

ABOUT THIS ISSUE'S HYMN



This hymn, a meditation on passages in the Gospel of Mark, is suitable for the Vigil of Easter and for the Resurrection of Our Lord in Year B, for the Second Sunday of Easter in any lectionary year, and for general use. The hymn is dedicated to Richard and Elaine Koenig, partners in ministry for sixty years, sustained and compelled by the gospel that they live to proclaim in word and service.

Richard Edwin Koenig is a Lutheran pastor, writer, editor, lecturer, and founder of new missions: Christ Lutheran Church in Yonkers, New York; Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst, Massachusetts; *Forum Letter*; *Lutheran Partners*; and *In Season*, to name a few. He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. He was once described as someone who leads by pushing the limits of conventional thinking and tradition while maintaining (in the words of theologian and brother-in-law Martin E. Marty) an "unerring instinct for staying the course (referring to Pauline Lutheranism) and moving on the basis of it." Marty also said that he knew of few people who do better than Richard Koenig at combining confessional loyalty with ecumenical vision. Promoting interfaith and interdenominational dialogue continues as a hallmark of Koenig's ministry beyond the parish. Of particular relevance to this hymn dedication is Richard's service as editor of *Lutheran Forum* from 1968 to 1974.

Elaine Camille Garbe Koenig is an Associate in Ministry, professionally trained visual artist, Bible-class teacher, social-service program developer, writer, and lecturer. She has committed her life to using all that

God had given her to further His work in the world, in partnership with Richard. She too has pushed the conventional boundaries, especially those associated with being a pastor's wife, by continually developing her own ministry path. The ways in which she continues to serve are varied and distinctly separate yet integral to the ministry partnership and intent on building community to nurture a deeper relationship with God. Their parallel ministries still resonate in the lives of their many friends throughout the world.

Two of their indebted friends are this hymn's co-authors, who met in the 1970s at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Amherst, when Richard was pastor there and both he and Elaine served in campus and community ministry in the Five College area. Bill Pasch is Professor Emeritus of English at Clayton State University and serves as organist and choir director at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, a multicultural congregation in Atlanta, Georgia. He is married to Katherine Pasch, whose decision to enter the Lutheran ministry owed much to the Koenigs' influence. Bob Weaver (brother to organist John Weaver) is Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Computer Science at Mount Holyoke College. Bob's wife, Anne Weaver, is a primary care physician in Amherst and directs the Immanuel church choir, in which Bob sings tenor. Bob and Bill would like to express their deep gratitude to Mary-Elaine Koenig Leake for her expert help in preparing this tribute to her parents, as well as to Sister Virginia Strahan of the communication team of the New England Synod for her assistance with biographical detail.



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