



Hymnal Project

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 2013. Since that time, seven subcommittees have been established. Each of these subcommittees has had its first face-to-face meeting. 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. Registering on the website will allow interested people to receive timely updates, useful insights, and invitations to participate in the research and development of the new hymnal.

National Worship Conference

The seventh triennial WELS National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts 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. (The conferences in 2005, 2008, and 2011 were held at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota). Through March and April, registrations for this conference have been coming in at a faster pace than any previous conference. 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
- Pastor Jon Hein, director of the Commission on Congregational Counseling, will present the keynote address on *Compelling Worship*
- 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
- 75 voice children's choir for children presently in grades 4-8 (with unchanged voices), directed by Kurt Cereske

Worship conference grants, called "Taking Worship to the Next Level," are still available. These funds provide subsidy for worship conference expenses with a priority for congregations that have not attended a previous conference and/or for congregations located farther away from the Midwest. Funds remain to assist three to six congregations at the time of this writing.

Applications are still being accepted for the worship conference Children's Choir and the High School Honor Choir at the time of this writing. About 20 more singers would bring the children's choir to its goal of 75 voices; the High School Honor Choir would especially welcome additional altos and basses; capable and mature freshmen may now apply (previously only sophomores through seniors could apply).

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 was field-tested at selected locations over the past year. 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 some of the model services are deleted from the schedule.

The last SoWE in our district was held in Tucson, Arizona on March 1-2, 2014. There are tentative plans for another SoWE in the Las Vegas area in early 2015 during the Epiphany season.

Hymnology Curriculum

A new hymnology curriculum for Lutheran elementary schools is being prepared, chaired by Kevin Bode. 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. The committee planning this curriculum hopes to distribute sample plans at this summer's worship conference and to release the finished project in 2015.

HymnSoft

At long last, the upgraded version of HymnSoft is now available! The full menu of products is available on the website of Northwestern Publishing House (www.nph.net). Several versions are available, including the basic HymnSoft program with MIDI files, and a CD with 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.

District Worship Committee

Two new members of the District Worship Committee were added to our group last fall. Kevin Bode now represents both the Commission on Worship and our District Worship Committee. Kevin is a teacher at Emmanuel in Tempe and is a very gifted musician. He will be able to represent our committee and the Commission on Worship at our district's teachers' conferences, which have not had an individual representing our district committee for some time. Sue Heinitz, wife of Commission on Worship lay member Brian Heinitz, has also been added to the District Worship Committee. Sue served as teacher, organist, and handbell choir director at St. Mark's in Citrus Heights, CA, before their family moved to Las Vegas where they are now members of Mt. Olive. Pastor Hernandez Daylo, Jr. was also added to our committee within the past few weeks. Pastor Daylo served for nearly a dozen years at Grace in Glendale before recently accepting a call to serve Prince of Peace in Yuma, AZ. Collectively our committee will provide practical ideas and suggestions to the district via regular reports at pastors' conference, as well as planning worship for the district convention and other major conferences within the district.

As we welcome these new members of the committee, we also bid farewell and express our thanks to Pastor Jonathan Bauer who has served on the District Worship Committee for several years. Pastor Bauer

recently accepted a call to serve Good News Lutheran Church in Mt. Horeb, WI. We thank him for his service to our district, and we look forward to continuing to benefit from his service as the chairman of the Communications Committee for the WELS Hymnal Project and as a member of the Institute for Worship and Outreach.

Respectfully submitted,
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AZ-CA District Worship Coordinator