

Overview for instructors

Leadership Program for Musicians, Inc.

Teaching New Music to the Congregation

This sheet is intended to be copied by a local LPM coordinator and given to the instructor with the course material.

Helpful things to understand This course is intended to awaken in participants an awareness of the importance of teaching music to the congregation and to develop the skills necessary to do that teaching. Musical leaders will learn to engage their congregation's attention and inspire their participation until such time as the people can sing the selection well enough to have joy in their achievement.

Participants are encouraged to identify the form of the composition they intend to teach in order to enhance teaching effectiveness. Recognizing that the second musical phrase is identical to the first, for example, allows the teacher to teach the first, invite the group to sing it again using the words of the second phrase, and then move on to other new material which requires more careful presentation.

The course is intended to help participants to have the ability to become capable teachers, even though they may have never considered this to be part of their music ministry. With attention and respectful care of individual participants, this course can build their confidence, through class teaching experience and positive response from their peers and their instructor. This positive response will make them better musicians who now enjoy the art and skill of teaching.

Materials See pages 4-5 for a list of sources for the reading assignments throughout the course. While all the books on this list would be valuable for everyone's library, it may be necessary to have a set in an LPM library that can be shared. Participants will need the **hymnal of their own denomination** and are strongly encouraged to own a copy of the **hymnal of another denomination**. "A Method for Introducing New Music to a Congregation" is summarized on a handout (p. 17).

Assignments After the first few sessions, classes are devoted primarily to participants' practice teaching their colleagues. This provides opportunity to fulfill the course requirements, which consist of teaching a total of four new selections in the following settings:

- (1) During the few minutes preceding a Sunday liturgy,
- (2) In an informal situation such as a parish supper,
- (3) To a group of young children, and
- (4) To a group of young adult Christians.

Following each participant's presentation, the class practices another important skill of teaching: commending and encouraging the developing teacher for what they have done well and offering suggestions for their improved effectiveness in future presentations.

Hints for teaching In the anxious moments of standing before their classmates and teaching (perhaps for the first time in a public situation), participants often forget these most basic guidelines for effective teaching. Interpreting and re-interpreting these principles to class participants and reminding them of ways their application could strengthen teaching is a central role of the class's leader. Participants often forget, for example, the need to provide a clear starting pitch when requesting that people "echo back" what has been sung to them.

Session 5 introduces consideration of the variety of musical styles. Modeling of genuine respect for music of cultures not one's own as well as for excellent examples of compositions written in a style which is not

one's personal preference is a critical part of the instructor's work. This is accomplished throughout the ten sessions by choosing a variety of music for use in the leader's own teaching demonstrations and by commenting on those qualities of the music which are strong and good.

Being aware of the nature of the group one is teaching, should assist in preparation of a presentation which is appealing to that group. Session 7 offers discussion of the characteristics of children and young adults which can help shape our approaches to teaching each of those groups.