

Benefits from a Music Coordinator

For a number of years Christ the Lord in Brookfield, WI retained a music coordinator who served in a limited capacity. In 2009 the congregation expanded this ministry. Learn how this position has had a positive impact not only on worship but also on other areas of parish life and health. Discover how the music coordinator interacts with the pastor and others involved in worship. Insights will apply to both volunteer and called positions.

Get acquainted...

Diagnosis

Schools of Worship Enrichment

By 2011, the tenth anniversary of these events, we had served 256 churches. The soul membership of these churches served is 114,792—30% of WELS. School of Worship Enrichment events have been some of the most valuable and appreciated efforts of the Commission on Worship. (from 2012 *Report to the Twelve Districts*)

7. My congregation's singing is strong and enthusiastic.
24. Our congregation seems to carry out its part of the liturgy (order of service) with enthusiasm.
13. We use enough musical variety for the psalms, hymns, and liturgical songs.

When do most congregations typically make the extra effort to use instruments other than the organ?

How often does the choir sing?

CWS hymn performance resources

Accompaniment Edition (with CD) for 88 hymns and canticles, Gathering Rites, Divine Service I, Divine Service II, Psalms

- Notes about each hymn. Also available [online](#).
- CD with alternate keyboard accompaniments and optional instrumental music
- MIDI files for playback

Guitar Edition

- Loose-leaf lead sheets for 67 of the 85 hymns

CD-ROM – sample of PDF file listing for the first of 88 hymns

- 702** Melody and descant for C and B-flat instruments; handbell score
- 704** Brass parts and descant for C and B-flat instruments
- 707** Descant for C and B-flat instruments
- 708** Handbell and percussion score
- 709** Handbell score
- 710** Melody for C, B-flat, and F instruments
- 711** Brass parts
- 712** Melody and descant for C and B-flat instruments; melody for F instruments
- 714** Descant for C and B-flat instruments
- 715** Alternate accompaniment and descant for C and B-flat instruments

Obstacles

WELS culture of expectations

Who does this work?

One congregation's solution and experience

[Christ the Lord, Brookfield, WI documents](#)

December/January

Early Rationale

Matrices

Position Description

Worship the Lord, #50, 9-2011 with extra files [online](#).

Testimonial

Additional reading and resources

[Director of Parish Music options](#) (Schierenbeck, WLS summer quarter summary; many approaches)

[Several part-time positions vs a full-time](#) (Becker, *Lutheran Leader*)

[Sample part-time call document](#)

[Board of Worship Manual](#) (Citrus Heights, CA)

[Worship in Small Parishes](#) (Summer 2000 *Lutheran Leader*)

Back issues of ***Worship the Lord*** newsletter

[WTL #14](#) – Making Long Range Plans

[WTL #12](#) – Encouragements from a Musician for Pastors / All or Nothing?

[WTL #35](#) – Choirs Soloists Instruments

[WTL #39](#) – Variety (from the series "Worship Words to Wrestle With")

Next generation

[WTL #17](#) – Cultivating Instrumentalists; photo below; 1-2006 (reprinted by LCMS)

Olivia's story

Intergenerational / "[Involving teens in worship](#)" (Forward in Christ, 10-2008)

Children Making Music (copies available for \$5)

DVD distributed in August 2008 to all WELS churches, schools, and early childhood centers.

Three audiences: children, parents, leaders.

Piano instruction during LES school day

Quality of singing / analogy: coaching basketball.

Audio samples. "Is this a WELS choir?"

Impact beyond worship on parish life and health

This document has numerous hyperlinks. To obtain an electronic version, email Bryan.Gerlach@wels.net.

A Prezi presentation about the Brookfield church by one of the pastors is [available here](#).



Miscellaneous input

Twelve Characteristics of Healthy and Growing Congregations in WELS

WELS Leadership Forum – November 2008. Data from 30+ fastest growing WELS churches.

1. Excellence in worship and relevance in preaching
2. Warm, caring, inviting, relational atmosphere
3. Priority on outreach, with intentional strategies
4. Member commitment to spiritual growth and service
5. Adaptability to surrounding culture, with pointed involvement in the community
6. Significant ministry to children, especially in early childhood
7. Strong, long-term pastoral leadership
8. Empowered and equipped lay leadership
9. Flexible, entrepreneurial, and permission-giving congregational climate
10. Unified staff with shared philosophy of ministry
11. Adding ministry staff to develop ministry program and facilitate growth
12. Quality facilities and adequate space

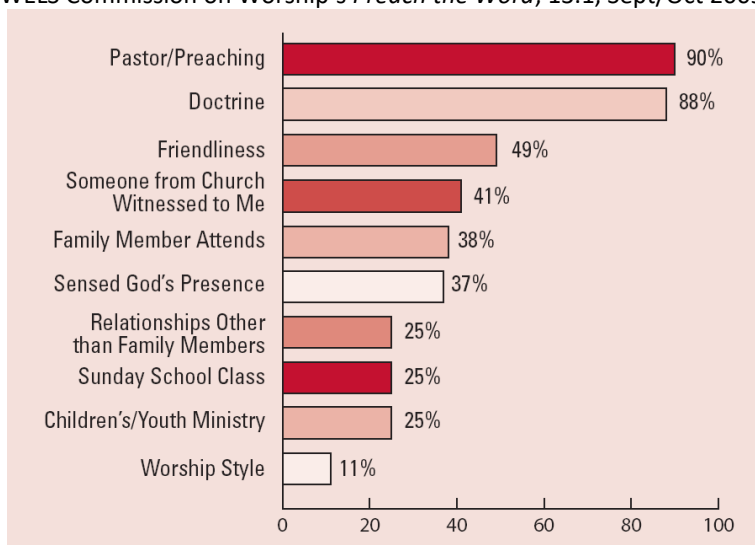
1183 WELS members

2007-09 interviews (Mission Counselor Mark Birkholz, Mission & Ministry 2010, WLS)

- Liturgy and structure are not “hot buttons”
- Music matters, though ‘quality’ and ‘singability’ matter more than genre
- Preaching is consistently mentioned prior to matters of format/music

Thom Rainer, *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched* (Zondervan, 2001)

Cited in WELS Commission on Worship’s *Preach the Word*, 13.1, Sept/Oct 2009



Compelling Worship, Vital Parishes, Strong Synod

“Compelling worship is one of the most important factors driving parish health. Stronger worship in its several aspects – setting, music, preaching, variety, engaged involvement – will, under God, build stronger parishes. Stronger parishes are better able to support the worldwide mission of WELS. Can WELS practice worship that strengthens the parish and builds synodical strength and unity?” (Jon Schroeder, WELS 2005 worship conference; WELS Streams: <http://vimeo.com/4065243>)

Compelling Lutheran Worship

- “Traditional” = cherishing the heritage of the Lutheran church.
- I’ve never done communion without Western rite. [several musical settings; other variety]
- I don’t like what I hear about division in worship. We need more unity, and it will have to come from your generation.
- Unity doesn’t mean we have to use same tune everywhere – like a franchise.
- But variety in the Western rite – this is what WELS does. (Jon Hein, Mission & Ministry 2010, WLS)

WLS Symposium 2011, Worship & Outreach

In worship there is a wide space between what is commanded and what is forbidden: everything between lies in the area of Christian freedom. Freedom in worship must be balanced by wisdom and love. Freedom that is not normed by love damages the body of Christ. Freedom that is not normed by wisdom fails in the stewardship of the means of grace. You may be free in making changes to worship practices; we will fight for your freedom to do just that. Do not, however, demand that we always call it wise. (Jon Schroeder; essay at Seminary website: <http://essays.wls.wels.net/handle/123456789/2994>)
“Do not, however, demand that we always call it wise.” To that I would add: “or necessary.” (David Valleskey)

Different Vision, Level Playing Field

There is a common phenomenon among some churches eager for variety or change: they devise a new/contemporary/blended worship strategy and pour tons of creative energy into that service – while leaving the “traditional” service to languish in the uncreative patterns that contributed to a desire for something new.

In some denominations one can find congregations with a contemporary service led by a dedicated “praise band” of several competent musicians, highly motivated, practicing diligently. Then at the “traditional” service there is the lone organist who, according to an all-too-common expectation for that role, plays relatively simple (uninteresting) music. And she plays alone, without any other instruments.

How would people perceive the “traditional” service if the same number of highly motivated musicians as found in the “praise band” contributed their skills on a regular basis? Imagine such a service with: a qualified organist; regular use of song leader or choir; trumpet descants on some hymns; occasional brass quartet; piano, flutes, guitar, and hand percussion on the psalm and another hymn; and other combinations of various instruments regularly accompanying choir selections and playing service music.

A lot of work? Sure. But God’s praise and his people certainly deserve it! (*Worship the Lord*, # 39, November 2009)

Steps toward implementation

Education / awareness

Intermediate options

- A 20% position
- A volunteer for more modest goals
- A goal of instruments once a month (paid or volunteer coordinator; or each organist takes responsibility)
- A goal of soloists, duets, trios, etc for half of the Sundays when a regular choir isn’t scheduled (same)

Developing talent / professional growth

Mentoring future talent: WELS Connection 4-2011 - <http://vimeo.com/18922582>

A place in short-range planning (next budget cycle) and mid-range planning (3+ years)

Great Sound from Average Singers – Kate (Wolff) Tiefel

1. Warming up - <http://vimeo.com/4046456>
2. Rehearsal modeling - <http://vimeo.com/4046751>
3. Conclusion - <http://vimeo.com/5172176>