

## **The Hymns of Charles Tindley and Roberta Martin**

**Presenter: Victor V. Bobetsky**

**2014 National Conference of the American Guild of Organists**

**Wednesday, June 25, 8:30-8:55 am**

**Marriott Copley Plaza Hotel: The Simmons Room**

**Boston, Massachusetts**

This paper/presentation focuses on two African-American hymn composers, the Reverend Charles Albert Tindley and Roberta Evelyn Martin, highlighting similarities and differences in their background, musical training and style.

### **Selected References:**

Boyer, Horace Clarence. "Charles Albert Tindley: Progenitor of African-American Music," in *We'll Understand it Better By and By: Pioneering African American Gospel Composers*, ed. Bernice Johnson Reagon (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992)

Darden, B. *People get ready! A new history of Black gospel music*. New York: Continuum, 2005.

Fuld, James J. *The Book of World Famous Music*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Dover Publications, 1985.

Jones, Ralph H. *Charles Albert Tindley: Prince of preachers*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1982.

Kimbrough S.T. and Young, Carlton R. ed. *Beams of Heaven: Hymns of Charles Albert Tindley*. New York: General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 2006.

Martin, Roberta. "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," *The Great Gospel Women*, Shanachie Records, 1993.

Maultsby, P. K. (2001). The Use and Performance of Hymnody, Spirituals, and Gospels. *Readings in African American church music and worship*. Abbington, J. (Ed.). Chicago, IL: GIA Publications.

Reagon, Bernice Johnson. *We'll Understand it Better By and By: Pioneering African American Gospel Composers*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1972.

Young, Carlton. *Companion to the United Methodist Hymnal*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993.

### **About the presenter:**

Victor V. Bobetsky is an Associate Professor of Music at Hunter College where he directs the Teacher Education Program in Music. Dr. Bobetsky began his career in education as a choral music teacher in the New York City Public Schools, where his choirs won grants from community arts organizations to perform at local colleges and universities. He went on to serve as a school district music administrator and supervisor for over twelve years.

Dr. Bobetsky recently presented a symposium at Hunter College (May 1, 2013) exploring the origins of the song, "We Shall Overcome". Students from the New York City Public Schools and the Nubian Conservatory of Music performed several songs considered to be antecedent songs to the "We Shall Overcome" we know today. The symposium brought together students and scholars who shared a common interest in the history of "We Shall Overcome" and in the origin of related hymns and protest songs. Dr. Bobetsky's research in these areas has led to the publication of his article in the February 2014 issue of *Choral Journal* titled, "The Complex Ancestry of We Shall Overcome", in the February 2014 issue of *Choral Journal*.

Dr. Bobetsky also specializes in arranging folk songs of diverse cultures for elementary, middle and high school choruses; these arrangements are published by Boosey and Hawkes, Cambiata Press, GIA Publications, Hinshaw Music and Musica Russica. His book, *The Magic of Middle School Musicals: Inspire Your Students to Learn, Grow, and Succeed* is published by Rowman and Littlefield Education and co-published by the National Association for Music Education. Dr. Bobetsky is active in the New York City community as a piano teacher and as a church and temple organist.