

Advisory on the Music of Composer/Lyricist David Haas

At the August Presbytery meeting, the MCPC asked that Presbytery commend to all Presbytery of Florida worship planners—for their prayerful consideration—the Presbyterian Association of Musicians' (PAM) statement regarding its decision not to use *Glory to God* hymn numbers 148, 172, 177, and 749 or any other music penned by composer-lyricist David Haas in worship services and events. MCPC further asked the Presbytery to recommend to worship planners across the Presbytery that use of those hymns be carefully considered out of respect and compassion for victims of sexual abuse to avoid triggering traumatic memories for them; and that the PAM statement, auxiliary links, and a caution to worship leaders/planners also be placed on the Presbytery website.

Background: Between 1975 and 2021, more than 50 women and girls (ages 12-63) reported lyricist and composer David Haas for acts of predatory grooming, rape, and other forms of sexual abuse. Because of the known proclivities of Haas, using his hymns could trigger horrifying responses in congregants who are victims of sexual abuse. The hymns attributed to Haas in the *Glory to God* hymnal are:

148 – *Mary and Joseph Came to the Temple*

172 – *Blest are They* (also arranged as a choir anthem)

177 – *I Will Come to You (You are Mine)* (also arranged as a choir anthem)

749 – *Come! Live in the Light! (We are Called)*

There are no hymns attributed to Haas in the 1990 *Presbyterian Hymnal*. There are also many readily available anthems arranged for choir, though several publishers no longer carry/sell his music.

Links for further information:

- <https://www.awakecommunity.org/search?q=Haas>
- Victims' Reports - <https://intoaccount.org/davidhaas/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Haas#cite_note-auto-1 (includes lists of music publishers, educational institutions, and religious organizations that have taken a stand in support of abuse victims, as well as organizations that have rescinded awards and honors)
- Haas Apology (2020) - https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/20604577-haasapologystatement7_9_20/

The Presbytery has no policy regarding use of these materials. Decisions about choice of music used in PCUSA worship services and events remains in the hands of pastors, sessions, and worship planners.