



The AGO Committee on New Music is pleased to announce the

2028 AGO/ECS PUBLISHING AWARD IN CHORAL COMPOSITION

Twenty-First Biennial Competition

AWARD

- \$3,000 commission for a new work for SATB choir and organ
- Performance at the 2028 AGO National Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Publication by ECS Publishing Group

COMMISSION

Composers will propose a commission for a work for SATB choir and organ, utilizing all of the text of “Hope” by Clara Ann Thompson. The piece should be four to six minutes in length, and the organ must play a significant role. There are no restrictions with regard to compositional style. The submitted proposal should reflect the composer’s compositional strength and interests. The work should be suitable for performance by a proficient choir of moderate ability.

ELIGIBILITY

Composers of all ages are welcome to enter, and the applicant need not be a member of the American Guild of Organists. Previous winners of the AGO/ECS Publishing Award in Choral Composition may not enter. Prior organ composition experience is not necessary and will not hinder consideration of an application.

APPLICATION MATERIALS AND DEADLINE

A completed online application has three parts (see agohq.org/competitions):

1. An application form.
2. A proposal for a commission—not longer than 1,000 words. The proposal should explain how the proposed commission would be useful to the AGO membership, and it should provide insight into your creative thinking as a composer.
3. Two sample scores, with all identifying information (such as the composer’s name) redacted for the purpose of an anonymous adjudication. One score must demonstrate command of writing for choir. The other must demonstrate command of writing for a keyboard instrument. You must also submit a corresponding audio-only file with each score.

The application will open on March 1, 2026, and all application materials must be submitted online on or before July 1, 2026. The winner of the commission will be announced on or before September 30, 2026.

JUDGING AND COMMISSIONING GUIDELINES

A panel of professional composers and performers will evaluate all applications in strict anonymity, selecting as the winner a composer who holds the highest potential for producing a lasting contribution to the choral repertoire, as well as one that is meaningful to the AGO membership. An advance payment of \$1,500 will be awarded at the time of commissioning. The remaining \$1,500 will be awarded upon receipt of an autographed copy of the completed score, due no later than June 30, 2027. If the commission is not completed on time, the commission advance must be repaid. Arrangements for publication of the winning composition will be made between the composer and ECS Publishing Group.

For more information, contact AGO Headquarters or visit the AGO website.

2028 AGO/ECS Publishing Award in Choral Composition
American Guild of Organists • AGOhq.org
Tel: 212-870-2310 • Fax: 212-870-2163 • Email: competitions@agohq.org

Hope

Clara Ann Thompson (1869–1949)

The saddest day will have an eve,
The darkest night, a morn;
Think not, when clouds are thick and dark,
Thy way is too forlorn.
For ev’ry cloud that e’er did rise,
To shade thy life’s bright way,
And ev’ry restless night of pain,
And ev’ry weary day,
Will bring thee gifts, thou’lt value more,
Because they cost so dear;
The soul that faints not in the storm,
Emerges bright and clear.