



## **THEODORE A. BECK**

**(1929–2003)**

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Born in River Forest, Illinois on April 17, 1929, “Ted” Beck attended both the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, where he studied piano with Kurt Waniek, and Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois (now Concordia University—Chicago), graduating with the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1950. While teaching organ there (1950-53) he earned a Master of Music degree from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. Beck was awarded the Doctor of Philosophy degree, also from Northwestern, in 1961.

Most of Dr. Beck’s teaching career was spent at Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska (now Concordia University—Nebraska), where he taught music theory, composition, and organ (1953—1998). During his tenure he was acknowledged as a master teacher and well known for his humility, his care for the students and his patient demeanor. The student body selected him as Teacher of the Year in 1987. He was also a very fine composer and always most willing to provide music for the choirs at the university. In October of 1997 the university honored him with “Beckfest”—a celebration of his musical contributions to the life of the Church. Many of his compositions for organ and for choir were published by Augsburg, Concordia, Chantry Press, and Choristers Guild.

Dr. Beck served as a member of the music committee for the *Worship Supplement* (1969), prepared by the LCMS Commission on Worship. For many years he was a member of the Music Editorial Advisory Committee (MEAC) of Concordia Publishing House, reviewing hundreds of submitted compositions each year and helping to develop and shape new resource ideas. He is still remembered for his quiet, reflective nature and erudite observations.

Dr. Theodore Beck died on September 19, 2003. His wife Carol (née Schall), whom he married in 1950, preceded him in death in 2002. He is survived by their three children, Tobin, Tedi, and Kevin.

*Barry L. Bobb*

*Originally written for the upcoming Lutheran Service Book: Hymnal Companion.*

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### **Sources and Further Reference**

Fred Precht, *Lutheran Worship: Hymnal Companion* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992) p. 542.

Email from Kevin Beck (son), October 22, 2008.

Email from David Held (colleague), December 11, 2008.

Phone conversation with Carl Schalk (fellow MEAC member), December 19, 2008.