

Church music composer David Haas accused of 'sexual battery' and 'spiritual manipulation'

by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [July 29, 2020](#) issue



David Haas performing at Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines in 2016. (Photo by Titopao via Creative Commons License)

At least two religious publishers have cut ties with Catholic composer David Haas after nearly a dozen women have accused him of sexual and spiritual abuse.

GIA Publications, which publishes one of the most popular Catholic hymnals in the US, said in a June 13 Facebook post that it had become aware of the accusations against Haas in early 2020: "In response, we suspended our sponsorship and publishing relationship with Mr. Haas, and have not sponsored his work since late January."

Then, in late June, MennoMedia—an agency of Mennonite Church USA—said songs composed by Haas had been removed from consideration for its new hymnal, scheduled to be released this fall, although five of his songs are included in hymnal supplements already used in many Mennonite congregations.

Catholic media began reporting on the abuse allegations in mid June after Into Account, a support organization for survivors of abuse in Christian communities, began sending copies of a letter to Catholic organizations on behalf of Haas's accusers.

According to the letter, Haas has engaged in "a repeated, unethical abuse of the professional and spiritual power he has had in church music circles." Furthermore, the letter states that Haas has deliberately targeted and exploited women who had previously experienced abuse.

Haas has denied the allegations. Into Account says 14 additional women have come forward with abuse claims since the story broke.