

2021 Faithful Servant Awards

The Faithful Servant Award was established by ALCM in recognition of and appreciation for those who have made extraordinary contributions to the worship life of the church. In 2021, ALCM's board of directors identified two gifted individuals to receive this year's award: **Cheryl Dieter** and **Scott Weidler**.



Cheryl Dieter was born in Buffalo, NY, in 1953 and attended both parochial grade school and high school in West Seneca, NY. Singing is her first love, and she still remembers all three stanzas of the first solo she sang in church: "I Was Made a Christian" sung to *Adoro te devote*. She also sang for several years with a city-wide Lutheran children's choir that performed an annual Christmas concert. Not many people can claim to have sung the donkey verse from "The Friendly Beasts" as a solo in Kleinhans Music Hall.

Cheryl received a bachelor's degree in theology and music from Valparaiso University and a master's in liturgical studies from the University of Notre Dame, both in Indiana. Throughout her adult life she has held part-time church music positions in addition to full-time employment in other areas. Those full-time positions included: residence hall director, librarian, records manager, consultant, and business owner.

In 2001 she closed her consulting business and accepted the position of coordinator of the ELCA's Renewing Worship project, which led to the publication of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELW) in 2006. While in that position she served on all editorial teams as well as the resource proposal group. She also served on the editorial team for ELW's *Occasional Services for the Assembly* and *Pastoral Care* volumes and was project coordinator for the *Simplified Accompaniment Edition* and *Guitar Accompaniment Edition* of ELW. In addition to articles in ALCM's *CrossAccent* and *In tempo*, she is a frequent contributor to Augsburg Fortress's annual publication *Sundays and Seasons*.

In 2017 Cheryl retired from her part-time position as minister of worship and music at Trinity Lutheran Church in Valparaiso, a position she held for over 27 years. Cheryl has been honored to serve as ALCM's full-time business manager since 2006.

(Faithful Servant Awards continued)



Scott Weidler was a cantor's cantor. If a bishop is a pastor to pastors, Scott Weidler was a church musician to church musicians, for at least the Lutheran musicians in North America, if not well beyond. His love for the church's song and the liturgies that contained them was spacious, exhilarating, and contagious.

Scott died after a valiant struggle with pancreatic cancer on January 23, 2021, in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, with his devoted husband Zia Ahmed by his side. Scott's life witnessed to the extravagant love of God, made visible in the way he loved others, life, the church, and the diversity of God's beloved people.

For those of us associated with Scott primarily through the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, we came to know Scott first through his work in LCMS and ELCA congregations in Florida, New York, and Pennsylvania. He served as an associate in ministry as cantor at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Lancaster, PA, where he especially exhibited his creative and visionary leadership.

It was in his role as associate director for worship of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America from 1995 through 2016 where we were most influenced by his work. Scott was a key figure in the introduction of *With One Voice* (1995) and also served on the editorial teams for *Libro de Liturgia y Cántico* (1998), *This Far by Faith* (1999), and *Worship and Praise Songbook* (1999).

Scott was prominently at the forefront of leadership for the ELCA Renewing Worship project that yielded *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (2006), eventually supervising the introduction of a robust family of worship resources to the church and beyond, among them *Musicians Guide to Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (2007); *Worship Guidebook for Lent and the Three Days* (2009); *In These or Similar Words: Crafting Language for Worship* (2015); and *Singing in Community: Paperless Music for Worship* (2017).

Any consideration of Scott's service among Lutheran musicians must include his dedicated teaching and leadership of the Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Festival (1984–1995), his work with the Leadership Program for Musicians, Valparaiso University's Institute of Liturgical Studies, the Liturgical Music Seminar of the North American Academy of Liturgy, and Music that Makes Community.

Thanks be to God for Scott's life and witness among us. Let us pray that God continues to raise up and call more cantors to the task Scott took up worthily and with profound dedication.