Barry Bobb

In Service to God and Man: David N. Johnson, Organist, Pedagogue, and Composer Daniel Schwandt

His music is a staple in most church musicians' libraries, but David N. Johnson's complex and too-short professional life has often left him at the margins of the study of influential mid-20th-century church music composers. His legacy is more than being the master of trumpet tunes and the composer of one of the most abiding 20th-century hymn tunes. His teaching and composing sought to connect the listener to the power of the divine and to bridge the divide between traditionalism and modernity.

Beauty, Bulletins, and Blurbs: Considerations for Images that Accompany the Divine Service

Matthew Rosebrock

In his defense of images, Martin Luther once quipped that the image of Christ on the cross within his heart was inevitable upon hearing the passion account. In other words, imagery, whether of the physical or mental sort, is unavoidable. It is not a question of "Will there be imagery?" but "What imagery will there be?" In the first half of this session, we will look at Luther's approach to images and art in order to establish some helpful criteria for selecting images that derive from and direct us back to the Scriptures and Christ. The second half of the session will address

the practicalities of a service bulletin. What should be the role of imagistic and aesthetic decisions? Do the images that we choose have any value beyond adornment? What is helpful when writing about a bulletin cover image? Is it appropriate to use AI-generated images? We will be addressing these questions and more to discuss how best to use images and the aesthetic of the bulletin in service to the Word and liturgy.

Tuesday, Workshops IV

In Service to God and Man: David N. Johnson, Organist, Pedagogue, and Composer Daniel Schwandt

Handbells for Small Ensembles | Anne Krentz Organ

From the Center for Church Music...Music of Walter L. Pelz | Mark Bender and Steven Wente

Early Music in Service Planning | Emily Solomon

"With Voices United, Our Praises We Offer:" The Story of The Lutheran Hymnal (1941) Elisabeth Urtel

Register [online](#).

Presenters



Mark Bender Mark Bender has been an active Lutheran church musician since 1968. Most recently he served as Minister of Music at St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School, Des Peres, Missouri, until his retirement in 2021. In 1992 he began the annual the Music at St. Paul's series. Walter L. Pelz inaugurated the series with a hymn festival. Dr. Pelz returned on two more occasions to lead similar events.



Barry Bobb, now retired from full-time parish musician responsibilities, has served the past thirteen years as volunteer director of the Center for Church Music at CUC, overseeing its various initiatives and archival work.



Rev. Sean Daenzer is director of LCMS Worship and the chaplain at the Synod's International Center. He previously served for seven years as pastor of a dual parish in rural North Dakota.



Sam Eatherton has been a church musician and teacher in Lutheran churches and schools for 28 years. He is currently the Kantor and Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis MO, where he directs the Seminary Choirs, including the new Seminary Youth Choir.



Marin Jacobson serves as Phyllis and Richard Duesenberg Chair in Lutheran Music, Director of Choral and Vocal Activities, and Director of the Bach Institute at Valparaiso University. A music educator, conductor, soprano, and composer, Dr. Jacobson is a frequent clinician. Choirs under her direction have toured throughout the United States and abroad.



Anne Krentz Organ is a church musician and composer living in the Chicago area. Her published compositions include fifteen volumes of hymn tune arrangements for piano, additional volumes for piano and instrument, numerous choral pieces, psalm settings, handbell pieces, hymn introductions and alternate accompaniments, and music for congregational singing. She currently serves on the worship team and as the liturgical composer in residence for *Lutheran Summer Music*.



David Porth has served Pilgrim Lutheran Church and School in Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin, since 2014 and currently serves as Staff Minister, overseeing worship planning, communications, outreach, and pastoral support. He holds degrees in elementary education from Martin Luther College and church music from Concordia University Wisconsin, and he serves as an adjunct professor of organ at Wisconsin Lutheran College.



Peter C. Reske is senior editor of music/ worship at Concordia Publishing House, where he has served since 2004. With Joseph Herl and Jon D. Vieker, he was co-editor of *Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Hymns* (2019)



Rev. Matthew Rosebrock is the pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Lindenwood, IL and an online adjunct professor for Concordia University Wisconsin. He presents regularly in his academic area of expertise in theology and the visual arts. He is the author of several articles and the 2025 Lenten and Easter series, *The Hand of the Lord* (CPH). Rosebrock also continues to create art and take commissions (drawing, painting, and sculpture). He holds a B.A. in Studio Art from Concordia University Chicago (2005), M.Div. from Concordia Seminary St. Louis (2010), and a Ph.D. in Theology and Culture from Fuller Theological Seminary (2017).

Register [online](#).

Presenters

CONTINUED



Daniel Schwandt is the Cantor of Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, where he continues the rich tradition of organ and church music cultivated by his predecessors, Paul Manz, Mark Sedio, and David Cherwien. He also serves as University Organist and Lecturer in Music at

the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music, where he teaches organ and harpsichord. Schwandt holds degrees from St. Olaf College and the University of Notre Dame, where his doctoral research focused on the life and organ works of David N. Johnson (1922–1987). His compositions are published by Augsburg Fortress, MorningStar Music Publishers, and GIA Publications.



Emily Solomon serves as Cantor for Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in Detroit. She is also the Executive Director for the Academy of Early Music and Co-Director of LCMS Connections. Emily received her doctorate in sacred music from the University of Michigan in 2020 and

was appointed as a Schalk Scholar in 2024.



Rev. Stephen Paul Starke retired as a Lutheran pastor in 2020. Well known as a leader among Lutheran hymn writers, he has penned over 250 hymns. In July of 2023 he received the Faithful Servant Award from the ALCM for his service to the Church as pastor, hymnwriter, and hymnal editor. In

October 2025, Concordia University Chicago conferred the Spiritus Christi award to Starke in recognition of his contributions to the song of the Church.



Rev. Dien Ashley Taylor serves as the Bishop and President of the Atlantic District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). He also is the Pastor of Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church in The Bronx, New York. In addition to these, he has served as the LCMS President's

Voting Representative on the LCMS Board for National Mission, serving as that board's Vice-Chairman. A church musician, he has led people of all ages and many backgrounds in song in congregations, schools, and agencies of the Church.



Elisabeth Urtel recently received the PhD in Historical Theology from Concordia Seminary (2026), with a dissertation on the development of The Lutheran Hymnal (1941). She previously received the BA in Music from Bethany Lutheran College (2013), the MA in Lutheran

Theological Studies from Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary (2016), and the MCM in Organ from Concordia University Wisconsin (2016). Dr. Urtel has taught in the music department at Martin Luther College as well as in the history department at Bethany Lutheran College. Additionally, she maintains a private piano and organ studio and serves as dean of the American Guild of Organists—Sioux Trails Chapter.



Steven Wente is cantor at First Saint Paul's Lutheran Church in Chicago and is distinguished professor of music emeritus and organist laureate at Concordia University Chicago.



Emily Woock is an assistant professor of music at Concordia University Chicago, where she teaches courses in music education and church music, teaches applied organ lessons and is the principal organist and music coordinator for chapel. Emily continues to serve as church musician

at Redeemer Lutheran, Elmhurst IL. She holds an M.S.M. from Notre Dame University and a Ph. D. from Indiana University.

Register [online](#).

Registration

LECTURES IN CHURCH MUSIC | OCTOBER 19-21, 2025
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

Registration this year is online, available at [this link](#) or scanning the QR code.

If you wish to use a paper form, please email Steven Wentz at steven.wentz@cuchicago.edu.



Conference Prices

	Before September 15	After September 15
Entire conference	\$240	\$275
Entire conference 65+	\$160	\$180
Entire conference without Monday banquet	\$225	\$255
Entire conference 65+ without Monday banquet	\$145	\$155
Monday session only (without banquet)	\$165	\$185
Monday session only 65+ (without banquet)	\$130	\$150
Tuesday sessions only	\$125	\$140

Housing

Conference attendees are to secure their own housing/hotel arrangements. Previous conference attendees have stayed at the following sites and at other locations.

Comfort Suites Chicago
O'Hare Airport
4200 N. River Road
Schiller Park, IL 60176

Carleton of Oak Park
1110 Pleasant St. Oak Park, IL 60302
(708) 848-5000

Holiday Inn Express Chicago
West-O'Hare
200 South Mannheim
Hillside, IL 60162

Courtyard by Marriott
370 North IL Route 83
Elmhurst, IL 60126

Food Choices

Monday and Tuesday lunch are available at \$11 each.

You can purchase a ticket for each through online registration or onsite. When registering, you will also be asked for banquet choices. There are three:

1. Chicken Madeira
2. Simply grilled fresh salmon
3. Butternut squash quinoa cakes with mornay

Bring a Friend

Often it is more enjoyable to come to a conference with a friend or colleague, especially if it is someone who hasn't attended this conference. **If you are coming with a friend, you each can save \$25 on the registration fee when you register individually.** Just mark that on the registration form. You'll be asked to list the name of your friend, and you will receive a special code for the discount.

Scholarships

Full-time college students (undergraduate and graduate) are eligible for conference scholarships. A limited number of additional scholarships are available to first-time participants, with preference given to those new to the field of church music.

To apply, please fill out the scholarship form at [this link](#) or scan the QR Code and submit by September 1.

Scholarship recipients will be notified by September 15. The conference scholarships cover the entire conference fee. Five scholarships will be awarded.



Register online.

CAMPUS MAP



LEGEND

A Welcome Center

B Financial Aid

C Graduate Admission

D Undergraduate Admission

University Permit Parking

Visitor Parking

Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

AED, April-October dependent on weather