



The Arizona-California District Commission on Worship

Besides planning worship for district events, the work of the district worship committee over the past two years has concentrated on two types of workshops held throughout the district: *Christian Worship: Supplement* introductory workshops, following its publication in 2008, and the School of Worship Enrichment (SoWE).

Supplement Introduction Workshops

Christian Worship: Supplement was introduced to our synod at the WELS National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts in 2008. A conference workshop provided training for pastors and musicians who presented introduction workshops across the synod. A total of eight workshops were held at various locations in our district. These workshops were led by district worship committee members Pastors Bill Tackmier, Paul Rydecki, and Johnold Strey. Supplement resources are also featured in the services and devotions offered during this convention.

School of Worship Enrichment

The School of Worship Enrichment is a day and a half event that enables participants to analyze existing worship practices and to plan strategies for beneficial innovation and renewal. By early 2010, the SoWE had served 222 congregations, representing a soul membership of 105,477, or over one-fourth of the WELS. Participant surveys at every site, representing a variety of parishes throughout the country, have given high marks to these events.

The School of Worship Enrichment is typically held over a Saturday and Sunday, although a Friday and Saturday schedule is available as an alternative. Eight to ten congregations meet together at the host church. The 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.

One of the highlights of the weekend is Sunday morning worship. Event presenters serve as worship leaders at the Sunday morning service(s) at the host congregation. All participants are encouraged to attend this service, since a variety of materials will be modeled. Pastors and organists with regular duties on Sunday morning are encouraged to seek substitutes, if possible.

During the past two years, SoWEs have been held in Tempe, AZ; North Hollywood, CA; San Diego, CA; and San Jose, CA. No new SoWEs are scheduled in the district at this time, although potential sites are being considered. The first SoWE was held in fall of 2001 in our own district at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Citrus Heights, California; we are exploring the possibility of another SoWE at St. Mark's in the fall of 2011 to mark the 10-year anniversary of the first SoWE.

National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts

Although the next WELS worship conference is over a year away, please note that the dates for the conference are set: July 19-22, 2011. The conference will be held primarily at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN, with one day of the conference at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN, to feature the new Chapel of the Christ.

Rev. Johnold J. Strey
District Worship Coordinator