

THE HYMN SOCIETY IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA



Thomas H. Troeger honored as Fellow by The Hymn Society

Dallas, Texas. Thomas Troeger has been honored by The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada (THS) at its Annual Conference in Dallas, Texas, July 17, 2019 by being named a Fellow of The Hymn Society. This award, the highest honor given by the organization, was conferred because of Troeger's work as a hymnwriter.

Born in Suffern, New York, Troeger studied at Yale University (BA), and Colgate Rochester Divinity School (BD). He is the Lantz Professor *emeritus* at Yale Divinity School and Institute of Sacred Music. Before that he taught homiletics and worship at Colgate Rochester Divinity School and then served as the Peck Professor of Communications and academic dean at the Iliff School of Theology in Denver.

Author of twenty-four books in the fields of preaching, poetry, hymnody and worship and a frequent contributor to journals dedicated to these topics, Troeger's first significant contributions to hymnody came through the publication of two collections with musical settings by Carol Doran: *New Hymns for the Lectionary* (Oxford, 1991) and *New Hymns for the Life of the Church* (Oxford, 1992). In the following years he finished four volumes of hymn texts and poems without musical settings: *Borrowed Light* (Oxford, 1994), *Above the Moon Earth Rises* (Oxford, 2001), *God, You Made All Things for Singing* (Oxford, 2009), and *Song that Blesses Earth* (Oxford, 2015). Scores of these texts were included in hymnals and supplemental collections, and many inspired new SATB anthems. Troeger is also known for exploring how poetry and music deepen faith by vitalizing our imaginations: *Wonder Reborn: Creating Sermons on Hymns, Music and Poetry* (Oxford, 2010), and *Music as Prayer* (Oxford, 2010).

He has served as president of The Academy of Homiletics (North America) and *Societas Homiletica* (the international guild of scholars in homiletics). His books in the field include *Imagining a Sermon, A Sermon Workbook* (co-authored with Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, Abingdon, 1990), *Sermon Sparks: 122 Ideas to Ignite Your Preaching* (Abingdon Press, 2011) and *The End of Preaching* (the 2016 Beecher Lectures). Troeger has been honored with honorary doctorates from Dickinson College, Virginia Theological Seminary, and the University of Basel in Switzerland, which cited him "for providing important impetus as the author of poems and hymns to a contemporary religious language which does justice to both aesthetic and theological demands." Troeger has led conferences and lectureships in Denmark, Holland, Australia, Japan, Africa, and North America. Ordained in the both Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches in the USA, he has served as national chaplain to the American Guild of Organists and is now happily retired in Maine with his wife, Merle Marie.

Speaking of his friend and colleague, Michael Hawn, FHS, said that Troeger is a "renaissance person who is known for writing the most intriguing incipits—those opening lines that say, 'What is going on here? What's going to happen next?' He is a 'thinking person'—covering a wide range of topics including lectionary passages, expanding our language for Deity, and especially the blending of faith and science." THS named its 2019 conference in Dallas after Troeger's hymn "Each Breath is Borrowed Air."

Founded in 1922, The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada is an ecumenical organization of people who are passionate about hymns and congregational song. We recognize the importance of the people's song in worship and want to assure its vitality in the future. The Hymn Society community, open to all, is made up of scholars, church musicians, poets, composers, choir directors, choir members, clergy, worship planners, song leaders, music publishers, music educators, and people who love to sing. We believe that the holy act of singing together shapes faith, heals brokenness, transforms lives, and renews peace. Our mission, therefore, is to encourage, promote, and enliven congregational song.

For further information about The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, contact J Michael McMahon, Executive Director, 5 Thomas Circle, NW, Washington, DC 2005, or call 800-THE-HYMN. www.thehymnsociety.org.