

# Parish Music Coordinator for the WELS Congregation

[Summer Quarter 1996, "Planning Christian Worship" Prof. James Tiefel, instructor]

by: James Schierenbeck

## Introduction

Traditionally Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) congregations have two types of called workers, pastors and teachers. Strong tradition with an established worker training system to back it up has perpetuated this paradigm. Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions certainly allow and encourage whatever forms of ministry are "most profitable ... for the good order, worthy of the profession of the Gospel and the edification of the Church, (Formula of Concord, Thor. Dec., X, Of Church Rites, *Triglotta*, p. 1055) Therefore, it is fitting and proper for congregations to consider whether additional forms of ministry would be beneficial to the work the Lord has given us.

In the past decade WELS congregations have seen the wisdom of considering a third group of workers, part-time or full-time, whose focus is different than the traditional scope of the pastor's or teacher's call. Titles for such workers may vary: day care administrator, minister of education or evangelism or discipleship, staff minister, parish program director, school administrator, church administrator, family minister, parish assistant, deaconess, parish nurse, and, the subject of this presentation, the Parish Music Coordinator (Minister of Music, Director of Music, ...)

Congregations felt that changing circumstances in their midst called for this new type of worker to join arms with pastors and teachers. Rationale grew out of the following observations: expanding pressures on the time and energy of the pastor, looming problems which required specialized training to handle, a need to dedicate more time than most volunteers have, a shortage of free volunteers, a desire to specialize programs for each segment of members, a desire to do new things, a desire to do old things in a new way, and, primarily, a desire to work more efficiently and effectively as we see the day of the Lord fast approaching.

This project will show:

- why parish music must not center around music but around the mission of the church and the philosophy of worship
- how the benefits of the parish music coordinator extend beyond the benefits from the work of a parish organist or choir director
- and, how a congregation might secure a qualified parish music coordinator

## What is worship?

WELS congregations are starting to talk about worship as the primary activity of the church. Worship is the hub of the congregation because it contains the most direct use of the Word and both Sacraments while it touches the largest number of members. With the possible exception of an exploratory mission, our congregations need worship first. Only then can follow the other parish services of adult and youth discipleship, evangelism, parish schools & family ministry, special ministries, and from there to the high school conference, worker training, and home and world missions. The spokes of the wheel must be connected to the strong and sturdy hub of worship..

The Holy Spirit will accomplish what he wills. We pray that we do not present hindrances to his will. As Prof James Tiefel states in a sample mission statement for congregational worship (*Planning Christian Worship*, WLS Summer Quarter, James Tiefel,

1996) “The objective of worship in this congregation is to solidify through Word and Sacrament, the good news of Jesus Christ on the hearts and minds of the people of God and to give the people of God an opportunity to summarize their lives of praise in fitting and beautiful forms.”

Music is a fitting and beautiful form for worship. In Revelations 4,5,7 we see the earthly activity of music transported to the heavenly realms. Prof em Bruce Backer, Martin Luther College, gives to each of his organ students a small card on which is found:

When you do music, present it as well as you can.

Good music, done well, offers a glimpse of creation after the sixth day. God saw that it was very good.

Good music, done well, points to the wonders of God’s creation that remain to this day.

Good music, done well, looks ahead to a new heaven and a new earth that God is preparing for those who long for the Lord’s return.

Colossians 3:16 shows us how the word of Christ dwells richly through music, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.” No wonder Martin Luther placed music second only to theology. Music is not a means of grace, but, properly, Lutherans have called music in worship the *viva vox evangelii*, a living voice of the Gospel.

In worship much of the heavenly dialogue (God to believers, believers to God, believers to each other, God and believers to unbelievers) is musical. Since music plays an uplifted role in worship, we would do well to heed the encouragement of Psalm 33:3 “Sing to him a new song, play skillfully, and shout for joy.” Skillful presentation of music in worship, therefore, is an imperative. However, as one parish music coordinator, James Bakken of St. Peter’s, Minnesota, writes, “If a congregation truly wants an excellent music program, they must be willing and committed to providing adequate personnel, time, and finances to accomplish this.”

The establishment of the position of parish music coordinator will truly be a benefit and a blessing for the worship of the faithful.

### **Is there any historical precedent for this type of position?**

In the Old Testament King David appointed chief musicians such as Asaph (I Chronicles 16:5) and many of the psalms carry the message, “For the director of music.”

The German cantor of Reformation days was responsible for church and school music. The most famous cantor, J. S. Bach, taught school, planned worship, prepared choirs and instrumentalists, played organ, trained future musicians, composed, and was a student of the Scriptures. Often cantors became companions with their pastors in the work (Luther and Walter, Gerhardt and Crueger).

More recently larger churches (often without schools) outside WELS have committed resources to full time parish musicians. In the LCMS their colleges have been graduating church music majors and providing a graduate program degree, the MCM (Master of Church Music). WELS congregations (starting years ago with Grace, Milwaukee, and continuing with many congregations including those with schools - see Appendix) as well as WELS colleges have seen the value of a worker specializing in church music.

## **What are the ideal qualities of a parish music coordinator?**

### *Knowledge of the Bible and Faith in That Message*

Music must take a back seat to theology. That the parish music coordinator possesses a thorough knowledge of the Bible's message is obvious. An understanding of the use of the Means of Grace is vital, since worship's core is the Gospel in Word and Sacraments. In order to maintain balance in the ministry, the parish music coordinator recognizes the paradoxes of Scripture including Law and Gospel, emotion and intellect, the three uses of the Law, Christ for us compared to Christ in us, justification and sanctification, the theology of the cross, sacramental and sacrificial acts in worship, and the human as saint and sinner. The parish music coordinator, furthermore, can detect and avoid the theology of glory, pietism and rationalism, worship as entertainment, and reformed doctrine. Other key doctrines in the practice of worship are the theology and practice of ministry, the role of women, and fellowship.

Not just an understanding of Biblical doctrine is required, but faith in all that is found in the inerrant Scriptures. (John 8:31-32)

### *Knowledge and Appreciation for Historic Christian Worship and Lutheran Worship*

Lutheran worship today is rooted in confessional Lutheran worship of the past five centuries, which was rooted in Reformation worship, which was rooted in the historic Western rite, which was rooted in New Testament worship, which was rooted in the Old Testament synagogue worship. Knowledge of the parish music coordinator's tiny spot in the millennia of historic worship obligates him or her to stay within the framework of historical Christian worship.

### *Knowledge and Appreciation for the Church Year*

The church year is the engine that drives variety and stability in worship from week to week. Each week the parish music coordinator lives a new week in the Lord through the context of that particular week in the church year. The parish music coordinator helps his members discover the benefit of blending their lives with the church year.

### *Respect for Personal and Professional Qualities*

Musical knowledge for a music coordinator is of obvious importance. Beyond this, the parish music coordinator is knowledgeable in the basics of public speaking, copyright law, effective teaching, church architecture and symbolism, chant, upkeep of instruments, computers, church administration, and the like. The parish music coordinator is well versed in skills of communication, conflict management, recruitment of music leaders and participants, time management, self-critical analysis, accepting criticism and compliments, humility, organizational skills, timing, and decorum.

### *Heart for the Work*

A parish music coordinator must have "heart for the work." "Heart for the work" includes a love for Word and Sacrament, an awe of God in worship, a respect for teamwork in the body of Christ, a desire to lead by serving, a desire to serve by leading, a love for each worshiper and for those who don't attend worship, and a steady effort to present a fragrant offering to God through his or her life.

### *A Desire to Know and Become More*

The parish music coordinator will search for publications, colleagues, and workshops/classes which will broaden and inspire the five areas listed above.

### **What can a parish music coordinator do?**

The job description of the parish music coordinator balances the needs of the congregation with the gifts and interests of the individual parish music coordinator. The list of duties should be specific enough to establish parameters; yet it should not be so specific that it limits the creativity and expansion of the program. If all the duties are spelled out, there is little incentive to adjust for changing needs or resources in the future.

Administratively, the parish music coordinator can either accomplish each duty personally or delegate the duty. A balance is desirable. Either way the parish music coordinator bears overall responsibility to the pastor and congregation.

The following items are presented, certainly not as a job description for a mere mortal, but rather to help a congregation begin to picture the endless possibilities and benefits of a parish music coordinator.

#### *Organ*

- play organ for 75% or less of regular and special services
- practice, primarily, hymns and liturgy
- select attendant music (preservice, distribution, etc.)
- practice attendant music and set registrations
- find, purchase, and learn new organ compositions
- take organ lessons
- attend organ workshops
- learn improvisation techniques
- promote purchase of an adequate organ when necessary
- make minor organ repairs and spot tuning
- opportunity to be the regular organist for weddings & funerals
- consult with wedding couples
- rehearse with soloists/instrumentalists
- schedule other organists
- schedule training and planning sessions with other organists
- give lessons to present and future organists
- give a brief talk about the organ to interested members

#### *Vocal Music*

- become familiar with music in the file
- search publishers for new selections appropriate in text and music
- schedule balance of music from the files and from new purchases
- artistic and spiritual preparation of music for rehearsal
- rehearse the choir
- accompany the choir or secure an accompanist
- rehearsal room - seating, music, teaching aids, clean up
- rehearsing the choir before the service
- various part-time or full time choirs - women, men, teens, family, or seniors
- children's choir (grades 6-8?)

- intermediate choir (grades 3-6?)
- cherub choir (grades 1-3?)
- Sunday School Choir
- Vacation Bible School
- summer choir
- recruit singers
- secure accompanists for all choirs
- choir attendance records
- organize a system for training choir members in music and worship
- maintain choir robes
- attend choral workshops
- take voice lessons
- prepare arrangements of music when necessary
- compose music
- prepare coordinated schedule for all choirs
- assist the pastor with chant and rehearse
- locate, schedule, and rehearse soloists and vocal ensembles
- offer private help for adults who have trouble singing

#### *Instrumental Music*

- locate, schedule, and rehearse solo or ensemble instrumentalists for worship
- assist and encourage the development of young instrumentalists and keyboardists
- organ and piano duets, piano preservice or offering music
- develop contacts with local music stores and high school music teachers
- prepare arrangements of music when necessary
- compose music
- borrow, rent, or purchase tympani and other instruments
- encourage use of Orff and other instruments with vocal groups
- locate and purchase suitable instrumental music
- maintain an instrumental music library
- adult handbell choir
- teen handbell choir
- children's handbell choir
- choir chimes for younger children, elderly, the non-musical, or for anyone
- teach recorder, for recorder choirs

#### *Special Needs of Lutheran Elementary Schools*

- classroom music curriculum planning and teaching
- classroom worship curriculum planning and teaching, beyond hymnology
- highlight music and worship in the new WELS religious curriculum
- assist teachers in finding music in the new WELS religion curriculum
- assist teachers in finding music appropriate for classroom singing in public worship
- secure accompanists for classroom choirs
- promote Verse of the Day, Psalms, and Hymn of the Day by children in worship
- provide materials, hints, and up-to-date trends to teachers regarding music and worship
- assist teachers in conducting, choral sound, and motivation of singers

- assist principal with faculty devotions
- tutor (personally, by teachers, or parents) every child who cannot sing on pitch
- in-school piano, vocal, and instrumental private lessons
- weekly or monthly all-school worship
- plan worship participation for Christmas Education Sunday
- plan worship participation for Christmas Eve
- rehearse and direct children when entire school sings in church

### *Worship Planning*

- consider church priorities—education, discipline, evangelism, administration, worship
- set priorities for the music/worship programs
- short range planning alone and with the pastor, by month, season, or semiannually
- long range (2-10 year) planning alone and with the pastor
- worship planning committee (pastor, organists, choir director(s) meet to plan worship)
- worship committee, a subcommittee of the Board of Elders, (reacts to worship plans)
- plan reasonable introductions of unfamiliar hymns and liturgies
- prepare a worship planning sheet for all who participate in each service
- schedule orders of worship
- keep a record of past hymn use (Hymn Soft)
- plan use of the Verse of the Day
- plan variety in use of the Psalm of the Day
- customize the Hymn of the Day list for the congregation and plan its use
- plan festival services -Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, Ascension, etc.
- plan special services - installations, anniversary, dedications, Tenebrae, school opening
- plan special music services - song services, hymn-sings
- plan for visits by area Lutheran High School or WELS choirs or instrumental groups
- choose each service's opening hymn months in advance
- communicate plans to church boards and committees

### *Publicity and Worship Education*

- report to church boards and the voter's assembly
- communicate to the congregation through newsletters, mailings, Sunday service folders
- educate the congregation about worship through written or verbal explanations
- teach about music & worship in Bible Classes (Come, Worship *Christ* from NPH)
- teach about music & worship to parent groups, ushers, Ladies Aid, Altar guild, etc.
- create worship awareness in all areas (Pioneers, softball team, budget meetings, ushers)
- educate families about home devotions
- secure WELS publications: Parish Leadership, Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, Educator
- secure non-WELS publications: Choristers' Guild, Creator, Logia, CrossAccents, AGO
- maintain a personal music and worship library
- assist with publicity material for outreach to the neighborhood
- start voter's meetings and Board and Committee meetings with worship
- provide choir and instrumental information for service folder

### *Equipment, Music, Budgeting, Miscellaneous*

- secure funds (budgetary or special gifts) for all aspects of parish music and worship

- administer the music and worship funds
- promote quality instrumental resources - organ, pianos, Off instruments, and others
- prepare database of vocal, organ, and other instrumental music
- arrange for organ and piano tuning and maintenance
- MIDI compatible keyboard and software
- coordinate a social gathering of church musicians & pastors
- storage areas, filing cabinets, neatly organized equipment and music
- correspondence including copyright permissions, thank yous, and invitations
- compose or commission music for special anniversaries
- setting up equipment, taking down equipment
- music stands, tables, chairs, choir risers, balcony seating, rehearsal areas
- acoustics in church and rehearsal areas
- encourage the visual aspects of worship - banners, candles, furnishings, paraments
- maintain music and worship archives
- secure substitutes, whenever necessary
- attend workshops and conferences
- be available for anyone's musical or worship concerns (by phone, letter, hearsay)
- be available to offer spiritual encouragement
- purchase recordings and attend concerts to learn more
- secular music opportunities - church open house, variety show, sing alongs, banquets

### **Where can a congregation find a qualified parish music coordinator?**

#### *College and Seminary students*

Congregations near Wisconsin Lutheran College, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, and Martin Luther College have a ready supply of candidates. Congregations near other private or public colleges and universities can contact the synod office to receive names of WELS students and their area of study. Music majors are obvious choices, but someone who was active in a WELS high school music program or in their home congregation's worship could help. Look for a student who has a heart for the work and an understanding of the role of music in Lutheran worship, What a college student may lack in maturity, he or she can make up for in energy level, creativity, relating to youth, knowledge of technology, and openness to training and nurturing.

#### *College Graduates with a Degree in Music*

A story is told about a college graduate with a degree in music who sent resumes to 500 WELS congregations without schools. She offered to do the music in their church and Sunday School, part-time, and would get another part-time job in their community to make ends meet. Only two congregations expressed interest.

Music majors hope to make a living by doing music. Most can't. But they do string together a series of part-time musical jobs giving lessons, entertainment gigs, playing for weddings, and working in music stores. The part-time parish music coordinator position should be added to this list.

Wisconsin Lutheran College graduates young men and women with music degrees in the "Professional Emphasis Area" of Church Music or Church Music Education. Martin Luther College's Staff Ministry students can elect a Church Music emphasis. MLC's five-year STEP program has a track combining elementary teaching with parish music.

### *Musically Trained Lay People*

A qualified layperson in a congregation may have the knowledge and skills to be a parish music coordinator. Many people who work full-time also have an additional part-time job. Couldn't this person's extra part-time job be serving as parish music coordinator? The pay could be comparable to other part-time jobs, but the working conditions and benefits would be superior.

If there is such a qualified person in a nearby WELS or ELS congregation, one could approach that congregation with the desire to strengthen the regional worship by sharing that individual.

### *Sharing a Parish Music Coordinator with Another Congregation*

A person may serve as parish music coordinator in two WELS or ELS congregations. Choir rehearsals could be held on different nights. On festivals like Easter and Christmas the parish music coordinator could assist in one service at each church while delegating duties for the other services.

Some advantages of sharing a parish music coordinator come to mind. Two congregations' worship could be planned at one time. Costs could be shared. The two choirs could join for a song service since they would know the same choir selections. A unity instead of parochialism would develop between neighboring congregations which may lead to more sharing such as in the Pioneer program, group evangelism canvassing, or other more efficient use of resources.

### *Lutheran Elementary School Teacher*

Many WELS grade school teachers are highly qualified to be parish music coordinators. They have theological training, church music training in the Lutheran tradition, an understanding of ministry, and can be called to come even if they don't now live in the area.

### *One person, two hats*

Some WELS congregations combine the parish music coordinator's work with education, evangelism, or church administration. When work is slow in one area, the person spends more time on the other area. More often though, WELS congregations choose to have different part-time people for each area. In that way each person is a specialist and the congregation does not incur the cost of full-time salary benefits.

In recent years a few WELS congregations have called pastoral trained men to serve as pastor and parish music coordinator.

## **What is the relationship between the parish music coordinator and others in the congregation?**

Teamwork, shoulders to the wheel, and marching in step describe the relationship between the parish music coordinator and others in the congregation. Teamwork is enhanced through clearly defined roles.

The pastor is responsible for worship, along with the Board of Elders. A parish music coordinator recognizes that he or she is not in charge. The pastor delegates responsibilities to the parish music coordinator, permits flexibility, and appreciates him or her as a team member. The pastor learns more about church music and the parish music coordinator learns more about

theology and church history. Regular meetings of a “worship planning committee” (pastor, musicians, others) keep the lines of communications open.

A “worship committee” (lay people on a subcommittee of the Board of Elders) serves the parish music coordinator by reacting to music and worship in the parish. The parish music coordinator appreciates and considers carefully the advice of the worship planning committee.

If the parish music coordinator has too many bosses and must snake through tedious bureaucracy, the program will bog down. On the other hand, the parish music coordinator works to create solid relationships with all people in the congregation, especially the school principal, church officers, other organists, other musical directors and participants, sports leaders, vocal and non-vocal lay people, Board of Trustees, Board of Evangelism, secretary, and custodian.

### **What are various titles for this position?**

*Director of Music* - sounds like a choir director only?

*Director of Worship* - sounds like he or she stands in front of the congregation to direct?

*Minister of Music* - if women are in the teaching ministry, can they be a minister of music?

*Minister of Worship* - sounds like the pastor’s role? lacks the music emphasis?

*Worship Specialist* - sounds too technical?

*Head Organist* - too limiting?

*Organist and Choir Director* - too limiting?

*Cantor* - (the historical title!) sounds like he or she is the chanter?

*Church and School Music Coordinator* - too long?

*Church Music Coordinator* - omits music of educational agencies?

*Parish Worship Coordinator* - role of the pastor? can a woman coordinate worship?

*Parish Music Director* - sounds like he or she directs all groups?

*Parish Music Coordinator* - but can we learn to call a congregation a parish?

The important thing is not so much the title. The congregation and the worker must be sensitive to the relationship to the pastor’s role, the scope of the work, the role of women, and the perception of the lay people.

Although the practice of calling workers in WELS varies widely (even from calling Sunday School teachers to not calling LES teachers), the parish music coordinator who is Scripturally qualified should receive a divine call to do the spiritual work of coordinating parish music and public worship.

### **Why should we compensate the parish music coordinator?**

Some WELS congregations have the policy that we should not pay church musicians. It is true that congregations survive because of volunteer work; the church couldn’t afford to pay everyone. But congregations do pay workers in three special situations. First, congregations tend to pay those who have specialized training and skill, such as pastors and teachers. Many more members could be a Sunday School teacher or coach than could be an organist, choir director, or worship planner. Secondly, congregations tend to pay those who lead worship. Pastors, guest pastors, organists, and choir directors are paid more often than non-worship leaders such as Sunday School teachers, evangelism committee members, or church council members. Thirdly, congregations tend to pay those who must be present on a regular basis. Organists, choir directors, custodians, and secretaries are paid more often than volunteer members who do plumbing or carpentry work around church when they find the time.

Some people feel that church musicians should be paid little because they are dedicated and little pay makes them feel more sacrificial. Their service to the Lord would not be tainted by money. Because the workers are human, however, lack of adequate compensation erupts into bitterness, yearning for appreciation, and resentment at others in the church who are paid for their work. Worse yet, we have lost gifted musicians to other church bodies primarily because we did not support them in WELS.

The parish music coordinator is not the only one who benefits from being paid; the congregation also benefits. Since the church is paying for the work, the congregation can more easily request a change in the way things are done, promote an expansion of the program, or require the parish music coordinator to receive continuing education. The parish music coordinator becomes accountable to the congregation. It is not so with volunteers. As one organist said, "I don't have to practice; I'm not paid."

The Dallas branch of the American Guild of Organists lists the following rationale for compensation:

- A creative music program requires talented and dedicated musicians. Churches want the best music leadership possible; however, not all of them understand how to secure and keep that leadership.
- Churches have offered a wage to those whose service is time-consuming or requires specialized training, so that they may be freed (wholly or in part) from the need to earn money elsewhere. Thus they may devote their fullest efforts to ministry.
- The salary a church pays its musicians reflects the quality of service it expects.

The congregation must fight the temptation to pay its workers less because they are faithful, dedicated, and enjoy what they are doing. The congregation members have a Scriptural directive to "share all good things" with those who instruct them in the Word (Galatians 6:6), to provide for preachers of the Gospel (I Corinthians 9:14), to give them "double honor" if they work in preaching and teaching (I Timothy 5:17-18), and to make their work a joy, not a burden (Hebrews 13:17). [Luther's Table of Duties, "What We Owe to Our Pastors and Teachers."]

### **How might compensation be calculated for a parish music coordinator?**

First a congregation determines the duties and responsibilities of the parish music coordinator (see above, "What Can a Music Coordinator Do?"). Calculate the amount of hours of preparation (Invisible Time) and performance (Visible Time).

Decide on a dollar amount per hour. One way to determine this number is to divide the pastor's or other called worker's salary and benefits by 2000 or 2500 (a 40 or 50 hour work week for 50 weeks).

Then, to determine the salary, multiply the hours required times the pay per hour. Emphasize that this is salary pay, not pay per hour, even though it was determined in this way. .

A congregation can choose to massage the salary figure based on education and degrees, years of experience, family needs, expertise, and depth of responsibilities.

Payment by salary is preferred. Payment by hour requires a time clock or time sheet and does not promote the spiritual and ministerial nature of the position. Payment by the job, such as \$1000 for Senior Choir and \$600 for worship planning, tends to be inadequate and unequal to other worker's salaries.

## **How might compensation be calculated for a parish music coordinator who is also a Lutheran Elementary School teacher?**

### *Option 1 - Monetary Compensation*

Compensation for additional duties beyond teaching is much debated. Churches want to avoid increasing pay for every extra duty that comes along. On the other hand, congregations do recognize a responsibility to compensate for major additions of hours or increased scope of responsibility.

A full-time teacher is paid 100 percent of a full-time teacher's salary. If someone is a full-time teacher but also serves as part-time parish music coordinator, then an addition to the salary is proper and necessary. The additional percentage of pay would be calculated using the system above ("How Might Compensation Be Calculated for a Parish Music Coordinator").

### *Option 2 - Time Compensation .*

WELS grade school teachers are called to be full-time teachers. In addition traditionally have been asked to fulfill other duties such as organist and adult choir director. This creates a full schedule. The teacher/organist/adult choir director may also add handbells, worship planning, equipment management and budgeting, worship education, instrumental music for church, and more, becoming a teacher/organist/choir director/parish music coordinator. These additions develop from the teacher's own initiative or from direct or implied desires of the congregation. This creates too full a schedule.

Teaching and church music both demand high levels of concentration, creativity, motivation techniques, and flexibility. This overload creates fertile soil for growth of frustration, negativism, shortness with members, lack of energy for teaching, inattentiveness to spouse and children, and burnout.

Some congregations just pay the teacher extra money for the extra duties as parish music coordinator. But more money in the paycheck just won't help the circuit overload. What the combination teacher/parish music coordinator needs is more time for creative brainstorming, focused planning, executing the plans, building relationships, and emotional renewal.

The congregation would not be assigning less work for the teacher with more time off. Rather the congregation is shifting work and time from teaching to a congregation-wide ministry of music and worship. Every teacher should be expected to serve in some way beyond teaching. But care needs to be taken so that we do not, as one congregation's policy, equate ordering new books for the school library or coaching one level of volleyball for 3 months with what is envisioned as the parish music coordinator position.

Time to accomplish the spiritual goals of the parish music coordinator will truly be a spiritual benefit and a blessing for the worship of all the faithful, especially for those members who will be involved in music and worship activities..

### *Procedures for Providing Release Time for the Teacher/Parish Music Coordinator*

WELS is not comfortable with providing release time to teachers. However, ground has been broken as congregations with large schools now grant release time to principals. Many school principals have a few hours, an afternoon, half days, or even full days of release time to fulfill their duties as school administrators. Since congregations recognize the extra benefits to the school by providing release time for a principal, could congregations be taught to see the

spiritual benefits to the entire congregation by providing release time for the parish music coordinator?

A logistical problem arises. Who will teach in the classroom while the regular teacher is working on the parish music coordinator duties? The same solutions as schools use to grant principals release time can be used here:

- A regular substitute (a part-time teacher) can teach for the parish music coordinator.
- A regular substitute teacher can teach for both the parish music coordinator (for example, 10:00am-12:00noon) and for the principal (1:00pm-3:00pm). This regular substitute could even become full-time by assisting the church or school as Art teacher, remedial & enrichment coordinator, deaconess, or whatever is needed.
- If the principal has time off during pastor's confirmation instruction of the eighth grade and addition release time, the principal could teach for the parish music coordinator during pastor's confirmation class.
- A specialist in an area such as art, composition, or computers could come in for a few hours to teach for the parish music coordinator (or for all the teachers).
- The half-day Kindergarten teacher or pre-school teacher could teach for the parish music coordinator some afternoons.

The purpose here is not to give the teacher/parish music coordinator time off and less work, but rather to allow them to do more work in their specialized field for the benefit of all the members of the congregation.

### **Where does the compensation money come from?**

#### *Regular Offerings*

WELS congregations traditionally rely on weekly offerings to pay workers in the church. Church's operating budgets squeak; debts from building programs overshadow. Can another expense be added? There are only two ways to balance a budget: reduce expenses or increase income.

Consider reducing expenses. Prioritize the budget items. Which items are most crucial to the spiritual well-being of the church? The parish music coordinator position dedicates time and energy to all facets of congregational worship. Where does worship fit in the priorities of the church? Some costs that have traditionally been covered by the budget may have to be dropped or covered by user fees.

More easily done than reducing expenses is to increase income. Increasing a church's income is easy because the Lord promises that faith will produce the fruits of faith, like fire produces heat. The answer to increasing church income is to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments. The parish music coordinator has as an objective to assist the pastor in the clear and effective proclamation of the Gospel. The Gospel will strengthen faith, and faith will produce fruits of faith, which include increased offerings.

#### *Special Offerings*

Include the parish music coordinator start-up costs in a Special Fund Drive. One drive could be called GROW (Garage/storage shed, Remodel the church, Operating debt reduction, Worship and music).

### *Special Gifts*

Start-up costs for the parish music coordinator position could be covered by a gift, memorial, trust fund, or endowment.

### *Slow and Steady Transformation from What-Exists to What-Could-Exist*

Gradually transform the organist and choir director positions into a parish music coordinator position. Start with an organist or choir director who is volunteer. Make the jump to minimal pay. Continue to increase pay and duties. Write out a ten year plan as you move toward the best music and worship possible.

### *Combine the Parish Music Coordinator Position with More Strongly Felt Needs*

If the congregation strongly feels a need for another pastor or a staff minister for evangelism, administration, or education, the parish music coordinator position could be included as part of the duties.

### *Reduction in Staff*

If fewer teachers are needed because of reduced school enrollment, extra money would become immediately available for another purpose like spiritual renewal through worship. Since there is a shortage of vicars, some congregations which presently have a vicar each year may see a similar spiritual benefit by spending the money on a parish music coordinator instead.

### *People instead of Things*

If a congregation is considering the purchase of a storage shed or meeting rooms, would it be wiser to spend this money on a person to do the work rather than a thing to do work?

## **Will the pastor and the laity support the need to have a parish music coordinator?**

### *Support from the Pastor*

The pastor's responsibility is worship. He may wish that he had someone to help out with the worship preparation, to research the musical resources, to brainstorm ideas with, to share joy and discouragement, to complement his knowledge and background, and to reinforce his goals in worship. Such a pastor will support the concept of a parish music coordinator. Or a pastor may feel threatened by sharing worship responsibilities, is uncomfortable with his lack of knowledge about the technicalities of music and worship forms, or is fearful that the parish music coordinator will be a "loose cannon". Such a pastor will not support the concept. Most pastors have a mixture of these feelings. Wisely, the pastor is cautious.

The pastor and the parish music coordinator both want the same thing: "to solidify through Word and Sacrament, the good news of Jesus Christ on the hearts and minds of the people of God and to give the people of God an opportunity to summarize their lives of praise in fitting and beautiful forms." The parish music coordinator's work is not about large choirs, fancy organ pieces, or learning lots of new hymns. Agreeing on the importance of the spiritual work, the mission of the church, and its worship, goes a long way to a workable system for both pastor and parish music coordinator.

*Support from the Laity*

It is helpful to seek the reaction of a few lay leaders privately so that a better proposal can be prepared, one that answers all questions before they can be asked. Emphasize the philosophy behind the position and the spiritual benefit to the members. Prepare a job description (see Appendix) If starting modestly, include a five year proposal for growth. Allow for the opportunity to sunset the position, if desired. Discuss the proposal for a couple of months before taking a vote. Appoint an ad hoc committee to do the leg work. The Board of Education may have input, but the primarily discussion should be in the Board of Elders.

One financial consideration may be the balance of financial resources between the school and the entire congregation. In one congregation, 82% of the home church budget and 86% of the called workers were used primarily for ministry to 200 school children. The remaining 18% of the money and 14% of the manpower was designated primarily for ministry to the other 1400 members. The parish music coordinator proposal may be part of broader fixture planning and self-study.

**What are some examples of WELS parish music coordinators?**

Church	Christ the Lord Brookfield, WI (has school)
Worker	Jackie Gerlach
Title	School Music Coordinator (under Board of Education) Church Music Coordinator (under Board of Elders)
Duties	School: teach music grades 1-8 (music curriculum & church singing) Spring Musical, school music budget Church: adult handbells, coordinate Sunday School & VBS music coordinate vocal & instrumental soloist and ensembles worship planning with pastor, church music budget
Pay	School: about 1/4 teacher's salary based on hours in the classroom, no benefits Church: \$2000/year, based on 4 hours/week at \$10 per hour Pay will increase as extra duties are added (children's choir, adult choir,) (This position was started by Dorothy Trueden for \$20 a week.. The Congregation saw what could happen and her year of volunteer work laid the groundwork for this new position)

Church	St. Peter's, St. Peter's, MN no school
Worker	James Bakken
Title	Minister of Music and Education
Duties	Music: organist, multiple vocal/handbell choirs, worship planning, much more Education: Sunday School Confirmation class, Pioneers, much more
Pay	Full-time for music & education

Church	St. Mark's Church Citrus Heights, CA (has school)
Worker	1986-1996 Bryan Gerlach, now William Tackmier
Title	Pastor
Duties	head organist, choir director, all worship planning

Pa	Unspecified split, about 25% music 75% other pastoral duties
Church	(in the planning stages) Grace, Oshkosh, WI has school
Worker	Four paid staff' people working with four appointed volunteers, One each in the four areas of Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, Finance & Properties, and Outreach & Worship These eight "overseers" would be assisted b groups called "worker circles"
Title	Overseers
Duties	"coordination, policy-making, and planning"
Pay	Full-time

Church	St. John's, Wauwatosa WI has school
Worker	Lynn Kozlowski
Title	head organist
Duties	organist, schedule organists, involving instruments, worship planning, special services
Pay	part-time
Church	Grace, Milwaukee, WI (no school)
Worker	Alfred Bloedel
Duties	organ, worship planning, (formerly choir also)
Pay	Part-time
Church	Apostles, San Jose, CA has school
Worker	Jeanine Heller
Title	Music Coordinator
Duties	Coordinate organists and accompanists, play regularly direct children's choir, Sunday school, VBS teach music grades 1-8, coordinate instrumental program Coordinate director or accompanist for classroom choirs Worship planning with pastor, coordinate music & musicians Equipment, budgeting, scheduling, record keeping
Pay	60% of teacher salary, full benefits, office provided
Church	Grace, Waukesha WI no school
Worker	Tom Bauer
Title	Pastor
Duties	Organist, Handbell Director Adult Choir Director, all worship Planning
Pay	Included in salary as pastor
Church	St. John's, Milwaukee, WI has school
Worker	James Schierenbeck
Title	Sixth Grade Teacher/Director of Music
Duties	Organ for 5/8 of services, Senior Choir, Coordination of school music curriculum, Coordinate Junior Choir, handbells, classroom choirs, school & church worship education, worship planning

	musical equipment & supplies, budgeting, overall responsibility
Pay	20% beyond teaching salary, 2 hours release time from teaching, during pastor's seventh grade confirmation class, the seventh grade teacher does his classroom phy. ed.