



**The Forty-Eighth Biennial Convention of the Minnesota District
June 12-14, 2012
Report of the MN District Worship Committee**

Worship is the heart of all parish life, the time when the greatest number of members gathers to proclaim the gospel and receive God's life-giving power in Word and sacrament.

The Commission on Worship, and by extension, the MN District Worship Committee “provides important guidance and education in a time when worship topics are at the forefront of discussion in our synod.”

1. A summary of points from the 2011 *Book of Reports and Memorials* and the 2012 *Report to the Twelve Districts* highlights worship activity in the WELS:
 - a. *Christian Worship Supplement*
 - i. Released at the anticipated mid-point of the life of *Christian Worship* (2008 – 15 years after CW release in 1993 – next new hymnal projected for 2024).
 - ii. Sales have exceeded *NPH* projections – a strong majority of WELS congregations are using *CWS* to at least some degree.
 1. 1,729 accompaniment editions; 45,488 pew editions.
 - iii. Helps produced:
 1. Bible class series on selected hymns
 2. Midweek Advent worship series
 3. An updated edition of *Planning Christian Worship*
 4. A professionally recorded 2-CD set of highlights using a wide variety of instruments, and
 5. A series of *Worship the Lord* newsletter articles.
 - iv. Four concertatos on *CWS* hymns were commissioned and published by *NPH*
 1. *Father, God of Grace, You Knew Us* (CWS 753)
 2. *Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands* (CWS 720)
 3. *Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia* (CWS 719)
 4. *For Builders Bold Whose Vision Pure* (CWS 775)
 - b. Schools of Worship Enrichment
 - i. Over 256 churches have been served – 30% of WELS. Post “school” surveys have given high marks to these events. Watertown, SD – September or October, 2012.
 - c. Publishing
 - i. *Christian Worship: Supplement*
 - ii. Two bi-monthly newsletters:
 1. *Worship the Lord* and *Preach the Word*
 - iii. *Worship Music: A Resource for Lutheran Keyboard Musicians* final publication of a ten-year run in 2010.
 - iv. Commission on Worship member, Pastor Michael Schultz prepared a new service setting for guitar and piano. Available from the composer. I have a copy here.
 - d. *The National Conference on Music, Worship, and the Arts*
 - i. The largest worship conference of all North American Lutheran church bodies
 - ii. July 19-22, 2011, Gustavus, St. Peter/MLC, New Ulm
 - iii. 16 newly commissioned musical settings

- iv. Major focus, “Passing the Torch to the Next Generation”
 - 1. Children and all in our Lutheran educational system (LES, ALHS, Prep, College and Seminary levels).
 - 2. Select children’s choir
- v. Continuing Education encouraged and documented, in keeping with the Ad Hoc Commission and Synodical emphasis
- vi. Thrivent Grant, “Taking Worship to the Next Level,” benefiting selected parishes
- vii. Conference resources available at connect.wels.net/worship
- e. Ongoing activity
 - i. Items mentioned above
 - ii. Revised/expanded worship curriculum (pending funding – current is *Come Worship Christ*, 1996)
 - iii. Redesigned/expanded HymnSoft
 - iv. Intranet resources on Connect
- f. New Initiatives
 - i. Revising/updating historic Lutheran hymns
 - ii. Next WELS hymnal at 500th anniversary the Reformation, 2024.
- 2. MN District Worship Committee Activity
 - a. The past biennium
 - i. Plan District Convention worship
 - ii. Committee member Pastor Joel Gawrisch served with Pastors Daniel Deutschlander and Jonathan Schroeder as a writer of the updated *Planning Christian Worship*
 - iii. In response to requests from the floor and privately by delegates of 2010 District Convention for support of contemporary/blended worship, two workshops were given at the Church Leaders Workshops in Belle Plaine, MN.
 - 1. March, 2011 - *Traditional Worship, Blended Worship, Contemporary Worship: Strange Bedfellows?* (David Bauer, Kurt Lueneburg).
 - 2. March, 2012 – *Foundational Worship Principles, Forming and Functioning of a Worship Committee, Blended Worship at St. Peter, Visiting Artists, New Songs and Instrumental Variety* (Joel Gawrisch, David Bauer, Kurt Lueneburg, SusanAnn Lueneburg)
 - b. Future Activity
 - i. Develop a presence on the MN District Website
 - 1. Resources, links
 - ii. *NPH* Music Reading Workshop
 - 1. Saturday, July 7, Chapel of the Christ, MLC
 - 2. Piano, Organ, Mixed Choir, and Children’s Choir music
- 3. New Resource
 - a. *Institute for Worship and Outreach* (worshipandoutreach.org)

Respectfully submitted,

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