



Leadership
Program
for Musicians

LPM News and Notes

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LPM2004 – HAVE YOU REGISTERED YET?

In case you didn't know, this summer's conference will be something totally new and different from the LPM conferences of past years. What's really significant is that the LPM Conference is not just for coordinator training anymore. This summer's gathering is for ALL church musicians, regardless of their previous association with LPM. We are excited about the interesting topics and top-notch clinicians that have been assembled, and really believe we have created

what will be one of the most rewarding and rejuvenating church music conferences around.

In planning this conference, we carefully examined what subjects and activities participants really found useful and inspiring and centered the week around those areas. Knowing the broad expectations of church musicians today, there are 19 varied course offerings. Selected specifically for their expertise and knowledge in their subject, the 13 outstanding clinicians make up the largest staff of any church music con-

ference of comparable size and scope. However, the individual class will be small with an approximate student-teacher ratio of 1:8. In addition, the LPM board of directors will be on site during the week, available for informal conversation and additional support. At CLU, the setting is very pleasant, accommodations are comfortable (with air conditioning), and the cafeteria is known for serving great food. Arguably, LPM 2004 will offer more value than any other conference we know, and hope you will be part of this great event. Continued on page 3

THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHURCH MUSIC COURSE IS VERY PRACTICAL

By Valerie E. Hess

I sometimes get the impression that this LPM course is sorely misunderstood. In my experience, the students start out in Year I with a suspicious look in their eyes. Philosophy of Church Music?! It sounds so dreadful, so impractical, so boring. Yet, hopefully by Year II, the students get to a point where they realize that many unfortunate incidents between clergy and musicians, between music staff members,

and within the congregation could be avoided if everyone could clearly state what their Philosophy of Church Music is. After a year and a half of half of discussing many different ways of articulating what we believe church music is (i.e. a philosophy of church music), many agree that this is one of the most practical courses a person can have if they want a successful music ministry.

In one of my class discussions, a woman who played for

a small Episcopal church told how the Baptist church asked her to come work for them. They did indicate that she would have to abide by their rules and she assured them that she had no problem being flexible. In a class discussion, though, she came to realize that she wasn't sure how flexible she really could be when it came right down to it. Many of us want to be thought of as nice, congenial, easy-to-

get-along-with kinds of people but that is where the trouble can begin. Once hired into a music ministry position, we may come to realize that the things they want us to do or play or prepare for are things that really grate against our sensibilities, musical tastes, personal theology, or all of the above.

Most churches, when asked what the congregation's philosophy of church music is, would not have a
CONTINUED PAGE 2

PHILOSOPHY CONTINUED.

If every congregation, clergy person, and church musician took the time to clearly think through their philosophy of church music, we would have far fewer clergy/musician conflicts.

CONTINUED FROM
PAGE 1

clue as to how to answer. Many clergy and worship committees have never discussed this issue.

When differences in philosophies are not properly articulated, adjectives like “too loud,” “too slow,” “too fast,” “too traditional,” or “too contemporary” start getting hurled around. Feelings are hurt, lines are drawn in the sand, and good musicians are lost to congregations. People

are left with wounds that can take years to heal. If every congregation, clergy person, and church musician took the time to clearly think through their philosophy of church music, we would have far fewer clergy/musician conflicts. To that end, let me suggest some questions that can be asked to formulate an individual philosophy of church music.

Begin with a piece of paper folded in thirds long ways. Start by listing “the hills you will die on” on the left side. By that I mean, what are the theological/musical issues that are non-negotiables for you. These things could be issues of musical style or the physical placement of musicians. It could be the quality of the musical instruments or the theological stripe of the congregation. Anything that could cause you to feel you were violating some kind of personal or theological integrity should go on that left side.

On the right side, list the things that make no difference to you. For some it could be the location of the organ or

the choir. It could be the size or your office or the gender of the clergy or the distance from your hose to the church. This category is for things that don’t bother you but be careful. Sometimes we think something presented theoretically wouldn’t bother us but in an actual church setting, it does, so don’t be too quick in making your list on the right side.

In the middle, list issues that could go either way depending on the exact circumstance. For example, I have mixed feelings about services that use exclusively folk/Christian pop styles of music. Whether this would end up in the left or right column would depend on the actual circumstances. These are the gray areas that you will need to discuss the most with your clergy, fellow music staff members, and the congregation.

Take the three lists and formulate each of them into a paragraph or two that states what you believe about church music and your role in it. Arrange a time to discuss this with your clergy, worship committee, fellow music staff,

and/or congregational members. This exercise is meant to clarify issues of agreement and disagreement for everyone involved. The goal is for constructive dialogue that will lead to compromise and mutual education as much as possible.

It is recommended in the curriculum that the LPM coordinator teach this class. Make sure that you as coordinator have sat down and clearly articulated what you believe about church music. Be prepared to model in class how one engages in a discussion about these beliefs with others who may hold polar opposite views. Find ways to role play in class. Use the historical background readings in the early sessions to show the students how people have viewed church music over the centuries.

We can better serve the Church of Jesus Christ in love and fellowship when everyone is communicating clearly with each other and seeking to learn from one another. Make sure your students learn more skills to enable them to do just that.

LPM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Please send questions related to LPM to the editor at: JVML10@hotmail.com Please indicate “LPM Question” in the subject box as e-mails from unknown sources are routinely deleted. Action shots from LPM programs are also accepted. Contact the editor for information on sending pictures.

Q: I have equal numbers of Lutherans and Episcopalians in our program. What is the best way to approach teaching the liturgy and hymnody courses.

A: If at all possible, everyone will benefit from those classes being team taught, especially the liturgy class. Our experience has been that not only the students but also the teachers learn a lot from each other in this format. Also, the students

get a better sense of the commonalities and the differences between these two faith traditions when they are team taught.

Q: Why does LPM stress class attendance so strongly?

A: Because so much learning takes place between the students in each class. As musicians and clergy, we benefit from shared wisdom and experiences. Make sure that this and the homework require-

ment are well advertised at the beginning as some students have been caught off-guard and ended up quitting in frustration.

www.lpm-online.org

Your source for all the latest on LPM resources and events. Be sure to let us know if you have a new phone number or mailing/e-mail address. We’d love to stay in touch!

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING IN CHICAGO FEBRUARY 13-14, 2004

The LPM National Board held its winter meeting at the ELCA headquarters in Chicago. All members were in attendance. Highlights of the meeting include:

- Expressed much excitement over the 2004 Conference to be held at California Lutheran University June 29th-July 2nd. Access www.lpm-online.org for registration and schedule information.
- Approved the Summer 2005 Conference site to be Texas Lutheran University in Seguin Texas June 28-July 1st.
- Tentatively affirmed a return to Carthage College for the Summer 2006 Conference.
- Commended Anna Leppert-Langert for her many faithful years of good work on the newsletter. Approved a new title and format.
- Continued to work on the 501(c)3 status.
- Continued work to improve the curriculum, specifically in the areas of flexibility, teaching structure, and the Vocal Track and the Hymnody Track. A goal of this summer was set to have these additional resources available to coordinators.

JOYFUL GIFTS UPDATE

Contributions Given Since November 2003

Marian Barnett; Rosemary Beakes; Teresa Bowers; Timothy Braband, in honor of Dexter Weikel

Barbara A. Bruns, in honor of The Rev. and Mrs. R. W. Brownlee

Thomas Loy Bumgarner, in memory of The Rev. Elvin Loy Bumgarner, Jr.; Celebration, Mimi Farra

Kip Coerper, in memory of Lois Hicks; Karen Couturier; Susan Crum

The Rev. Elizabeth Morris Downie, in honor of Dr. Raymond F. Glover; Kathryn Duffy, in honor of Julia Pohlmann

The Rev. Ronald T. Englund; Nathan B. Ensign; Marilyn Freeman; Mrs. Joyce Frigm; The Rev. William C. Hibbert

Geoff and Patty Holland; Sally Hubbard, in memory of Robert M. and Helen F. Hubbard; Beverly Jedynak

The Rt. Rev. and Mrs. David C. Jones, in honor of the ministry of Marti Rideout

Marilyn Keiser, in honor of Joyce and Raymond Glover; Pauline F. Kiltinen; Marcia Koopman; Bruce Larson

Andrew Leahy; Margaret Lehrecke; Anna M. Leppert-Largent; Don and Shireen Levsen; Marc Liberman

Dorothy H. Lyall, in memory of The Rev. Dr. Gordon Lyall

Margaret McCamant; Richard C. Milhon; Rachel Newell

Robert Cox Passow, in honor of the faculty and leaders of the Diocese of Washington LPM, Class of 1996-1997

Donald A. Read, in honor of William Wunsch; Marti Rideout; Priscilla A. Rigg, in memory of Emma F. Adams

Mr. and Mrs. John M. Robson; Virginia A. Schoenike; Thomas J. Secor; John Seest

Shirley R. Smith, in honor of Avis Renshaw; Sally Sturges; Joseph H. Waterman ; Nathan Wilson

LPM is dependent on your generous giving to continue its mission and ministry. Please consider giving regularly. For example, give one wedding or funeral fee per year to the LPM Joyful Gifts fund. Checks may be made out to "LPM" and sent to the administrator's address on the back page of this publication. The National Board thanks you as do all of the students who benefit from the program.

CONFERENCE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

One thing more: A large component of the week will be lots and lots of SINGING. Throughout the day-- at daily worship,

at classes, and whenever possible -- the entire conference will be experienced through the framework of sung praise, carrying us

out into the world to fulfill our mission of Keeping the Song Alive!

LPM is on the cutting edge of improving worship and music in the church. Come to Thousand Oaks and find out how you can be part of the excitement!

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Leadership Program for Musicians Serving Small Congregations (LPM) seeks to prepare capable and confident musical leaders who will enable their congregations to sing well and take their part in the liturgy of the church.



Valerie Hess, Jan Graettinger, and William Bradley Roberts join the Board in Chicago.

As they say in real estate—"Location, location, location!" We are really excited about our 2004 Summer Conference and it's location at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, June 29-July 2, our first West Coast event. The campus is beautiful, the weather should be ideal that time of year, this is a great opportunity for enrichment just before the national AGO convention in Los Angeles, and one may receive 1.5 credits for continuing education if attending all the conference. Check out our web site for details and look for a brochure in your mailbox later in March.

Our winter board meeting was very productive in Chicago and we were excited to welcome our two new members. **Jan Graettinger** is a K-12 vocal director in a rural NW Iowa public school system. For the past 35 years she has served the Lost Island Lutheran Church as organist, and in addition to being a mother/grandmother, she is coordinator for the Western Iowa Synod LPM program. **Valerie Hess**, Coordinator of Music Ministries and Organist at Trinity Lutheran Church in Boulder, Colorado, is also the LPM coordinator for the Rocky Mountain Synod--ELCA/Episcopal Diocese of Colorado. She has a strong interest in "under trained" church musicians, and is the new editor of our newsletter—I'm sure you noticed the new format and name. I personally would like to thank Anna Leppert-

Largent for her excellent years of service in that capacity.

I'll look forward to greeting many of you in California this summer! Register on-line NOW!

Nathan B. Ensign, LPM National Board President

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