



Worship the Lord

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Sharing worship ideas with WELS pastors

The supplement is a new resource for congregational singing, but it also has tremendous value for soloists, for choirs of adults or children, and for instrumentalists – even in parishes that aren't (yet) using the supplement with the entire congregation. Bryan Gerlach is the Administrator for the Commission on Worship and served as the supplement project director.

Christian Worship Supplement: Choirs, Soloists, Instruments

By Bryan Gerlach

Some favorite new hymns in *Christian Worship* began their lives as choir pieces. They may have been written and composed for eventual congregational singing, but choirs shared these songs of proclamation and praise long before the congregation ever sang them. After people first came to appreciate these hymns as choir pieces, they later grew to love them as congregational songs.

This approach to teaching hymns is not new among Lutherans. The first hymnal published under Martin Luther's guidance, the *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn* (1524) was not a hymnbook as we think of hymnbooks; it was a collection of polyphonic motets for the choir. But the titles are now familiar to us as hymns. *Christian Worship Supplement* (CWS) offers new opportunities to introduce songs through choirs or soloists. Recognizing that congregations vary in their ability to learn new songs comfortably, this approach is valuable in almost any setting. Which of the following describes your setting?

1. Already using lots of CWS content:

Your congregation has already experienced quite a bit of CWS content. Don't overlook a hymn that's a perfect thematic fit just because other new hymns have been used recently. Let a choir or soloist sing that perfect fit as an anthem.

2. Cautiously introducing new hymns: You have a plan to gradually introduce new hymns for congregational singing. (And maybe some have complained about new things.) Create another plan for hymns sung by choirs and soloists.

3. Haven't even bought CWS: Consider obtaining copies just for the choir or the LES classroom. Hymnal supplements are a bargain source of new "anthems." Compare the costs to see how economical this can be if you use only 25 songs as choir pieces over the next few years.

CWS	
Pew Edition of CWS	\$13.50
Total for 20 copies	\$270.00
Average cost per 25 songs	\$.54
Prorated cost of \$70 Accompaniment Edition (per song, per copy)	\$.14
Total average cost	\$.68

Anthems	
Average cost of new anthem	\$1.60
20 copies of 25 anthems	\$800.00
Sometimes instrumental parts are extra for choral music.	\$4.00
Total average cost, at least	\$1.60

This isn't an entirely fair comparison. Some anthems cost less. Some provide greater

musical options or richness, but even unison or 2-part anthems can cost \$1.60 or more per copy. On the other hand, there are 88 songs in CWS (not counting psalms and liturgies) – far more than 25 in the example above.

Add instruments

Praise him with...trumpet, harp, lyre, tambourine, strings, flute, cymbals. Psalm 150

Let every instrument be tuned for praise. #734

One strength of the supplement is the wealth of resources on the Accompaniment Edition CD. Whether a choir sings the entire hymn or only select stanzas, these resources enrich the presentation of these hymns. The CD provides alternate accompaniments, instrumental parts, and a few handbell parts. (Some organists will appreciate a simplified keyboard accompaniment for Divine Service I.) A separate Guitar Edition is available. Guitar accompaniment might be used for a middle stanza with choir or soloist even when the congregation sings to piano or organ accompaniment.

The availability of these instrumental scores fills a need in many parishes. Musicians don't have to go hunting for resources that enable them to add instruments to a choir (or congregation) song. But there seems to be something about our WELS "culture of

over

Pastors, pass this issue on to musicians who serve your parish. Or send an email inviting them to find this issue at www.wels.net/jump/wtl. The first article in the CWS series appeared in March 2008, long before CWS editions were available. Some of those earlier issues will be helpful for parish musicians.

expectations” that limits the use of additional instruments. When, typically, do we make the extra effort to include extra instruments? Isn’t it common to hear them mainly on festivals? But why not use instruments more often? The impact of the music – and the message – is heightened when more instruments are used, along with participation by choir or soloist.

Parishes attending Schools of Worship Enrichment (SoWE) regularly report that they do not use instrumental variety as often as they would like. This is significant. It’s not the SoWE consultants who say “You really should use instruments more often.” It’s the parishes who report that they would like to, but don’t...even when instrumentalists are available. Two of the lowest scores in SoWE surveys – in parishes small and large – are for these points:

- We use enough musical variety by instrumentalists.
- We use enough musical variety for the psalms, hymns, and liturgical songs.

CWS helps parishes to add variety and musical interest to hymn singing. See the sidebar for a partial list of resources found on the Accompaniment Edition CD. Since these resources are in PDF format, it’s easy for them to remain hidden away on the CD! Consider passing the files to key musicians or printing an entire set to keep in a binder with other church music files.

Examples, April and May 2009

April 10: 718 “Rest, O Christ, from All Your Labor,” a familiar tune. Children sing a middle stanza with one of two alternate accompaniments (one in printed accompaniment book, one on CD) with optional instrumental descant. Use the instrument also to introduce the hymn, with or without keyboard accompaniment, and elsewhere in the service.

May 3: 766 “The Lord’s My Shepherd,” the tune Brother James’ Air. Choir or soloist sings stanzas 1-2 with the alternate accompaniment (page 187 in the printed accompaniment book), with an instrument doubling the melody, and stanza 4 with the handbell part from the CD (if handbells are already playing in the service). Congregation sings stanzas 3 and 5.

May 31: 723 “Holy Spirit, the Dove Sent from Heaven,” an unfamiliar tune. School is out, and choir season over? A soloist or a small group of volunteers takes stanzas 1-3. The congregation sings stanza 4. Piano or organ plays the alternate accompaniment (page 100 in the printed accompaniment book). An electronic keyboard, common in many churches, plays the bass part using a string bass sound. (This is how it was done on the CWS sampler CD for this hymn as well as #734. On the recording pay special attention to 723 stanza 3: soloist, piano, bass – beautiful variety that is not difficult! Note also on several tracks how much is added by simply using a single instrument to double the hymn tune – easy variety available to most parishes!)

Beyond CWS

Using hymns straight from the supplement as choir selections can work for just about any parish. Many more options are available, some more challenging, some with pianistic accompaniments, some for various choirs (SAB, SATB, etc), some with more elaborate instrumental options. Check www.wels.net/jump/cwsupplement for two resource lists:

- Sources of arrangements heard on *Christian Worship Supplement Hymn Sampler*, the 2-CD set of highlights sent to each parish, are found in “CWS: Highlights for Musicians.”
- Additional arrangements available by early 2009 from various publishers.

Some day your congregation might know most of the hymns in the supplement. Worshipers will discover new spiritual insights and new favorites. In many cases their comfort and appreciation will be higher because they first heard some hymns sung by choir, children, or soloist.

Accompaniment Edition CD

Sample PDF files. The complete list is found on the CD. A wealth of variety is available so that musicians don’t have to go hunting elsewhere for resources.

Lent-Trinity

- 714* Descant for C and B-flat instruments
- 715* Alternate accompaniment and descant for C and B-flat instruments in keys of A-flat and A
- 717*
- 718* Alternate accompaniment 2 and descant for C and B-flat instruments
- 721 Brass parts
- 722 Brass parts
- 723* Melody for C and B-flat instruments; bass part
- 724 Descant for C and B-flat instruments

Redeemer section

- 746 Alternate tune and setting
- 748* Melody for C, B-flat, and E-flat instruments
- 750*
- 751* Melody for C and B-flat instruments
- 752 Alternate accompaniment in keys of D and E-flat

*Some alternate accompaniments are found in the printed Accompaniment Edition.



What’s the ideal tempo? Avoid “generic hymn tempo syndrome.” Consult tempo indications in the Accompaniment Edition. If a suggestion seems too slow or too fast, give it a chance and see if you can discover what the composer intended.

