

REGION IV NEWSLETTER



Tips for Getting Youth Involved in Worship

Nathanael Maki

Getting youth musically involved in our worship services can be a greater task than one anticipates. I certainly found this out. The tips in this article are no way guaranteed to work in another locale as every youth is different and needs to be treated on an individual basis. However, these are the techniques I found helpful.

When it comes to youth playing in worship the majority of youth are not knocking on the door asking to play. For many youth playing in worship can be intimidating. The first thing when working with youth is to remember to cater more towards the youth's desires then your own desires.

(See **TIPS** pg. 11)



Robin Knutson

Region IV Conference Review

Helen Iverson-Metzger

What could be better than a weekend in San Francisco? A weekend in San Francisco attending an ALCM conference! I had not been able to attend an ALCM conference for several years. This conference was a reminder of how fun and informative they are and made me promise myself that in the future, they will be a priority.

(See **REGION IV CONFERENCE** pg. 3)

We Applaud Our New Region IV Officers. Thank you for serving!



Karla Devine, Norma Aamodt-Nelson, & Carol Churchill
Region IV Conference, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, San Francisco

Member Profile:

Robin Knutson

I didn't exactly choose my preferred instrument; we were set up by a matchmaker! And like some lucky arranged marriages, I grew to love the union. I enjoyed the piano lessons my parents provided for me since 3rd grade, and practiced willingly - for the most part. There was a time, however, about three years into piano, when my teacher called my mother with an unfavorable report: "I don't think Robin wants to take lessons anymore. She isn't practicing as she should. I think we should stop wasting your money on lessons." Well, the threat of discontinuing piano lessons worked! (See **KNUTSON** pg. 8)

Singing a New Song in Godzone: The Bach Cantatas in New Zealand

Mark Whitfield, Pastor, St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Wellington, New Zealand

We are blessed here in New Zealand [sometimes locally known as 'Godzone'] with an abundance of beautiful song. Kiwis are accompanied in their daily routine with some of the most musical birdsong in the world. This may well be the only country in the world where one can be woken at 7:00 am each morning by the "birdcall" on National Radio. And, as the day beyond 7:00 am and a recorded birdcall unfolds, even here in inner-city Wellington [the capital of New Zealand] one can listen "live" to the song of the native New Zealand songster called the Tui, amongst many others.

(See **SINGING A NEW SONG** pg.6)



Soup's On!

Carole Arenson



Recently the Wall Street Journal published an article featuring a phenomenon which can only warm your heart. While all stocks are taking a dive, there is one stock which not only remains steady, but can even show an increase. It is none other than down to earth Campbell's Soup. The article went on to say that in rocky times filled with fear of what the future may bring, people turn to "comfort food" to make them feel better. Can't you hear the call to the family: "*Soup's on. Come and get it!*". It evokes a feeling of "home". It envisions a belonging time when we can gather around the table with our family and share a meal.

(See **SOUP'S ON!** pg 4)

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<u>Submission Deadline</u>	<u>Issue</u>
January 15	Spring
April 15	Summer
October 15	Winter

The Association of Lutheran Church Musician's Region IV Newsletter has a circulation of 12 states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming; Three Canadian Provinces: Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan; Australia and New Zealand. It is also sent to members of the National Board of Association of Lutheran Church Musicians and selected leaders in Canada and the United States.

It is the main source of communication between and for the leading Lutheran Church Musicians of the West.

Advertising Information

The **Region IV Newsletter** is published three times per year in February, May, & November.

Single issue rates

- Half Page 5" X 8" \$ 50.00
- Quarter Page 4" X 5" \$ 30.00
- Business Card 3" X 2" \$ 20.00

1. Submit ad in JPEG or PDF format.
2. Send 2 months before publication.
3. Send payment check (payable to ALCM) to Carole Arenson, editor.

From the Editor...

Carole Lea Arenson, Region IV Newsletter Editor

Region IV is a marvelous region in which we celebrate our great diversity.

This newsletter has articles submitted from a variety of locations with a variety of insights. We have contributions from: New Zealand, Colorado, Idaho, California, Washington and Arizona. Thanks to all our writers for sharing.

There are many revues in which you can share your expertise within this newsletter. Our goal is to foster new ideas for music ministry while knowing full well each place of ministry has unique advantages, disadvantages, gifts and even problems. Together we respect each other's opinions and ministry even though they may differ from our own. This is what the Region IV Newsletter is all about.

You are invited to contribute to our mission of sharing. The earlier you contact me the better, since the space can fill up quickly. Contact: carole.arenson@cox.net or 602/677-1918.

From the Desk of the Prez!

Norma Aamodt-Nelson, Region IV President

Words of welcome and appreciation come with this issue of the Region IV ALCM news. Thank you to Zita Weyland who served with responsibility and faithfulness as Secretary/Treasurer of our region from 2004 to 2008. Zita not only kept careful records through our Seattle and San Francisco gatherings, but she also helped in the planning and served as registrar. As of October 1st she passes her torch (and books) to Carol Churchill who you have elected to serve and we say, *Welcome Carol!*

We welcome again Karla Devine, now re-elected for a second term as Vice President. Karla has a strong interest in *Young Lutherans Sing*, having served on the faculty for this fine children's music program, part of ALCM. Karla will help oversee membership in our region and also focus energies on recruitment and local gatherings. Check out the news of *Young Lutherans Sing* on the ALCM website. YLS will be held again at Carthage College in 2009, just prior to our biennial gathering in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and it's not too early to mark your calendar for that event, August 2-5, 2009 and hit up your church for continuing educational funds to help you BE there.

I'm hoping that by now you have read the ALCM emailing announcements of our new Executive Director, Jim Johnson, and our President-elect, Lorraine Brugh. Both Lorraine and Jim are great assets to the Association! Each brings not only years of commitment to church music, but a wealth of experience in so many critical areas, and additionally, they come with passion and enthusiasm for not only their work with ALCM, but also for the future of this group, people like us, who continue to pay annual dues, attend conferences, read the newsletters and journals, and connect with colleagues by email and/or phone.

I just have to say this - isn't it interesting that one of the most unassuming, but largest-land-wise, states in our region, Alaska, has recently become so newsworthy? People are now, thanks to the media, making all sorts of travel plans to this scenic region.

I do not have news yet of the next regional gathering (2010) but at this time, a team of ALCM leaders from each region is discussing conferences in general, and I expect we will be encouraged to have more gatherings in several different locations within the region, to help alleviate high travel costs and yet boost membership.

There are ups and downs with any organization, but I believe that the future of ALCM is dependent on our students and youthful members. I challenge each of you who are mentors and teachers to tell your students about ALCM, hand them a brochure (available on line) and remind them that scholarship money is available for them to attend the 2009 Milwaukee Biennial Conference. Call or contact that neighboring church musician and pass on a newsletter or journal. When asked to help a church find a musician, share the news of our placement service. It's up to YOU!

What are you reading? I just finished a couple of books I want to recommend to you in the "Worth the Read" section.

If you have ideas for local events or other ways that we can connect, please please send me an email. I would love to hear from you, and again, I'm still looking for people to commit to grass-roots leadership in their own state. Write me! nkaamodt@aol.com



Region IV Conference Review

Helen Iverson-Metzger, Organist
First Presbyterian Church
Jerome, ID

What could be better than a weekend in San Francisco? A weekend in San Francisco attending an ALCM conference! I had not been able to attend an ALCM conference for several years. This conference was a reminder of how fun and informative they are and made me promise myself that in the future, they will be a priority.

A highlight of the conference for me was the Hymn Festival led by Aaron David Miller. The selection of familiar and newer hymns was thoughtfully organized and connected with meaningful readings. The text of the hymn, O Day Full of Grace, was made so vivid to me with the choices in alternative singing, organ registration and alternate accompaniments. It was a joy to worship and sing in the beautiful sanctuary of St. Mark's!

The session on global music led by Carol and Tom Parmeter Dyer was excellent. I had not planned to attend their session, but after Morning Prayer at which they led the music, my schedule was altered! They were so enthusiastic about the topic and so ably shared their considerable knowledge. I've been able to use information from this session on several occasions.

One of the best results of any conference is the opportunity to meet new people, make new conference friends, and reconnect with others. The size of this conference was very conducive to forming new relationships.

The dinner cruise was fun and very scenic and the food was awesome! What a wonderful close to the conference.

A "Big Thank You" to our ALCM Region IV 2008 Conference Planning Committee!



*Pictured from left to right: Gretchen Sauer, Ronald Koch, Zita Weyland (registrar), Kathryn Beck, Liv Beck, David Hunsberger, Marty Schaefer (co-chair) & Randy Knutson (co-chair)
Not pictured: Jacque Berlien and Brian Stoffregen*

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Soup's On!

Carole Lea Arenson
Tempe, Arizona



Recently the Wall Street Journal published an article featuring a phenomenon which can only warm your heart. While all stocks are taking a dive, there is one stock which not only remains steady, but can even show an increase. It is none other than down to earth Campbell's Soup. The article went on to say that in rocky times filled with fear of what the future may bring, people turn to "comfort food" to make them feel better. Can't you hear the call to the family: "**Soup's on. Come and get it!**". It evokes a feeling of "home". It envisions a belonging time when we can gather around the table with our family and share a meal. As a matter of fact, it is even easy to make room at the table for a guest. The soup can be stretched by merely adding a little more liquid. In times of struggle it is very important to be sure all are made welcome at the home table.

So how does "Soup" relate to Music Ministry?

Before tackling the question of "soup", we take a look at the circumstances of life this year. The current "State of our Economy" coupled with our "War on Terror" does instill some fear into all of us. We see our friends and family fearing for their jobs hoping not to get caught in the "downsizing" at their place of employment. Others are struggling to make house payments or secure a small business loan just to keep things going. Our charities are fearful since there is an increasing need for more money to meet the increasing calls for "help" from individuals and families caught in today's crisis. At the same time of this increased need, ordinary income is becoming stagnated because of the economy. The truth is simply this: we all will experience a financial loss in this economy. And... F E A R is rampant.

"Fear" changes the way people respond and act. It can rearrange priorities in one's life. Fear needs an antidote or at least some salve to lessen the effect. Soup is "comfort food" for the body and the gathering of family together at the table is "comforting" for us in troubled times. It means "home", the place where "we belong".

Those of us in Music Ministry know something more than soup is needed to comfort the soul. We also know that only God can supply this necessary comfort. During difficult times, times of recession, many want to again experience the warmth of belonging in God's family.

So how does the "Soup Factor" translate into our work of music ministry?

I. The first point to consider is the one of "Inclusivity".



In the "Soup" scenario, everyone gathers together in one place. Guests, who are outside the family, are also included in the warm welcome to gather and partake of "soup". Everyone is welcomed.

This is an opportune time to bring the family together in worship and include everyone. It is time to focus on the whole family. It may be necessary to "**desegregate**" the worship service (if it is a practice in your congregation). There are three groups to consider. These are ones who can be meant to feel "less than welcomed" in worship.

1. Children (especially K and up)

We need the "whole family" gathered in one place at one time for worship. It is easy to segregate our children from the adult

activity. We forget how God can speak through a child's voice, whether sung or spoken, in ways which are different from adults. **Many congregations "invite the elementary children to leave" for Sunday School at a given time early in the service. When this happens their teachers, who are usually parents, also leave. It is segregation.** I can remember being very young while sitting in worship with my parents. As I talk with many of you, you had the same experience. I don't know if I would be as church connected today if I had been excluded from worship during my early elementary years.

The whole lesson learned from gathering as a family to share "soup" is lost without the presence of children. **A segregated church family is a fractured gathering.** Children can and do contribute to worship with their presence. As Ministers of Music we can help our children and youth participate more fully on the Sundays they sing. Yes – it is work, but we have many gifts given to us for this task and we have the power of prayer to give us the strength to use them.

2. Youth (junior and senior high students)

The second group which is often made unwelcome in worship is our teenagers. Instead we "offer" social activity and other gathering times, which may or may not include some worship, in their own special group separate from the more mature Christians. It reminds of the civil rights days arguing "separate, but equal". **This too is segregation. It disrupts the family and fractures the worship experience for teenagers and their families.**

Let us strive to welcome our teenagers into the fold of family worship. Yes – they would like to sing more edgy songs than some adults would choose. But for those of us in Music Ministry we know how to ask the right questions to help both our teenagers and our adults find some middle group.

Three big ones come to mind:

1. Is the text God directed?
2. Does the text illuminant God's Word?
3. Is the volume of the accompaniment balanced so the choral text prevails?

In this time of unrest and fear, our family is strengthened when they stay together as they come into God's presence.

And, as I have often witnessed", the Spirit can work and does through teenagers. They bring much to the gathering. Sharing and blending of old and new can do wonders for the whole.

3. Guests

History has shown us that people need God more than ever anytime their life is stressed. Today's "fear" makes them ready and open to search for some comfort for their soul. They begin to reason that it may be time to give church a try or in most cases, a second try.

Who are these "guests"? Often they are members or former members, the ones you see only at Christmas and Easter. However, they now are drifting back to "church". Others have heard from friends about the congregation and feel this may be the time for a visit. But, they basically don't have the worship toolkit needed to easily fully participate in current practice. Maybe we are the ones needing to change so they can feel welcomed into the congregation?

As Ministers of Music we can help. Are we willing to stop and take a look at what pitfalls the liturgy presents to our visitors? Are we willing to question “why” we continue doing the things the way we always have done them? **Is it possible we are more enamored with our Lutheran past than our Lutheran future?** Are we willing to find a way to include new members in meaningful ways so God can connect with them? Are we willing to do whatever it takes to include those who haven’t been in worship for years?

Each congregation has a different atmosphere, a unique set of problems and advantages. This is where you can help, since you do have the tools to do so.

II. Secondly, consider what is happening in the Lutheran Church.



The 2008 October issue of **The Christian Century** reports:

- Membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the country’s largest Lutheran denomination, has fallen for 16 consecutive years. While Lutheran churches are growing world-wide, total baptized ELCA members declined by more than 64,000 in 2007.
- Although average weekly attendance dropped from the previous year, the total receipts for ELCA churches exceeded \$2.8 billion in 2007, a rise of more than \$67 million from the year before. The value of church assets increased nearly 7 percent to a total of \$20.6 billion.

The LCMS record isn’t any better. The church has been in a continual decline for the last 35 years.

Some questions for us to consider:

- Does this mean our membership is aging and our younger members are not in worship?
- Maybe our older members are giving more today because their major life expenses have been met?
- Will the 16 and 35 year decline continue until our aging members leave this earth?

III. How can music ministry be part of building a new future for the Lutheran Church for people of all ages?



The good news is this: as artists we are already endowed with passion, creativity and an active imagination. Added to these blessings, we have an instinctive understanding of people and openness to their feelings. This is what brought us into the field of Music Ministry in the first place. It is why we find ourselves in church ministry and not in a concert hall or a classroom. So our task becomes: “How can we help provide an atmosphere for God to connect with people?” It is true this has been our goal prior to the current “Fear Crisis”, but now it has become crucial. Today people in crisis are searching for something beyond themselves. This is an opportune time for us to stretch ourselves and use our gifts for the ministry to which we were called.



All Are Welcome

Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God’s children dare to seek to dream
God’s reign anew.

Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God’s grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:

All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.

ELW # 641 Text & Music: Marty Haugen

There are no easy answers, but this newsletter will continue to focus on music ministry. The Region IV Newsletter can be a platform where ideas, success stories and failures are shared.

You are invited to contribute.

We would like to hear from you!

To submit an article to the Region IV Newsletter contact:
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Singing a New Song in Godzone: Bach Cantatas in New Zealand

Mark Whitfield, Pastor • St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Wellington, New Zealand



We are blessed here in New Zealand [sometimes locally known as ‘Godzone’] with an abundance of beautiful song. Kiwis are accompanied in their daily routine with some of the most musical birdsong in the world. This may well be the only country in the world where one can be woken at 7:00 am each morning by the “birdcall” on National Radio. And, as the day beyond 7:00 am and a recorded birdcall unfolds, even here in inner-city Wellington [the capital of New Zealand] one can listen “live” to the song of the native New Zealand songster called the Tui, amongst many others.

Of the native Bellbird [Maori name – Korimako], it has been written –

Ko te korimako ki te ngahere The song of the bellbird
Ko te tangata ki te whenua Fills the forest with gladness
Man sings and fills the
land with joy.

The Oxford History of New Zealand Music, John Mansfield Thomson
Oxford University Press ©1991 John Mansfield Thomson

In a country which may have known the music of Johann Sebastian Bach since its earliest European settlement in the late 18th century, it is only now that the song of the Bach Cantata is filling the forest with gladness and the land with joy in the way that Bach intended – i.e. in the context of Lutheran worship and for the praise of God and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I realize that many of you reading this are or have been accustomed to a Lutheran Church somewhere – maybe even in your own suburb or city – presenting the Bach Cantatas as part of Lutheran worship on a regular basis. And you may ask – what’s so special about the Bach Cantatas in New Zealand?

The Lutheran Church of New Zealand [LCNZ] is a small church. The total number of people worshipping in all 17 congregations of the LCNZ on a Sunday would number between 400 and 500 – possibly less than the 8:00 am congregation at some of the large North American churches. Of the 4476 people who identified themselves as being Lutheran in this nation of 4.2 million in the New Zealand Census [2006], about 1000 of those belong to one of our congregations.

Even though Lutherans have been in New Zealand since 1843, we have never been a large church. We are not able to have congregations in every region of the country and so therefore we have a very low national profile. Many have no idea who we

Lutherans are or how we fit in, suggesting we might even be a sect or somehow connected to Martin Luther King!

Our small size and lack of profile nationally has added to the challenge of taking our place amongst the Christian churches of New Zealand as servants of the Gospel and Kingdom builders for God.



St. Pauls Lutheran Church, Wellington, New Zealand

It’s with this challenge in mind that St. Pauls Lutheran Church in Wellington, with an average weekly worship attendance of 65, is establishing a music ministry using the sacred cantatas of Bach. Our aim is to connect with many in our community who hear this music at a “music-only” level, not realizing that these cantatas have also been written to bear and proclaim the gospel of Christ. In the same way that many Lutheran churches have already done, we have in a sense *re-claimed* the cantatas from the concert hall for their rightful place in Christian worship, where they may be supported by the things which happen in liturgy – reading and preaching on the Word, prayer, congregational song, meditation – so that God can serve his people [*Gottesdienst*] powerfully with the gospel.

We have received wonderful support and encouragement in establishing this ministry from the Lutheran Church of New Zealand, individual members of our own congregation, and a number of people from outside Lutheran circles – most notably some national and internationally-acclaimed musicians based here in Wellington, including the CEO of the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

This support and encouragement enabled us to install a small 2 manual and pedal mechanical-action instrument by *Flentrop Orgelbouw* in April this year – the first Flentrop in New Zealand and “the one furthest from home.”

On the 26th October this year when we present *Nur Jedem das Seine!* BWV163, we will have presented 5 cantatas as part of our *Bach Cantata Vespers* series in our first year. The *Vespers* services are creating a lot of interest among the music-loving public of Wellington and throughout New Zealand. Each service is advertised nationally on Radio New Zealand Concert and the “over-flow” doors of our small church, which seats 90 comfortably, are often opened to accommodate congregations of over 100 and up to 120.

We are blessed to have extremely gifted musicians in partnership with us in this ministry. Most of them have completed post-graduate study in Europe, are dedicated to ‘early music performance’ techniques, and are happy to offer their time and their music-making for free. In return for their kindness to us, we offer them free use of our church for their own concerts. And

get this – *they* insist on thanking us for giving them the opportunity to participate in the Bach cantatas!

The ministry is indeed in its infancy, but we have great dreams for its continued development, including the possible presentation of the *St. John Passion* within the next 2 years. I have a really big dream too – I would love to explore the possibility of creating a Bach Cantata Global Exchange/Circuit where cantors and musicians from various places in the world might even get to Wellington to present and perform.

I want to publicly state in this article my appreciation for the encouragement I have received from a number of ALCM members who oversee similar Bach Cantata ministries, including Albert le Doux [Christ the King Lutheran, Houston] and Rick Erickson [Holy Trinity Lutheran, New York City]. My attendance at last year's ALCM Conference in Houston was also something of a defining moment as I continued to lead our congregation towards embracing this ministry.

At the beginning I suggested you might ask – what's so special about the Bach Cantatas in New Zealand? I hope that now you might understand how special they are to us. They not only raise the profile of our small and little-known church in New Zealand; they also give us a wonderful means by which we can *fill the forest with gladness* and the *land with joy*, with the hope and prayer that many might catch a glimpse of the New Song himself – the Lord Jesus – and come to faith in him.

Mark Whitfield has been Pastor of St. Pauls Lutheran Church Wellington, New Zealand since January 2001. He left his native New Zealand in 1980 to study at Luther Seminary in Adelaide, South Australia, graduating with a BTh in 1986. During his Seminary years he studied organ with Christa Rumsey. He was ordained in 1989 and has served parishes in Victoria and South Australia. In 1994 he received a scholarship which enabled him to complete a Master of Sacred Music degree at Luther Seminary and St. Olaf College, Minnesota, where he majored in organ. He sings with the Choir of the Wellington Cathedral of St. Paul [Anglican] for Evensong. Mark is married to Leanne, and they have three daughters.



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Robin Knutson, Organist

Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist • Lodi, CA



I didn't exactly choose my preferred instrument; we were set up by a match-maker! And like some lucky arranged marriages, I grew to love the union. I enjoyed the piano lessons my parents provided for me since 3rd grade, and practiced willingly - for the most part. There was a time, however, about three years into piano, when my teacher called my mother with an unfavorable report: "I don't think Robin wants to take lessons anymore. She isn't practicing as she should. I think we should stop wasting your money on lessons." Well, the threat of discontinuing piano lessons worked! It was then that I decided, "I'll show her! I will practice! I love to play!" Soon I was playing for the Sunday school children at their opening, and singing/accompanying for *Joyful Noise*, the youth choir at Trinity Lutheran in Fresno, CA, where I grew up. Playing piano became a part of my identity, something that distinguished me from others my age.

My parents became members of Trinity Lutheran partly out of convenience since it was only two houses away, and because they wanted to choose a Christian denomination somewhere between my father's Roman Catholic and my mother's Presbyterian roots. Also, it was important to my father to interview the pastor (Philip Jordan) concerning his views on evolution, since he was a science teacher and wanted a "thinking" church. Pr. Jordan's response, "God doesn't tell us *how* he did it, just *why* he created: out of his great love for the earth and all of creation", this satisfied my dad and our family of seven became members. All the children were baptized at once. When I was small, I figured out that if I refused to go to Sunday School, I could have my parents all to myself as I sat with them in worship. At that time, S.S. was taught simultaneously during worship, and unlike most of my sibs, I developed a worship habit from early childhood.

When I was in Jr. High, my piano teacher suddenly had to support herself and stopped teaching for another career. The music director/organist team at Trinity, Carl and Eunice Kronberg, had already begun encouraging me to learn to play the organ. They had heard me accompany *Joyful Noise* many times, and I even led a hymn from the piano during a youth-led service (Stand up, Stand up for Jesus - Webb). I was happy to switch to organ lessons since I was intrigued by Trinity's 19-rank Reuter pipe organ and especially the pedals! But without the guidance of Carl and Eunice, I don't think I would have been led to learn organ. Trinity allowed me to practice and even gave me a key to the church. By the time I was in High School, Eunice began training me to play services, starting with just the prelude and opening hymn. Soon I was her substitute. I had my first real church job before I had a driver's license. It was at Immanuel Lutheran in Easton, just south of Fresno. I was one of about 5 organists who came from Trinity during Carl and Eunice Kronberg's 38 years of service, since they saw it as their job to encourage young church musicians.

When I was a senior in high school, I was too busy with choir and drama to figure out where I wanted to go for college, so I attended Fresno State. During that year, I had the opportunity to hear both Pacific Lutheran University's touring choirs: *Choir of the West* and *The University Chorale*. I was totally impressed with both choirs, but COW knocked me off my feet with their

blended, expressive sound and with their organist accompanist, Bruce Neswick (now serving at St. John the divine in N.Y.C.). He spoke with me after the concert and told me I would find no better place to study organ as an undergraduate than with David Dahl at P.L.U. I was so excited after hearing the choir and talking to Bruce that I couldn't sleep! (I also remember noticing Randy, my future husband, singing in C.O.W.!) This was the same year, the San Joaquin Valley chapter of the American Guild of Organists awarded me first prize in the student competition, which certainly encouraged me towards my future vocation!

I had a terrific experience studying at PLU, earning a Bachelor of Music degree with David P. Dahl as teacher, inspiring mentor and friend. Highlights include: recitals on the newly installed Brombaugh organ at Christ Church Episcopal, performing



Poulenc's Organ Concerto with the University Symphony, and my Senior recital on three different organs; a Brombaugh continuo organ, Trinity Lutheran's Schlicker, and the Casavant in Eastvold auditorium. Just a week after graduating, Randy and I were married and we began serving together as a church music team; Randy conducts the choirs: children, adults

and handbells, while I accompany and lead worship from the organ. We returned to my home congregation, Trinity in Fresno, and served there from 1984-1994, honored to follow Carl and Eunice Kronberg when they retired.

Last summer, I had the enjoyable honor of playing Evening Prayer on the recently installed Taylor and Boody organ at St. Mark's Lutheran for the Region IV ALCM conference in San Francisco. Although it is frightening to play for peers, I am confident that God has called me to a career of church music (as we all are members of ALCM!). I am grateful for the teachers, mentors, AGO and ALCM who help equip me along the way! May God grant us the skill and desire to honor Him!

Dear Colleagues...

Carol Churchill, Reg. IV Secretary/Treasurer

Greetings from the Pacific Northwest where warm summer days have given way to cool autumn mornings! I enjoyed renewing friendships and meeting fellow ALCM colleagues at our Region IV conference in San Francisco last June. My deepest thanks to all who gave their time, energy, and resources to offer another outstanding conference.

As I begin serving as your Region IV Secretary/Treasurer, I invite your conversation by phone or email at any time, and offer my help whenever needed. ALCM is blessed with good leadership and I will do my best to weave my gifts into our organization's fabric. In addition to our very gifted slate of officers at the National and Regional levels, I am delighted that ALCM has selected Jim Johnson to be our Executive Director. Jim brings a deep commitment to ALCM's mission and to its future growth. I am hopeful for our future and the blessings God provides for our worship music through all of us.



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Stuff that Works: Organ

Thomas A. Ohnesorge, Director of Music/Organist
American Lutheran Church, Sun City, Arizona



I am a recent transplant to the bright New World of Arizona and the Sun Cities. Several things are important to understand from the beginning. First, I grew up and served in a Lutheran congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota for 25 years before finally deciding to throw away my ice

scraper and move south. My background, education, and experience are very firmly rooted in a traditional setting. Second, I am by nature a “liturgical” organist, which means I try to choose literature to fit a given Sunday’s Lessons, Prayers, and Themes. Third, the liturgical function of the organ at American Lutheran has some minor limitations. There is no formal Prelude to begin the worship service. Rather, I respect the time before the service as one where people can greet each other and, if they choose, quietly converse with their friends and neighbors. I do provide some very quiet music (in more of a background sense) during this time for those worshipers who wish to quietly pray or meditate. However, the “Prelude” actually comes after the opening Welcome and Announcements from the pastor and is styled the “Preparation for Worship.” This allows me to be very deliberate in my choices of music, but does not really lend itself to performing major works of Bach or other lengthy pieces. Finally, the congregation of American Lutheran predominantly consists of retirees. This age group is the “builders” (versus the “boomers”) and enjoys traditional, more conservative music. All that being said, I will offer the following modest suggestions:

Wood Works for Organ

Softly and Tenderly:

Organ Meditations on Contemplative Hymns

Dale Wood • Sacred Music Press

These two sets are multi-volume arrangements of very traditional hymns and songs. Preludes include: **Near The Cross**, **Softly and Tenderly**, **Shall We Gather at the River**, and other, more old-fashioned numbers. But you will also find useful arrangements of favorites like **Children of the Heavenly Father**, **Amazing Grace**, and **Beautiful Savior**. Dale Wood was a master of interesting harmonic movement. Almost jazz-like in places, the ear is never bored. I have had many people comment on the beauty of these pieces. He takes an old standard, dusts it off, and breathes into it new life. The preludes are versatile and lend themselves to multiple uses. I have substituted a solo instrument for the organ melody or even had a soloist sing the hymn-tune using Mr. Wood’s lush harmonies as an accompaniment. I recently used a soprano soloist to sing Mr. Wood’s rendition of **The Old Rugged Cross** on Holy Cross Sunday (Sept. 14) and did not leave a dry eye in the house. They are fun and well worth investigating as are all Dale Wood’s organ pieces.

The Organist, The Organ Portfolio and The Sacred Organ Journal

Lorenz Publishing Company publications

Because of my limits regarding the formal prelude, these publications provide a wealth of material which is short, hymn-based, and accessible. But, be warned, there is also a lot of stuff in there not up to the best quality so choose carefully and intelligently. That being said, I would like to draw your attention to one of their contributors: Robert W. Thygeson. His background must include improvisation and jazz

since his arrangements are always fun for the listener as well as the performer. Two stand out for your consideration: **Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!** (*The Organist*, Vol. 109, No. 5, November/December 2005) and **I Have Decided to Follow Jesus** (*The Organist*, Vol. 110, No. 3, July/August 2006). Both are lively and provide an interesting contrast to the usual liturgical fare (your congregation may even think you are about to serve pizza at communion). From *The Sacred Organ Journal*, **When I Survey the Wondrous Cross** by Albin C. Whitworth (Vol. 37, No. 4, March/April 2003) that provides as an organ solo the same powerful, sweeping grandeur that exists in the choral arrangement that every church choir loves to sing (but for which I can’t remember the arranger — it has the blue cover with the Duke University Chapel picture).

Hymn Preludes for the Church Year - Book 1 and Book 2

Kevin Mayhew Ltd. Publications

I recently attended the annual organ festival of the RCCO in Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario and discovered some old favorite resources as well as many new ones. I advise you to check out Mayhew’s website: kevinmayhewltd.com. They have some wonderful materials providing new and interesting sounds for your congregation. There are short, accessible preludes based on many of the English hymns we have all come to know and love, but for which we can never find preludes. Written by a variety of composers/arrangers, they all convey the uniquely “British” sound to what are already beautiful tunes. They can stand alone as preludes and do not need to be attached to their tunes to be useful.

Two Hundred Last Verses:

Popular Hymn Tunes with Varied Harmonies

More Last Verses:

Another Two Hundred Varied Hymn Tune Harmonies

Noel Rawsthorne • Kevin Mayhew Ltd.

Two volumes with varied 400 hymn tune accompaniments with harmonizations that will make you sound really clever without leaving your congregation wondering, “What happened to the melody?” I love these books and, more often than not, use them to spice up an otherwise dreary old standard. They are made even more useful if you employ a solid instrumentalist (trumpet, oboe, flute) to double the melody. If you are playing for a festival service with brass at your disposal, using one of these harmonizations for the “organ solo verse” is also very exciting and interesting.

50 Fanfares for Organ:

To Introduce the Hymn or Acclaim the Gospel

Colin Mawby • Kevin Mayhew Ltd.

The fanfares are written in various keys, time signatures, and rhythmic patterns that are not tied to a particular hymn tune. Instead, you find the fanfare which fits the key, time signature, and “flavor” of your hymn and employ it to lead into the hymn introduction (which could also conceivably be an alternate harmonization of your choosing). They are perfectly suitable for use with your trumpet or reed chorus, but could also be re-arranged nicely to be used with a brass ensemble (hint-hint, but don’t go violating any copyright laws - contact Kevin Mayhew for permission to re-arrange).

Chorale Prelude on “Silent Night” from Die Natali, Op. 37 Samuel Barber (transcribed by the composer) G. Schirmer, Inc., distributed by Hal Leonard HL50288900

Placing the tune in your feet with a rhythm that is all Barber (and not quite settled), the piece has an “Adagio for Strings” feel to it that should mesmerize your listeners. They will come away commenting on how beautiful it was without realizing they were listening to “contemporary” music. Now there’s a great Christmas present for any organist.

Stuff that Works: Lessons and Carols for Epiphany

James Taube, Organist/Choirmaster
Lutheran Church of the Master, Los Angeles, CA

I'm sure most of you are very familiar with the tradition of Lessons and Carols from King's College Cambridge. My pastor and I came up with the idea of designing something similar for the first Sunday in Epiphany. The service proved most successful and I would encourage you to try it with your choir. Use your creativity. The following are only suggestions which have worked for me. How about a Lessons and Carols Service for the Sunday after Easter (another tradition in some churches) – or one for Holy Week? Here is a sample of one for Epiphany. Add or subtract readings as you like. You can also use congregational carols from ELW or other hymnals.

A Service of Lessons and Carols for Epiphany

The First Lesson: Isaiah 60: 1-6

Suggestions (pick one)

Anthem: *Star of the East*

Richard Horn • Morning Star MSM-50-2100

Very effective using handbells and percussion in procession.

Anthem: *O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright*

Robert Hobby • Morning Star MSM-60-2000A

The Second Lesson: Luke 2: 8-16

Anthem: *Where Shepherds Lately Knelt*

Carl Schalk • Augsburg 11-2456

Anthem: *How Far is it to Bethlehem*

Parker/Shaw • Alfred 51017

The Third Lesson: John 1 1-5

Anthem: *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light*

Kathleen Thomerson • GIA G-2786

Anthem: *The Glory of the Father*

Egil Hovland • Walton Music W 2973

Group your choir around the lit Christ candle and sing this one!

The Fourth Lesson: Matthew 2: 1-12

Carol: *We Three Kings of Orient Are* • WOV 646

Have men soloists sing the verses and the choir and congregation enter on the refrain.

Anthem: *The Three Kings*

Peter Cornelius • Oxford OCS1502

If this one is too much of a challenge for your choir, have the choir simply sing the chorale in unison supported by the organ. Place your soloist away from the choir for an antiphonal effect.

Anthem: *The Journey of the Magi*

K. Lee Scott • Morning Star MSM-50-1106

The Fifth Lesson: Matthew 2: 13-23

Anthem: Coventry Carol

Walter Pelz • Augsburg 11-2139

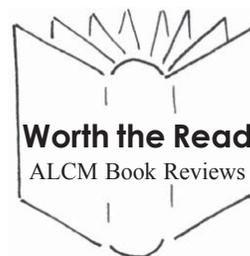
The Sixth Lesson: John 1: 1-18

Anthem: *Tell It on the Mountain*

Lloyd Larson • Alfred 22826

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I have an unusual situation in that I have a small choir (13). Out of 13, 6 are paid singers (students from UCLA). Because of this and having these talented music students, we are able to do bigger works. I feel very fortunate to have the entire support of the congregation (financially as well) in doing really good music. The church itself is quite small (seats c. 125).



Beyond Bells and Smells: The Wonder and Power of Christian Liturgy

Mark Galli • Paraclete Press

ISBN-13: 9781557255211

2008 publication

This is an honest reflective quick-read about worship and the deeper meaning of the rite.

With a Voice of Singing: Essays on Children, Choirs and Music in the Church in Honor of Ronald Nelson

ed. Zebulon M. Highben and Kristina M. Langlois

Kirk House • ISBN 1.933794.03.8

When you read this book don't miss the foreword by Paul Manz. Then pass on a copy to one of your students. It is packed with good stuff!

Both books recommended by Norma Aamodt-Nelson

Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain

Oliver Sacks • ISBN 978-1-4000-3353-9

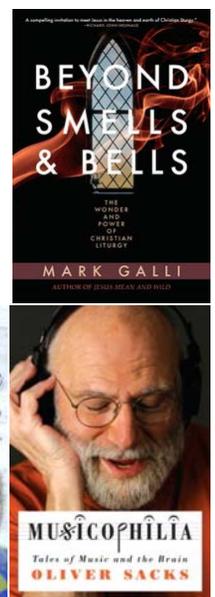
Vintage Books (A Division of Random House, Inc.)

2008 publication

If you have ever wondered about music/brain connections and have questions such as: Why do some people have "perfect pitch"? Why does "that" melody keep playing in my head ad nauseam? Why can someone with severe dementia sing a bass line when they can't do anything else?

Oliver Sacks is a practicing physician who weaves neuroscience with personal stories to enlighten us on numerous connections between music and brain. It is an excellent resource and an interesting read.

Recommended by
Carole Lea Arenson



Tips for Getting Youth Involved in Worship

Nathanael Maki, Associate Director of Music
Atonement Lutheran Church
Boulder, Colorado



Getting youth musically involved in our worship services can be a greater task than one anticipates. I certainly found this out. The tips in this article are no way guaranteed to work in another locale as every youth is different and needs to be treated on an individual basis. However, these are the techniques I found helpful.

When it comes to youth playing in worship the majority of youth are not knocking on the door asking to play. For many youth playing in worship can be intimidating. The first thing when working with youth is to remember to cater more towards the youth's desires then your own desires. There are three important points to consider: style, exposure, and difficulty.

STYLE

If you go out there with a goal for forming a contemporary praise band from scratch, thinking most youth want contemporary, you might be surprised.

There are a number of youth out there who like the more traditional styles of worship. Find out what style the youth likes, not necessarily as a whole, but as an individual. Sometimes they might not give you a straight answer. In this case, you will have to experiment in both styles and pay attention to how they respond while rehearsing or playing.

EXPOSURE

The second point is exposure. While you may know the youth could be very good at the instrument they are playing, they will be playing for a different crowd in worship then they would in school. In addition, typically they are playing in a band or orchestra in school and are not nearly as exposed as they would be in worship. In this area, I think it is best to start out with less exposure.

When a youth is playing for the first or second time, do not have them play during an offertory or prelude since these points of worship cause them to be very exposed and often with attention focused on them. This alone may discourage them. Instead, start out by having the youth play the melody of a hymn along with you. This way the congregation is busy singing and the addition of the organ and piano may make them feel less exposed. It may help them feel more comfortable in worship. As they become more comfortable, you can switch them to playing descants on hymns. The next step is starting to have them play solo pieces during communion or the postlude. Once they are really comfortable you can place them during the prelude or offertory. It is important to make sure the youth understands their role is still important even though they may only be playing the melody alongside you during a hymn. One of the things I used for hymn accompaniment for a youth who plays trumpet, is to have the trumpet solo out the melody line instead of the organ. During a verse I had the trumpet player continue to play the melody while I dropped back to the swell accompanying with a light registration using the enclosed boxes. I simulated soloing out the melody on the organ, without actually soloing it out on the organ. I still played full accompaniment including the melody. This way they see how their role is important. Also this is a valuable safety net. By using the enclosed boxes when

something starts to go off, you can quickly open the boxes and take back the lead to support your youth when they are having difficulties.

DIFFICULTY

The third point is difficulty. Remember when the youth plays in school they spend a lot of time working on the difficult school music. Most likely they do not want to be spending a lot of time on the music for worship in addition to school. You want to make their music not as challenging so that they can: 1) learn it quickly boosting their confidence and 2) not have to spend a lot of time on it. At the same time you do not want to make it so simple they become bored. Since the notes may not be very difficult you can focus on articulation, intonation, and dynamics. This will spruce up a rather simple part. When the time comes to actually play in worship and they cannot get all the things you worked on, they will still have the notes.

Working with youth can be a very difficult task, but never give up. When one thing does not work, just keep trying other things. Find what the youth wants and needs rather than what the church wants and needs. It will get you off to a better start. For example: when a church wants a youth choir it will fail if the youth do not want to sing. It is much better to find out what the youth are willing to give and start this way. But, do not let the youth get away without trying. If you find they are reluctant to play, try a number of different ways to get them to play at least once and go from there. For example: you might try bringing them donuts and juice on the morning they play. After awhile you will find you can phase out the treat and they will continue participating. After they have played for the first time, find out what they liked or did not like and address those aspects. Spend some time talking with them and new avenues may open to both you and the youth.

The most challenging part can be just getting them started. Do not give up because this is an aspect of ministry which can be very rewarding and enjoyable.

Nathanael T. Maki is the Associate Director of Music at Atonement Lutheran Church in Boulder, CO. He graduated from Valparaiso University with a Bachelor of Arts in Music with a focus on church music and a minor in theology in 2007.





ALCM Region IV Newsletter

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2009

January 15

Last day for Region IV Newsletter submissions
(Winter Issue)

August 2 – 5

ALCM National Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin