

Report of the District Worship Committee

Committee Members:

Pr. Johnold Strey, coordinator	St. Mark's; Citrus Heights, CA
Pr. Jon Bauer	Emmanuel; Tempe, AZ
Mr. Kevin Bode	Emmanuel; Tempe, AZ
Mrs. Susan Heinitz	Mt. Olive; Las Vegas, NV

WELS Arizona-California District Pastors' Conference
King of Kings Lutheran Church; Garden Grove, California
October 22-24, 2013



School of Worship Enrichment

The School of Worship Enrichment (SoWE) is a weekend event that enables participating congregations to analyze existing worship practices and to plan strategies for beneficial innovation and renewal. Several congregations meet together at the host church. The customary two-day SoWE schedule includes lectures on the theology, purpose, and forms for worship, demonstration of musical samples for choirs and services, break-out groups for congregations' short-term planning, and participation in several model services. A new one-day schedule will be used at selected locations this fall. The obvious advantage to the one-day schedule is that participants only need to give up one day of their time; this format may be especially useful in locations where the two-day schedule might deter participation (especially in parts of our district where congregations are widely spread out from one another). The disadvantage is that some breakout time and the model services are deleted from the schedule.

The next SoWE in our district is tentatively planned for Tucson, Arizona on March 1-2, 2014 (Transfiguration weekend). Initial recruitment for this SoWE is taking place at this pastors' conference. Looking further ahead, we would like to offer a SoWE in winter 2014-15 in Las Vegas. If a group of congregations in your area of the district is interested in hosting a SoWE, please speak to Johnold Strey.

Hymnal Project Website

The WELS Hymnal Project has begun its initial work under the leadership of project director Pastor Michael Schultz. The 13-member executive committee held its first meeting in September, where members of the seven subcommittees were suggested. The subcommittees are [1] Hymnody, [2] Rites, [3] Psalmody, [4] Scripture, [5] Literature, [6] Technology, and [7] Communications. You can discover more at the project's website, www.welshymnal.com. The project website not only informs you about the hymnal's progress, but it includes forms for WELS members to submit their own feedback and ideas.

The hymnal project invites all WELS congregations to participate in a three-year review process. The start of the new church year on December 1, 2013 will also mark the start of another cycle through the three-year lectionary. During the next three church years, participating congregations will provide weekly data about hymn selections, orders of service, and Scripture lessons used in the service. As of this writing, about 125 congregations are registered to participate. Ideally, the hymnal project committee would like to see around 200 participating congregations. You can register to participate at www.welshymnal.com/research/collaborative-three-year-review. November 15 is the deadline to register for this review process.

WELS National Worship Conference

The seventh triennial WELS worship conference will be held July 22-25, 2014 at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin. This will be the fourth time the conference will be held at Carthage, the first time since 2002. More information is available at www.wels.net/worship/2014-national-worship-conference.

The conference is designed not only for congregational worship leaders, but anyone interested in the various aspects of worship. It will feature sessions on music, architecture, visual art, and liturgy and preaching. Opportunities at the conference include:

- 50+ presentations/workshops
- Concerts and recitals
- "Compelling Worship" will be the keynote address by Pastor Jon Hein, director of the Commission on Congregational Counseling
- 125 voice Festival Choir with full orchestra, directed by James Nowack and Katherine Tiefel
- 100 voice high school Honor Choir with full orchestra, directed by Jon Laabs
- 70 voice children's choir for children presently in grades 4-8 (with unchanged voices), directed by Kurt Cereske

Hymnology Curriculum

A new hymnology curriculum for Lutheran elementary schools is being prepared under the direction of teacher Kevin Bode, a member of the C/W and a new member of our district worship committee. This is a standalone curriculum (independent from *Christlight*) with three levels: K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. Students will learn a core of 8-11 hymns every year, with options for another 20-23 hymns. Students who attend an LES from Kindergarten through eighth grade would learn approximately 85 hymns over their time in school from this curriculum. This curriculum could also be used with Sunday Schools, homeschool situations, teen groups, and possibly also adult groups.

HymnSoft

Last year at this time, reports from NPH indicated that HymnSoft would be released at the start of 2013. Obviously that did not come to fruition! At last month's meeting of the C/W and DWCs, the earliest anticipated release date of HymnSoft was the beginning of this month. As of this writing, it has yet to be released. At any rate, many of our district's congregations hope it will be released soon! The basic HymnSoft program with MIDI files will be available for \$199; an "early bird" special will offer a \$20 discount. A \$400 version will include M4A files with a high-quality organ and piano sound that can be played on any computer or device (e.g. iPod), even without the regular HymnSoft software.

New Committee Members

Within the last two months, two new committee members were added to the Arizona-California District Worship Committee. Kevin Bode now represents both the Commission on Worship and our district worship committee. Kevin will be able to represent our committee and the C/W at our district's teachers' conferences, which have not had an individual representing our district committee for some time. Sue Heinitz, wife of C/W lay member Brian Heinitz, has also agreed to join the district worship committee. Sue served as LES teacher, organist, and handbell choir director at St. Mark's in Citrus Heights, California, before their family moved to Las Vegas where they are now members of Mt. Olive.