



2026

CENTER FOR CHURCH MUSIC
ASSOCIATION OF LUTHERAN CHURCH MUSICIANS

Richard
HILLERT
AWARD
in Student
Composition

2026 Hillert Award Winners Announced

The Center for Church Music, in partnership with the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, wishes to honor the legacy of Concordia University Chicago distinguished professor of music Dr. Richard Hillert. His legacy includes not only his many liturgical pieces and musical works, but also his many gifts for teaching composition.

The Richard Hillert Award in Student Composition will be awarded every other year to a current student at a Lutheran university or seminary. The \$1000 cash prize will be awarded at the ALCM biennial conference, which may also include a performance of the work as a part of its program. The Center will also donate \$500 toward the winning composer's travel to the conference.

The Center is pleased to announce the winners (a tie!) of the 2026 Hillert Award....

Soren Ficklin *"What Wondrous Love Is This"*

(SATB choir, piano)

Zachary Heiss *"Built on the Rock"*

(Toccata for organ)

Previous winners...

Philip Michael Biedenbender (2016)

"And You Will Sleep"

Austin Theriot (2018)

"Psalm 8"

David Gilson (2018)

"Isaiah 12"

Owen Duncan (2020)

"I Am Still Seeking You"

Thomas Johnson (2020)

"Closet Prayer"

Bethany Zeckzer (2022)

"An Evening Prayer"

Katrina Jurica *"O Antiphons"* (2024)

(SA/SSA choir, congregation)

Grace Marshall *"Holy Sonnet XIII"*

(John Donne text for soloist or unison choir, piano)