

Rev. Dr. Daniel G. Reuning



I am so honored to be a recipient of our English District's Roger D. Pittelko Ille Dilexit Ecclesiam Award. That "he loved the Church" is such an appropriate summary of his life and ministry. Providentially, God placed Roger Pittelko, into my life at a time when I was experiencing overwhelming challenges and enormous stress from them. His great love of the Church helped me to look beyond its human foibles and to fix my eyes on the One who continues to be present therein, strengthening us in Word and Sacraments with His grace, mercy, and truth.

My personal expression of love of the Church, encouraged by Pastor Pittelko, has always manifested itself in a blend of theology and music. The blend of these two disciplines I first encountered in 1935, when I was born into a musical pastor's family, living in a New Jersey parsonage, with a schedule that centered around the worship and musical activities at church. My mother was assistant organist and directed the adult and children's choirs, in which both my brother and I participated. At age 7, I started piano lessons, and by the time I was 12, I became the Sunday School organist. Three years later I began my studies at Concordia, Bronxville. During those years I also took organ and violin lessons at Julliard in NYC. At Concordia I served as one of the chapel organists, as accompanist for the touring choir, and as the organist for Sunday student services at the Village Church, where I also directed the Gloria Dei Student Choir. After Bronxville I attended Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and during those years served as a chapel organist, as accompanist of the Seminary Touring Choir, and as the assistant conductor of the Cantata Singers and assistant accompanist of the St. Louis Bach Choir. During my vicarage year, 1958-59, at Holy Cross in Toledo, Ohio, I founded the Toledo Lutheran Choral Society, and there met the love of my life, Barbara, who has not only been my faithful help-meet to this day, but has sung and continues to sing soprano in the choirs I direct. We have been blessed with two children and four grandchildren.

In 1960 my first Call was to St Luke's in NYC, where I served as assistant pastor, organist, and choir director. During my two years there, I also attended the School of Sacred Music at Union Theological Seminary, where I majored in Liturgy and organ and choral performance, and in 1962 was awarded the Master of Sacred Music degree.

From 1962-68 I served as sole pastor of St. Paul's in New Hartford, Connecticut and founded a Lutheran Choral Society there. Then in 1968 I was called to Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois as its dean of the chapel, assistant professor of liturgy and sacred music, and director of the men's and mixed choirs. In 1976 the Seminary moved to Fort Wayne, Indiana, where I continued to serve in the same capacities until 1999. During these Fort Wayne years I saw Pastor Pittelko very often and these encounters of continuing pastoral care and support were a God send.

Since 1987 I served as Kantor, organist/adult choir director, at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fort Wayne, Indiana. There I also have assisted Pastors Evanson and Petersen with a variety of pastoral duties.

From 1999-2001 I attended the University of Illinois in the doctoral program, majoring in choral conducting and in sacred choral literature, with an emphasis in Reformation era repertory. After graduating with the Doctor of Musical Arts degree, I founded the Bach Collegium—Fort Wayne in 2002 and conducted it for 20 years. Its concert venues provided opportunities to manifest the love of the Church, where the Gospel was proclaimed through song to diverse audiences from the greater Fort Wayne environs and beyond.

During the last ten years, I have been editing a hymnal supplement, *Te Laudamus (TL)*, for the Protes'tant Conference, a group of former Wisconsin Synod pastors and laymen.

Since the mid-70s Roger D. Pittelko and his love of the church have been an inspiration for me, and I will cherish his memory until I too will be called to glory and will see him again.