

Tom Trenney Named 2023 Raabe Prize Winner



The Association of Lutheran Church Musicians is pleased to announce that Tom Trenney is the recipient of the **2023 Raabe Prize for Excellence in Sacred Composition** for his choral submission, “From Generation to Generation.”

Tom Trenney has been minister of music to First-Plymouth Church (Lincoln, Nebraska) since 2009, where he directs choirs, preaches sermons, and accompanies the congregation on the Schoenstein organ. In 2019, he became associate professor of music and director of choirs at Nebraska Wesleyan University. Tom’s choirs have been honored to perform for state, regional, and national conventions of the American Choral Directors Association, and they have been award-winners of the American Prize for Choral Performance.

A graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Eastman School of Music, Tom plays hymn festivals and leads choral festivals around the country. As an organist, he was awarded first prize and the audience prize in the AGO’s National Competition in Organ Improvisation. Tom is grateful for the inspiration of his teachers and mentors, especially Anton Armstrong, David Davidson, Craig Hella Johnson, (Mister) Fred Rogers, William Weinert, Anne Wilson, and Todd Wilson. His choral compositions are published by Augsburg Fortress, Beckenhurst Press, Choristers Guild, E.C. Schirmer/Galaxy, Morningstar, Musicspoke, Pavane, and G. Schirmer. “From Generation to Generation” is published by Augsburg Fortress.

The selection committee, headed by Dr. Thomas Schmidt, included the following comments regarding “From Generation to Generation” in their report to the ALCM board:

“Among the 47 entries in the Raabe Competition this year, there were quite a number of excellent compositions, and it was interesting and gratifying for the committee members to discuss them over three rounds of judging. The winning piece, “From Generation to Generation” by Tom Trenney, was beautifully crafted and used its piano accompaniment, changing meters, and contrasting choral sections to excellent effect. The committee considered the piece, while very interesting and somewhat challenging, accessible for a wide variety of congregations, and this was an important factor in the committee’s decision. In the midst of many fine entries, the committee unanimously felt that it was fresh and creative, capturing the optimism of the text in an exciting and appropriate manner, and its use of the traditional hymn “O God, Our Help in Ages Past” combined with its forward-looking view towards generations to come, was a timely emphasis.”



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 Rev. Nancy Raabe of Philadelphia, PA, 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. Visit www.alcm.org for more information about the Raabe Prize.