

**AN INTERVIEW WITH**

**Prof. Em. Bruce R. Backer  
Of Martin Luther College**

**By**

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**CH 3031 Modern Christianity  
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Prof. James F. Korthals  
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On October 28<sup>th</sup> 2006, I had the privilege of interviewing Professor Emeritus Bruce R. Backer of (Dr) Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota. As I conducted my interview, I was reminded of something Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant” (Matthew 20:26 NIV). When Jesus spoke these words, he was reminding his disciples that they do not become great because of a title, job, or vocation but that they become great by serving people. A great example of this was our Savior’s own life, “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28 NIV). Professor Emeritus Bruce R. Backer did just that - as a minister he was a servant, and his ministry was service. The purpose of this paper is to highlight what I learned and what can be found in this interview concerning the life and work of Professor Emeritus Bruce R. Backer.

## **PROLOG**

Professor Emeritus Bruce R. Backer would like to address a few words by way of introduction to me, to my instructor Prof. Korthals, and to anyone else who might see or listen to this interview.

“This project requires me to speak almost entirely of myself and my work. This is a spiritually hazardous journey. So I need to put the following into a context of spiritual context. The Lord God Almighty gave me life and health, wife and family, a comfortable home, and everything else that goes with these gifts. The God almighty guided my life and presented to me the various opportunities, challenges, and tasks of which we are going to speak. For all this I thank and praise him. The Lord God almighty gave me his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who rescued me from myself, from the power of Satan, and from eternal damnation. For this I thank and praise them. The Lord God Almighty also gave me his Holy Spirit in Holy Baptism. By his strength I have come to believe what I have said above. With his strength I carried out my ministry. For this gift I thank them. I brought nothing to the table, but the Lord God Almighty loaded it with blessing after blessing. When I succeeded in using his gifts for the good of the church, it was God’s work. And when I failed to use his gifts, as I did often, it was my own doing.

And for this I ask His forgiveness. To God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – be thanks and praise now and always!”

## **HIS LIFE**

Professor Backer was born in New Ulm, Minnesota, on December 13, 1929. There he attended Saint Paul Lutheran School and was confirmed in 1943. After four years at Martin Luther Academy in New Ulm, Minnesota, he enrolled at Dr. Martin Luther College of New Ulm, Minnesota (DMLC), and graduated in 1950. Beginning in 1951, Professor Backer became a student of Heinrich Fleischer, under a protracted study until 1991. After he received his B.A. in 1952 from Northwestern College (NWC) in Watertown, Wisconsin, he enrolled at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) where he graduated with a Master of Divinity in June of 1956. While enrolled at WLS, he also pursued a master’s degree in church music at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. He performed his master’s recital on July 6, 1956, graduated from Northwestern University on August 5, and was married August 7 to Virginia Spaude, a 1953 graduate of DMLC. Professor & Mrs. Backer were greatly blessed by God with a family of five children.

Professor Backer’s assignment from the Seminary took him to Winnebago Academy, where he taught for one year, 1956-57. The following summer of 1957, Professor Backer’s father, Emil D. Backer, who taught at DMLC since 1924, was called to his eternal resting place. DMLC asked Professor Backer to come to New Ulm and substitute teach for a year in his father’s place. In 1958, DMLC issued him a permanent call as Professor of Music until 1995 and thereafter until 2001 as adjunct instructor. During his early years at DMLC, Professor Backer pursued a Ph.D. in musicology, and became a candidate for the degree in 1967; but he did not write his dissertation. His areas of instruction while at the DMLC/MLC were organ and Lutheran Worship.

## **HIS WORK**

Professor Backer was very interesting to interview for many reasons. Not only does he have vast knowledge and experience, but he also has excelled by the grace of God in an area that I know little about - music and worship. As was mentioned earlier, Professor Backer is well versed in church music and also Lutheran Worship. His work covers a large range of events through out the history of the WELS. Due to time restraints, I narrowed down my interview to six questions, hoping to highlight some of Professor Backer's key accomplishments during his life. For a written version of Professor Backer's answers to the questions, please see the appendix.

### **Interview Questions**

- I. Describe the development of church music in your life and work at DMLC and any possible benefits of it to the WELS?
- II. What are his thoughts on Lutheran worship, with relation to the WELS?
- III. What was his involvement in the Organ Renaissance, and how has it affected the WELS?
- IV. What insights did he gain from his work on the Commission on Worship and on the Joint Hymnal Committee?
- V. Name an important development in the history of worship and music in the WELS and why?
- VI. How he pursued his advanced degree, how that degree made a difference in his career, and how the WELS might be better served if more pastors and musicians would pursue such training?

Overall, I learned a great deal about the life and work of Professor Emeritus Bruce R. Backer. A few of the more memorable things I learned from this interview dealt with his two main areas of expertise. Concerning church music Professor Backer reminded me, "Look backward, and move forward with security. Know your heritage, practice it; and it will lead you

securely into the future.” Concerning Lutheran worship he opened my eyes to something that has and is becoming more prevalent today! As individuals or as a whole synod we should be careful not to put all our focus on variety, but rather to get back to the essentials: the periscope of lessons, orders of worship in CW, the use of Psalter, and hymn periscope and other sound hymnody. I cannot say enough about this interview, it is filled with many insights, history, and struggles leading up to what we today sometimes take for granted – church and choir music and worship. For this, I would like to thank Professor Backer for his time and patience during this interview. And special thanks to the Lord God Almighty for blessing his church with such an innovative man as Professor Emeritus Bruce R. Backer. As a minister, he truly was a servant, and his ministry was a service to his Heavenly Father above!

## Appendix

**Describe the development of church music in your life and work at DMLC and any possible benefits of it to the WELS?**

CHURCH MUSIC AT DMLC HAS ITS ROOTS IN THE GERMAN LUTHERAN HERITAGE ESTABLISHED IN NEW ULM BY FRITZ REUTER 1863 – 1924

- **Reuter's life.** Born in Saxony Germany and died in New Ulm. Received excellent training in all facets of church music. Special emphasis on composition (Schreck & Rheinberger). Emigrated to N. America 1905, age 42, to Winnipeg CA, then to Chicago, and then to NU in 1908
- **Reuter's work.** In 1908 he was installed as first professor of music at DMLC. He taught all courses, directed all choirs, band and orchestra. He was also organist and choir director at St. Paul's. **Choir music.** He sang Bach and the finest literature available to him of the 18th and 19th C. Example: cantata at St. Paul's. **Organ music.** Brought organ instruction books from Germany (Palme), Bach - difficult and easier works, and the best of the 18\* and 19th century. **His own music.** He wrote choir music and sang it with his choirs. His choir music was based for the most part on Scripture passages. Knowledgeable persons outside the WELS considered his music very well written. He wrote organ music for use at the college and in congregations. He championed organ music based on hymn tunes. He was moved to write partly because the poor quality of organ music in the US at that time. **Instruments.** Reuter secured for the college a quality Steinway grand and a large Wirsching Organ. They found their place in the Music Hall, used at that time for chapel and concerts.
- **Reuter's legacy.** His choir music was too difficult for many church choirs; it was used to some extent. But his organ music was used in WELS up through the 50s and 60s. Students, who had received a good piano training at home or in the academy, were able to play Reuter's music with relative ease and did so. Even today one hears a Reuter hymn prelude from time to time.
- **Reuter bibliography:** Edward H. Meyer THE LIFE AND WORK OF FRITZ OTTO REUTER Master's thesis, CU River Forest 1972 (Copy in MLC library. MLC is gathering Reuter's choir and organ music for its archives.

CHURCH MUSIC AT DMLC FLOURISHED UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF EMIL D. BACKER 1893 - 1957

- **His life.** Born MilfordTwp1893, bapt. St. P; SP School, ML Acad; DMLC grad 1914. Assigned to Bethesda Cong. Milwaukee. Attended Wise Conserv. Music and studied piano. Diploma and post-grad diploma. Taught piano, public schools, came to NU 1923 when Reuter was very sick. Became professor/music in 1924. Studied organ at Amer. Conserv. Chicago with Wilhelm Middelschulte. Died 1957

- **His work.** Brought a high degree of organization to the music program at DMLC. **Choir music.** Sang the 8 Bach motets, the 3 Brahms motets, the Brahms Requiem, motets of Mendelssohn, motets of Schreck and Georg Schumann (Thomas cantors). In his last years 3 Bach cantatas. When CPH began publishing German Lutheran choir music in the 40s through the influence of Dr. Walter Buszin, my father used as much of it as he could. He wrote some of his own music for use in his choir. His two blessings are best known, with which he closed every concert. Published by NPH. He encouraged his brother-in-law, Martin Albrecht, to publish simple choir music. "DMLC Series." Popular in the WELS into the 70s. **Organ music.** Organ instruction was based on a sound preparatory piano program in the academy, which he had developed. Organ instruction included Bach collections, Brahms, Reuter collections, Anthologie, new collections from CPH (Wedding Music) Orgelbuchlein **Instruments.** By saving money from choir tours he was able to purchase a number of quality Wicks practice organs. Two others came as a gift. He was also able to completely refurbish the Steinway piano that Reuter had purchased years before.
- **His legacy. Choir** Through his love for choir work, his high quality performances, and through his conducting course he instilled in the graduates of DMLC a love for choral singing and conducting. His students carried this into congregations of the WELS. **Organ** As a result of his highly organized keyboard program from academy through college almost every graduate from DMLC went into his parish with the ability to lead congregational worship from the organ. **Instruments** As a result of his organ purchases, many WELS congregations purchased organs not unlike those in the Music Hall of DMLC
- **Bibliography.** Grace Wessel Hennig (wife of Pastor Brian Hennig, New London WI) wrote a master's thesis (1999) on the life of Emil D. Backer under the title: THE BACKGROUND, LIFE'S WORK, AND INFLUENCE OF EMIL D. BACKER

#### IT EXPERIENCED CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE MINISTRY OF BRUCE R. BACKER

- **His life.** Born 12.13.29 in New Ulm, bapt. 12.25.29. St. Paul's School 1943; Martin Luther Academy 1947; DMLC diploma 1950; Northwestern College B.A. 1952; Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary MDiv June 1956; Northwestern University MMus August 1956; University of Minnesota Candidate for PhD Musicology 1967. Student of Heinrich Fleischer, protracted study: 1951-1991.
- **His work**
  - A. **With choirs**
    1. The choirs: Academy choirs 5 yrs; College Choir II and Treble Choir, about 15 yrs.
    2. The literature: Cantatas of Buxtehude, motets of the later Renaissance and Baroque periods. Change: best of 20\* C. lit: Distler, Bender, Wienhorst.

3. Continuity & Change: Choirs assist in campus worship. Thesis: first fruits of choral music should be offered to the Lord in worship. Legacy continues to this day: Wednesday chapel is a choral office: permitting the singing of a psalm and a short motet or anthem.
4. Opportunity to sing the finest choral literature in the context of worship Choir director at Saint John's 1957 -1978
  - A group of about 25 gifted singers gathered to sing with me
  - In addition to the regular singing of Introits and Gradual-Alleluias, regular singing of HOD in alternation with cong., the regular singing of Gospel motets and short motets during Communion,
  - Sang as a response to the Gospel: Adv III Bach Sing Ye, Chr Day, Bach, To Us A Child is Born; Good Friday, Bach From Depths of Woe; Easter Bach Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Mvt I Jubilate Selection from Brahms Requiem; Ascension Bach Praise Our God in All His Splendor Mvt I.
  - In this context I felt that I was following in the footsteps of Prof. Reuter and of my father. And I went one step farther: **The best, offered to the Lord, in the context of worship.**
5. Necessary support for such choral work came from the teachers of Religion: at DMLC the Religion-Social Studies Division under the leadership of Prof. Ted Hartwig; and at Saint John's the unswerving support of the sainted Rev Frederic Nitz.

#### B. Organ Instruction

1. Developed an organ curriculum that trained students to play the liturgies and hymns of our church.
2. As service music we championed, like our predecessors, the very best of organ literature: Scheldt, Pachelbel, Buxtehude, Bach, Mendelssohn, but added 20th C.: Hindemith, Bender, Walcha, and others. Especially important: **Introduction of Orgelbuchlein**
3. The Organ Renaissance provided us with this literature.
4. We were able to gather a group of highly gifted organists and teachers, all of whom were committed to the same goals: Anderson, Luedtke, Kresnicka, Shilling, Meyer, and Wagner. (All had practical service experience.)
5. This work is a legacy that remains by and large to this day.

#### C. Instruments

1. We proposed, designed, and built a Music Center in 1961. Into this building we placed eight state of the art pipe organs. These instruments permitted us to teach effectively the best organ literature.
2. The crowning event was planning, fabrication, installation, and
3. dedication of the Backer Memorial Organ in 1971. It seems to me, in retrospect, to have been a stamp of approval on what had been done in the field of organ instruction and performance.

- **His legacy.** Students left DMLC, who had heard the finest choral and organ music in the context of worship, both at the college and at Saint John's. Students left DMLC, who were able lead choirs and play the organ, using the finest literature available. And there is evidence that this was done, here and there, in this parish and in that. It also needs to be said that, through the tireless efforts of Prof. em. Dr. Edward Meyer, having become an excellent organ consultant, our synod has been blessed with the installation of many excellent pipe organs. In this way the Lord of the Church has blessed our WELS more than I could ever have imagined. To him be thanks and praise now and always!

#### MESSAGE OF DMLC MUSIC PROGRAM TO THE WELS

- We go forward by looking backward. In the confusion of various styles of music surrounding the church today the music program at DMLC says: "Look backward, and move forward with security. Know your heritage, practice it; and it will lead you securely into the future." Is this being done at present? You be the judge!
- An important piece of research needs to be done: The History of Music at Dr. Martin Luther College. It could be a master's thesis or even a doctoral dissertation. It would elaborate in great detail what I have just discussed.

#### What are your thoughts on Lutheran worship?

- In 1988 I published the final edition of a textbook for my course: Lutheran Worship. The text has the same name. On page 10 of this text I speak of principles of Lutheran Worship. I should like to read this page to you.
- In my course and in the text I taught four areas: the church year, the Order of Holy Communion, the Psalter in worship, and hymnody in Lutheran worship.
  1. **CHURCH YEAR:** I taught the church year to teachers, since I wanted them to introduce the lessons to the children. This was before Christ Light. They should teach one of the lessons on Friday, so that the children will pay attention to it on Sunday. (The lessons tend to wash over people in Sunday worship.) Projects.
  2. **HOLY COMMUNION:** I taught it as an event that was in motion: from confession, prayer and praise to the Office of the Word; from there on a bridge of various offerings to Holy Communion; and from there on an exit path of Praise and thanks to live their life of worship during the week. Projects!
  3. **PSALTER:** The Psalter teaches the church how to pray. It is our prayer teacher. I should like to read to you from Page 89.
  4. **HYMNODY:** The Rev. Prof. Dr. Walter Buszin was the greatest Lutheran hymnologist in the 20th century. His influence in the WELS was extensive. He

was brother-in-law of the Rev. Prof. Hilton Oswald, who taught music and hymnology and directed choirs at NWC and WLS for many years. Dr. Buszin and my father were very good friends. They exchanged thoughts on church music and hymnology, as extensive correspondence attests. It was also my privilege to get to know Dr. Buszin. I heard him speak at numerous church music seminars; I visited him at his home; and I had the privilege of sitting hi on a meeting of LCMS church musicians, in which Dr. Buszin spoke of qualities of excellence in hymnody. I refined these qualities for my own use. They appear on pages 124-126 of my text. I should like to read them without comment.

- My text is no longer used in the WELS. But President Schmeling of Bethany Lutheran Seminary uses it in his course on Lutheran Worship.
- Following good principles of worship depends upon who the pastors, choir directors, and organists are in a given parish. Each of them brings his or her training with them into the parish. But they also bring their genetic code, and the sum of their worship experiences throughout their life. All of this produces a complex mixture of thoughts and possible actions. The distillate will be the worship program of a given parish. Thus, it seems to me to be a highly existential unit. WELS can help parishes by conducting church music seminars, which do n o t present more variety, but which give focus to the essentials: the pericope of lessons, the regular orders of worship in CW, the use of the Psalter, and hymn pericope and other sound hymnody. WELS needs a call to worship unity, not to worship diversity.
- These are my thoughts on Lutheran worship.

### **What was your involvement in the Organ Renaissance, and how has it affected the WELS?**

#### THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ORGAN RENAISSANCE

- Musicologists to bring to light the music, composers and performers, instruments on which music was played.
- Literature: the music of this organ renaissance
- Publishers: to make the music available
- Organists: to perform the music and to teach it to others
- Organ architects and builders: to design and build instruments that will bring this music to life.
- Market: places that will hire the musicians, build the instruments, and encourage performance of this music.

#### THE REALIZATION OF THE ORGAN RENAISSANCE IN THE U.S.: 1940 - 1980

- Scholars like Gustave Reese and Manfred Bukofzer wrote path finding volumes on music of the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and Baroque periods. There were many others.
- Their research brought to light in particular the German Lutheran heritage of organ music: Samuel Scheldt, Johann Pachelbel, Dietrich Buxtehude, JS Bach, and a host of lesser but still important composers and performers.

- Publishers for printing the music: C. F. Peters of Leipzig, Barenreiter of Kassel, CPH of St. Louis
- Organists & Teachers: Carl Weinrich and E. Power Biggs on the East Coast. Robert Noehren in Michigan. Heinrich Fleischer in the midwest. Major schools of music, such as Eastman, and larger universities attracted organists and teachers who were devoted to teaching this music.
- Organ designers and builders: G. Donald Harrison & Lawrence Phelps: Aeolian-Skinner; Herman Schlicker: Schlicker Organ Company; Walter Holtkamp: Holtkamp Organ Company; Casavant Organ Company, Quebec, CA. Paul Bunjes of Concordia U., River Forest, was emerging as a first-rate organ designer.
- Market for all of the above: the seminaries, colleges, and parishes especially of LCMS & WELS, also ELCA.

#### THE ADOPTION AND USE OF THE ORGAN RENAISSANCE PARTICULARLY IN WELS

- Young men and women studied the scholarly research at Midwestern universities: Northwestern University, University of Minnesota. Anderson, Luedtke, F&J Schubkegel, Backer. This included analysis and performance of many works of the German Lutheran heritage. The names of Scheldt, Pachelbel, Buxtehude, Bach generated real excitement among teachers and students alike, as did 20\* C. composers such as Walcha, Bender, Distler, Pepping, and Micheelsen.
- Publishers printed a broad spectrum of literature of German Lutheran heritage. Peters, Barenreiter, and especially CPH. My teacher Heinrich Fleischer, came to the US in 1949. He had been professor of organ at the Leipzig Conservatory and a top student of the famed Karl Straube. After he had come to America and began teaching at Valparaiso University, CPH and he got together very soon and published Vols. 1-4 of THE PARISH ORGANIST. Significant: it was a collection of simple but good organ music for the average parish organist. This collection was enlarged to 12 volumes. Used in many parishes into the 80s, and is still used in some places today. Important also was publication and use of Keller's 80 CHORALE PRELUDES; it is still used in basic organ instruction and is used in parishes. Of especial interest is publication and use of the ORGELBUCHLEIN of Bach.
- Teachers were available in schools of music and larger universities to interpret this literature. For us at MLC it was Heinrich Fleischer. He taught in turn at Valparaiso, Chicago Musical College, University of Chicago, and the University of Minnesota. WELS organists: Anderson, Luedtke, FSchubkegel, Bethel Zabell, Mary Prange, Doris Kitzerow Rindfleisch, and Backer. Focus of instruction was the major works of Bach and Buxtehude.
- Instruments: During the 40s there were no instruments to adequately interpret the German Lutheran heritage. Soon a good instrument was built here and there: a larger Schlicker organ in the auditorium of Wisconsin Lutheran High School. The building of this instrument may well have been the first important step forward. The man behind the acquisition of this instrument was a student of Heinrich Fleischer.
- In 1961 the Music Center was dedicated at DMLC. Consultant was Prof. Dr. Paul Bunjes of CU, RF. WELS purchased pipe organs, each of which was perfectly qualified to present German Lutheran heritage. Builders were Casavant, Schlicker, Schantz, and Reuter. With these instruments students could hear every day how German Lutheran

organ music, past and present, ought to sound. They could and did take this sound into their parishes. Culminating event: design, construction, installation and dedication of Backer Memorial Organ in 1971. Design by Paul Bunjes, and construction under the watchful eye of Lawrence Phelps by Casavant of Canada. Now students and staff could hear in worships the best Lutheran music played on a first class instrument by good students and eminently qualified instructors. A member of the music division, Prof. em. Dr. Edward Meyer became a qualified organ consultant (designer) under the tutelage of Dr. Bunjes. He has over the years designed and supplied many congregations of the WELS with very fine instruments. His work includes the fine Dobson Organ at WLS.

- Market for the organ renaissance: College and seminaries and parishes of WELS and LCMS made abundant use of good literature: PO, 12v.; Keller 80K., and other Baroque composers; made use of gifted organ teachers who taught this music; and of skilled organ designers and builders who offered quality instruments to present the music of the German Lutheran heritage.

### **What did you gain from your work on the Commission on Worship and on the Joint Hymnal Committee?**

- Since I lived most of my life in NU, I gained insight into worship customs in a broad spectrum of WELS. I had a chance to work again with my uncle, The Rev. Prof. Martin Albrecht. We had worked together for only five years at DMLC, when he was called to WLS. He had always been and remained inordinately kind to me. On one "hymnal trip" it was my privilege, together with my sister, to visit him the evening before he passed away.
- At great risk I select a few men from the hymnal project whose memory remains with me. Pastor Victor Prange: He was able to keep the entire hymnal project in his mind, and was able to keep the project moving forward. He exhibited great strength of body, soul, mind, and spirit. Prof. Dr. Kermit Moldenhauer: Indefatigable, he kept bringing us fresh copy of the proposed hymnal so we could act and move forward. And the work he did was always first class. The Sainted Rev. Prof. Richard Buss: He was very good friend. A member of the English Division of DMLC, he became chair of the hymn text committee. He did a superb job of steering a middle course for the texts of CW, with the result that the hymnal gained general acceptance in this respect. Pastor Kurt Eggert: He had an uncanny sense of what the constituency of the WELS would accept. We remember him especially for his fine hymn: **NOT UNTO US BE GLORY LORD.**
- Members of the Hymn Text and Tune Committee: Without their good and sometimes outlandish humor we would never have made it through a week of work.
- To be sure, I enjoyed the company of every member of JHC. I was happy that they accepted me, and I was more than pleased to be in then- company.

### **Name an important development in the history of worship and music in the WELS and why?**

- A group of men in the Milwaukee area, interested in worship, met informally from time to time -once or twice a year. The leaders were: Pastor Kurt Eggert of Milwaukee, The Rev. Prof. Dr. Ralph Gehrke of NWC, and The Rev. Dr. Walter Wegner from Columbus

WI. These meetings attracted a goodly number of pastors, choir directors, organists, and interested laymen. Choosing informality, the group did not give itself a name.

- The work of this group featured the essentials of worship. They were: the historic periscope (church year), the Order of Holy Communion, singing the Psalms, the best of Lutheran hymnody, and the best of Lutheran church music. There were essays and discussions, as well as demonstrations of hymnody and church music. This group, according to my recollection, met once or twice a year.
- This group issued a publication: **VIVA VOX**. It rehearsed what had been presented at meetings and presented other essays in the area of worship and church music.
- One cannot emphasize too much the importance of the work of this group. At a time when the essentials of worship, as noted above, were neglected, this conference emphasized them. And the result is that these essentials are still with us today: use of a standard pericope; frequent celebration of Holy Communion; singing of the Psalter; and the use of a hymn periscope, called Hymn of the Day. The influence of this group reached out beyond WELS into LCMS, and it may well have gone beyond that.
- This conference certainly had an influence on me: in the formation of my course **LUTHERAN WORSHIP**, in my organ instruction, and also in the introduction of DMLC choirs into the worship program.
- This is an area where fruitful research should be done, since we tend to forget our roots. The research should be in the history of this church music conference, and there should be a thorough analysis of the many volumes of **VIVA VOX**.

**Why did you pursue an advanced degree. How has that degree made a difference in his career? How might WELS be better served if more pastors and musicians would seek such training?**

- Paternal encouragement. My father encouraged me to get advanced training in music after 1952 graduation from NWC. He understood the difficulties of pursuing advanced education as a husband and father.
- Education as a student. Summer of 1952 University of Minnesota Undergraduate courses in theory and analysis Summers 1953-56 Northwestern University Master of Church Music Degree. Graduation from WLS June 1956 Master's Recital July 1956 Graduation from NU August 1956
- Education as a professor of music. Upon graduation I became a tutor of DMLC for two years. In 1958 I received a permanent call as professor of music. Faculty of Northwestern University had encouraged me to return to work on a PhD. As husband and father I considered the distance too great. Then I met Dr. Johannes Riedel, musicologist at the University of Minnesota. He encouraged me to come and work on a PhD in musicology. I completed my course work hi 1966, took my preliminary examination in the fall of 1967,

and I became a Candidate for the PhD. In 1971 I decided that I would not write a dissertation, so I discontinued my graduate studies.

- Education as an organist. I began studying with Heinrich Fleischer in 1951 and continued until 1991. I studied on a non-credit, protracted basis at Chicago Musical College, at Rockerfeller Chapel, and at University of Minnesota. The emphasis of my study with him was the chorale-based music of Bach. This emphasis was Reuter's legacy to my father, and my father's legacy to me. And I have offered it to my students.
- The benefits of my education in public universities. The confines of the WELS are intellectually restrictive. The same basic thoughts keep tumbling around the synod. Not many new thoughts are added, because "new" is often suspect. We may compare ourselves to the Amish or to the Hutterites. They are geographically confined, and we are ideologically confined. Here and there a Hutterite will leave the community, go about, learn new things, and return. The result is usually positive for the community. The same applies to me. In attending NU and U of MM, and in studying with HF, I learned many things that were good and wholesome, things that could be of real benefit to the WELS. I applied them to the duties that were assigned to me.
  - **Academic organization.** I was chair of a committee whose task it was to organize the academic process of the college. We organized the faculty into academic divisions with division chairmen, and proposed an academic dean to govern this body under the president. The proposal was the first of its kind in the WELS. It was later imitated by other schools in the WELS.
  - **Choir work.** I brought the best of the Lutheran tradition and the best of 20<sup>th</sup> century literature into the choral program.
  - **Organ instruction.** We structured an organ curriculum that would serve the WELS eminently well. I emphasized the best of the Lutheran tradition and the best of 20<sup>th</sup> Century literature. And the Orgelbuchlein became the benchmark of instruction at the college.
  - **Piano instruction.** I encouraged the introduction of class piano. As a result, Prof. Otto Schenk studied with Guy Duckworth, at that time the leading exponent of class piano instruction in the US; and with great skill he introduced class piano at DMLC.
  - **Theory of music instruction.** I brought our teaching of theory in line with Eastman School of Music, the University of Minnesota, and Concordia University, RF.
  - **History of music.** Instead of Introduction to Music as "talk course," I developed a course that was totally a listening course. This was current practice in other schools.
  - **Lutheran Worship.** I developed the course call Lutheran Worship. I have spoken of this before. It reflected the best of current thinking in the area of worship.

All of these thrusts were positive and were of great benefit to DMLC.