

Eileen Guenther Biographical Sketch

Dr. Eileen Guenther, Lecturer in Organ at The George Washington University, also serves as Professor of Church Music at Wesley Theological Seminary, where she teaches music and worship courses and directs the Chapel Music. Her role as teacher extends to churches and musical and denominational organizations, for which she leads workshops on music and social justice, global music, Spirituals, and clergy-music relations. Her book, *Rivals or a Team: Clergy-Musician Relationships in the 21st Century*, was published in June, 2012 by MorningStar Music Publishers. It has been widely acclaimed and has received a great deal of media attention, resulting in interviews with Eileen which have been published in a variety of venues, from blogs and denominational newsletters to *The Huffington Post* and *The Christian Century*. A second book, *In Their Own Words: Slave Life and Power of Spirituals*, published by MorningStar Music Publishers in June of 2016, has also been enthusiastically received and is in its third printing.

Eileen holds a BA in English and a BM in Organ from the University of Kansas, along with Master's in Musicology and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from The Catholic University of America. She served six years as National President of the American Guild of Organists, the third woman to lead this organization since its founding in 1896. The AGO, with a membership of over 16,000 members, serves organists and choral musicians around the world. Under her leadership the organization completed a long range plan and an overall reorganization. As an organ recitalist, Eileen has performed over 250 recitals around the US as well as in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America. She appears on several record labels and for many years was the host of her own award-winning radio program, *The Royal Instrument*, broadcast on WGMS AM-FM, Washington's only full-time classical music station at the time.

Eileen's interest in world music has led her to serve as visiting lecturer at Africa University in Zimbabwe and to participate in UMC Global praise teams teaching music and worship in Uganda and Ivory Coast. South Africa, too, holds a special place in her heart and she has led eight groups of Wesley Seminary students on intercultural immersion trips there.

Dr. Guenther served with distinction as Director of Music at St. Francis Episcopal Church in Potomac, MD and as Minister of Music and Liturgy at Foundry United Methodist Church in Washington, DC. Under her leadership, the Foundry Choir appeared at United Methodist General Conference twice and sang at the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference many times. President and Mrs. Clinton regularly attended this church and the choir was invited to sing at the White House on numerous occasions. Described in a review by *The Washington Post* as "one of Washington's best choruses," these singers had a heart for justice and for years presented an annual Concert for Life. Under Eileen's direction, these concerts raised more than \$600,000 for organizations serving those living with HIV/AIDS in southern Africa and in the Washington area. She was recently honored for her leadership at the 20th annual Concert for Life on the occasion of the concerts' having raised \$1 million.