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A Newsletter for those who Appreciate and Participate in Worship and the Arts

Spring 2008

Finding a Music Coordinator ... *you can meet the challenge.*

By: Tova Olson, Messiah Lutheran Church, Camrose



Finding the right person for the church music coordinator position can be challenging. The person needs to not only be knowledgeable in music, but also creative, welcoming, patient, and have organizational and leadership skills. Most importantly, this person must have a growing relationship with Jesus that is evident to all whom they come in contact with. Churches that have both a traditional and contemporary service may have difficulties finding a person with the appropriate skills needed for the two kinds of services. Job descriptions, contracts, how a church advertises and salary are all components of how well a church will be able to hire someone.

The job description needs to be precise. Clearly state what is expected musically, non-musically and spiritually. Expectations that could be included are: playing for services and finding replacements, directing or coordinating directors for choirs, choosing appropriate music, maintaining a music library, familiarity with and ability to maintain several instruments, preparing a budget, working with worship/music committees, planning services and special music, playing for weddings, funerals and extra services and concerts and other special musical events. A music coordinator should take their leadership role in the church seriously. They are, in a sense, mentors. An important aspect of their job is sharing their

faith through their job, including and nurturing congregational members and other people, and facilitating choir devotionals.

Benefits of the job need to be conveyed also. Does the music coordinator have a continuing education fund? Do they have medical coverage? Do they get paid separately for extra services? Can hours be banked and taken as holidays at a later date? Do they have freedom to be creative? Is there time for rejuvenation and recuperation, as this is important to cultivate their creativity? Can they teach private music lessons using the church facilities? This is a good way to supplement their income, and the two jobs work well together.

One of the main reasons churches have difficulty hiring qualified musicians is that they are not willing to pay comparable salaries. Find out the current rates for musicians: accompanists, teachers, choir directors in the area and pay accordingly. You can also contact The Royal Canadian College of Organists (www.rcco.ca) for

organist wages. Treat this job like any other job. If you want high caliber, you have to pay for it. Many years of educations, training and money went into the musician you have hired. This is probably the number one downfall of most congregations in hiring a music coordinator.

Discovering a person who has knowledge both in traditional worship as well as contemporary worship is becoming more difficult. It might be necessary to hire two people to fulfill the job: one person to oversee the music program and play for the traditional service and another person who is subordinate to the first and handles the contemporary service. If the candidate is willing and has the capability of doing so, be willing to train that person in the area that they are less competent in such as paying for organ lessons or sending them to workshops on how to lead contemporary worship. Churches can also foster the growth of young musicians by involving them in the music life of the church. Set them up with a mentor and start them playing in a worship band or accompanying the congregation in hymn singing. Do not segregate them to one service, but introduce them to both types. Set up a bursary program where their organ lessons are paid for by the church, and then

require them to play for a certain number of services as a gift back to the congregation before being paid salary. Not only are they getting involved in the church, but it also is an incentive for them to use their skills and be paid something for it. This is of particular help for university students.

Finally, where you advertise is important. Post-secondary schools with music programs always have students looking for employment that will fit into their school schedule. The ELCIC Synod Web site, as well as the Christian Careers Employment Site (www.kongdomjobs.com), PastorFinder.com (an American website, but has postings for musicians also), the Organ Guild Website, and any other site that might come up when a potential church musician is googling for employment opportunities are all places to start looking. Don't limit your advertising to your own country either. Some musicians are looking to move to another country and are keeping tabs on the jobs that surface in different countries. Websites are good places to start, but also advertise in your community and use word of mouth. You never know what connections congregational members have! Keep your advertising as wide and as varied as possible to contact the most number of people. **A**

LifeWords LifeWords LifeWords

By: Carolyn Speakman, Church of the Good Shepherd, Lethbridge

LifeWords is a theme we explored at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Lethbridge, in the fall 2007. Our worship committee was inspired by the "Vertical Habits" initiative featured in Reformed Worship (Issue 84, www.reformedworship.org.) to focus on some of the words that express our relationship with God.

Based on the assigned texts and events for each Sunday, we selected a key word that we could highlight within worship; we did this with simple bulletin graphics, songs, words and actions. Take-home devotions on the week's *LifeWord* were prepared by someone from the congregation, and congregation members were asked to create artwork to be featured on our website and in our fellowship area. Here's an excerpt of the introduction from our fall newsletter:

Just as caregivers help children learn the language of relationship, worship helps us develop vocabulary to express our relationship with God. We join together to say things like, "I love you," "I'm sorry," "Thank you," "Why?" "Help!" "You're

wonderful," and "What can I do?" We learn the language of love and faith, and we develop deep practices that sustain us through every moment of our lives.

*Worship does more than express where we are in our relationship with God; it also moves us in the life of dependence and faith. We carry the *LifeWords* of worship into the world!*

On the first Sunday, our *LifeWord* was "Bless you" (benediction), and our worship included a blessing of school backpacks/students/teachers. Children participated in prayer for the Sunday School staff, and all of us learned gestures of giving and receiving blessing during these times. On other weeks, our *LifeWords* included "I'm sorry" (confession), "What can I do?" (service), "I love you" (praise), "thank you" (thanksgiving), "why?" (lament), and "Help" (petition). Many other possibilities exist! We hope to explore *LifeWords* even more deeply in the future, perhaps with different emphases and integration into even more areas of congregational life. **A**

Would you care for some green with your coffee?

Part One: An Exploration of Greening the Church By: Colleen McGinnis, St. John's Lutheran Church, Wetaskiwin

We've likely all participated at some point, in that pot luck dinner or morning coffee at church where we opt to save time by using disposable cups, plates or plastic utensils and stir sticks. And most of those even come *packaged* in plastic. Add to that the sandwiches brought or desserts prepared in tin foil pans and you end up with a garbage can full of things that add bulk to our landfills and won't break down for up to 500 years.



Trade coffee or tea, and serve it in glass mugs or cups we have won the eco-friendly grand prize. Certified Fair Trade coffees can now be easily found in mainstream supermarkets as well as in most specialty coffee shops.

If coffee filters are used, look for biodegradable and unbleached ones. Try loose tea in a tea infuser. Remember that coffee grounds and tea leaves make great compost.

Serve cream and sugar in reusable containers – not in plastic or paper packets.

Imagine – the foam cup we hold in our hand today could still be around after our great grandchild's great grandchild isn't. It's kind of sobering when it's thought about in that way. I'll admit it. I didn't think about it that way until I started researching this article.

The dinner: In the kitchen and at the table, "organically grown", "locally grown", and "minimal packaging" are the stars.

So, here are some of the things I learned and some of the things that were reinforced, some of the things that are "must do's" and some of the things that are "should do's". Some will save money and some will cost more money to implement. In the end, whatever we decide we *can do will* have a positive effect on the environment, and on our social and ecological consciousness.

Organically grown (a multi-faceted area, so do your research) wins again, and not just because we are putting pesticide and chemical fertilizer free food into our bodies, but because those same pesticides and chemicals are not being fed to the earth, poisoning wildlife, and leaching into our water systems.

Coffee and Tea: Perhaps the most common phrases that soar into the air like brightly coloured birds are "certified fair trade", "organically grown", or "shade grown".

Locally grown means we can support local entrepreneurs and buy seasonal produce or meat. ▶

Buying a certified fair trade product means that the producer of that product has received fair payment by local or regional standards, and that they are working in a safe and healthy environment. Look for the label that says "Fair Trade Certified".

Organically grown reassures us that the product is grown, harvested and processed without toxic chemicals that are harmful to they who grow them, and to we who consume them.

Shade grown more commonly refers to coffee plantations where the natural forest is allowed to remain. Many plantations clear the area of all other vegetation, forcing the crops to produce more and mature faster. Under the natural canopy of the forest, richer flavours are created since the beans mature more slowly. The added bonus is that the trees also provide a home for native and migratory birds.

So, if we buy an Organic, Shade Grown, Certified Fair

A Search for Talent!

Is there a talented
artist or crafts person
in your church?

Ask them if they would allow
their names to be submitted for
inclusion on the
Synod Worship Arts List,
and send the information to:

Sharon Villetard
Synod of Alberta and the Territories
10014 - 81 Ave., Edmonton, AB T6E 1W8
email: svilletard@elcic.ca

Would you care for some green with your coffee?

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This fare arrives tasty and fresh to our table after having travelled only a short distance. Much of the fresh produce in supermarkets has travelled at least 1500 miles by aircraft and truck, which in turn pollutes the atmosphere with harmful emissions. This can negate many of the ecological benefits of an organic tomato brought here from Mexico.

Aim for minimal packaging when you shop, especially when faced with shelves full of grocery items contained in petroleum-based plastics. Those thin plastic fruit and vegetable bags can be avoided by bringing canvas shopping bags and putting your fruit and vegetables in them so they don't roll around in the bottom of your cart. If you buy from bulk food stores, you can bring your own containers and have them weighed before you fill them.

Bring your potluck offering in a container that can be washed and re-used. Look for 100% recycled paper napkins. Hopefully they won't come wrapped in plastic, but sometimes, you just can't win! The thing to watch for here is 100% PCW (Post Consumer Waste) in the fine print. Many paper products on the market, which state they are "recycled", contain little or no post-consumer waste (PCW) paper, only wood chips and mill scraps.

When dinner is over, stretch that visit out a little longer and involve extra people in the cleanup. Gathering together to do dishes is fellowship too.

The Cleanup: Whether you are washing dishes by hand or in a dishwasher, use detergent that is phosphate free. Whatever goes down the drain eventually ends up in our water system. When phosphates enter our waterways, they act as a fertilizer, which leads to an overgrowth of algae. Emerald green blanketed bodies of water are the result. The water's oxygen supply will eventually be depleted, killing off fish and other organisms.

There are other commercial cleaning products available, which are non-toxic and biodegradable, but a simple mixture of vinegar, baking soda, a little warm water and/or dish soap makes a good all-purpose cleaner for most surfaces.

If your church or perhaps a church member has an active compost heap, the vegetable based table scraps and paper napkins could be collected, composted, and eventually returned to the soil.

The Commitment: Going green. Conservation. Eco-friendly. Taking care of God's creation. Whatever you *call* it, there is an overwhelming and sometimes bewildering wealth of information *about* it. It can lead to a major lifestyle change, or just tickle the surface of the consciousness. I am awed by the great lengths some individuals will go to be good caretakers, and disheartened by the complete disrespect of others. Somewhere in between is where I find myself.

Where is your church on this journey? What changes have you implemented or will you be implementing? What tips do you have to offer on "*greening our church dinners?*" Send your thoughts to the Editor, email: mail@caelinartworks.com and they will be published in a future issue of Adoramus when we deal with another "greening" issue.

One last thing: The dinner and clean up is finished and you're ready to leave the church. Now, reset your programmable thermostat to its pre-programmed low setting. Oh, and turn off the lights. **A**



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