**Artists in the Trenches**

Professional artists often find themselves at odds with both their workplace and their church. For musicians, whether on the concert stage or in the opera house, the prevailing assumption is that Christian faith is either naïve or intellectually dishonest. How does one faithfully live out one's calling in this atmosphere? And how does one contribute meaningfully to a church which either distrusts one's profession or finds it irrelevant to its mission? Join conductor Delta David Gier, along with a panel of professional musicians (soloists, opera singers, orchestral musicians), for a robust and honest discussion about life and faith in the midst of adversity.

**Delta David Gier** has been called a dynamic voice on the music scene, recognized widely for his penetrating interpretations of the standard symphonic repertoire, passionate commitment to new music, and significant community engagement. Orchestras Mr. Gier has conducted include the New York Philharmonic, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony, the St. Louis Symphony, and the Minnesota Orchestra. In Europe, his engagements include the Bergen Philharmonic, the Polish National Radio Symphony, and the Bucharest Philharmonic, along with many other orchestras in Italy, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Turkey. He studied at the University of Michigan under the renowned conducting teacher Gustav Meier, along with studies at the Tanglewood Music Center and Aspen Music Festival. He was a Fulbright scholar in eastern Europe from 1988-90. He has chaired the music jury of the Pulitzer Prize and is a frequent panelist for the League of American orchestras. The Lakota Music Project was developed under Gier’s direction to address racial tensions between Native Americans and whites in the region the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra serves. Other engagement projects with the SDSO have included Arab, Chinese and Sudanese/Somali refugees.

**Questions to be addressed to the panel:**

1. How do you see your talents in relationship to God?
2. What is your responsibility regarding evangelism and discipleship in your professional life?
3. What has been your relationship to the Church? Have you been able to use your gifts for God’s glory in the Church, or only in your professional life?
4. Have you had substantive interaction with pastors, theologians, seminarians, regarding the arts in worship? Your role as a Christian serving the Lord in the secular arts world?
5. If you were able to influence worship in the Church in general and/or in your own congregation, what possibilities do you see?