

Minnesota District Worship Committee Report

June 2024

Who We Are

Rev. Craig Engel, Prof. Craig Hirschmann and Teacher Mike Marquardt serve as members of Minnesota District Worship Committee. **Pastor Joel Gawrisch** has served as the coordinator for the committee since 2021, filling out the term initially held by Teacher Mike Marquardt. Please reach out with worship-related questions and feedback. Joel Gawrisch: joelg@wels.us

Activity in the Past Two Years

- In-person congregational, pastoral conference, and district Leadership Workshops to introduce resources, demonstrate flexible use of resources, answer questions, and assist with worship planning.
- Support to help promote purchase of CW resources.
- Leadership Workshop presentation: Life-of-Christ Worship – encouraging the central place of the Life of Christ in worship through focus on Church Year resources (liturgy, lectionary, hymnody, etc.)
- District Easter Vigil service held on Easter Eve in the Chapel at St. Croix Lutheran Academy. This worship event included singers, musicians, and attendees from many parts of the District.

Coming up

- **2024 National Conference on Worship, Music, & the Arts:** July 30-August 2, 2024, Carthage College, Kenosha, WI. See wels.net/worshipconference for details. NOTE: This conference is intended for a broader audience than musicians. There is literally something for everyone. Several DWC members will be presenting at the conference.

Christian Worship Hymnal Suite

- To make the most of the CW21 “suite of resources” are available at christianworship.com and online.nph.net/church-supplies/categories/hymnals-songbooks/christian-worship-suite. In addition to the pew editions of the hymnal and psalter, with their six accompaniment volumes, another 17 items are available with two more still pending. These resources are available, not only to help make the most of those who are using CW21, but also to help those still looking to make the change.
- NPH estimates that almost 900 WELS congregations have adopted the new hymnal, and 621 congregations have subscribed to the *Service Builder* program. And additional 145 congregations have purchased the Playlist add-on. For a variety of reasons, adoption of the new hymnal was not expected to be as rapid as adoption of the 1993 hymnal. But thus far adoption of both the hymnal and *Service Builder* are well above projections.
- The launch of *Musician’s Resource* (MR) took place in 2022. MR provides choral alternates, lead sheets, modulations, and instrumental packs (SATB voices of pew edition settings in a variety of transpositions for instruments). MR resources are digital resources (downloadable PDFs); customers will need to be logged into an account to purchase. With more than 1500 files currently available, new materials are added regularly at: online.nph.net/musicians-resource.

- Setting 5 by Schultz/Becker available (piano only or liturgical ensemble packages; no organ w/instruments available or planned at discretion of the composers)

A Look Ahead for the Commission on Worship

- In cooperation with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, C/W will be developing materials for pastors who want to improve their preaching. This may include resources like refresher materials for those who have found themselves drifting when it comes to purpose statements, or good Lutheran video examples of alternate preaching styles.
- In cooperation with Lutheran Schools, C/W plans to work with the content development team for the new theology curriculum, incorporating resources for teaching Lutheran hymnody at all age levels. This collaboration will begin in 2025. The hymnology instructional materials published by NPH are available to congregations and schools who want to include hymnody instruction even before development on the new theology instructional resources begin.
- C/W plans to publish online Hymnal and Psalter Handbook resources, including the history and common usage of all hymns and psalm settings, and one-sentence descriptions of hymns for use in bulletins.
- In cooperation with worship planners at WELS area Lutheran high schools, C/W plans to supply resources that will allow and encourage high schools to make the best use of the treasures old and new available in the new hymnal suite. Similarly, C/W will work with Home Mission personnel to discover which of the new hymnal resources work best in unique Home Mission settings.

Special Thanks

- After nearly 30 years of service, Commission on Worship Administrator Bryan Gerlach is retiring after the National Worship Conference. He chaired the first conference in 1996.

Respectfully submitted,
Joel J. Gawrisch