

**Guidelines for Corporate Worship
For Conventions, Meetings, Workshops, and Gatherings
of
The Indiana District**

It is a gift from God for Christians to gather together within the Indiana District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. We gather for work, for study, and for fellowship. In addition to these activities, the heart and center of our gathering is that which is not even primarily our own activity. That is, our Lord Jesus Christ gathers us around Word and Sacrament in worship.

While it is true that there exists diversity in worship practices among the congregations of the Indiana District, it is also true that there exists much in common and a desire for unity. In particular, when coming together as Synod in this place, we walk together in common confession and Christian love by using those forms we have agreed upon as Synod. As the Scriptures state, “There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” (Ephesians 4:4-6, ESV).

Lutheran Service Book is a remarkable example of this unity, and also helps our District and Synod promote unity within worship. The book as a whole serves as a clear and strong confession of faith which can be embraced by pastors, teachers, and elected officials of the Indiana District. Given its overwhelming approval by Synod in convention, and its positive reception by a healthy majority of the congregations of Synod, it has proven itself to be well within the mainstream of the Church and her practice.

For these reasons, it is recommended that conventions, meetings, workshops, and other gatherings of the Indiana District use the hymns, orders of service, and other material from *Lutheran Service Book*. Specifically,

- Celebration of Holy Communion is recommended for the chief service(s), using one of the Divine Service settings.
- Divine Service Setting Four is recommended for congregations less accustomed to *Lutheran Service Book* and for presiding clergy with limited chanting experience.
- Other settings, such as Matins and Vespers, are recommended for other services without the celebration of Holy Communion.
- Morning, afternoon, and evening devotions without musical accompaniment are ideal times for Responsive Prayer 1 or 2 (pp. 282-287) or various Daily Prayer settings (pp. 294 ff).

- Use of the lectionary is encouraged, where pertinent and appropriate, for the particular day or week of the church year.
- The use of the *Lutheran Service Builder* (electronic version) software is encouraged to create service bulletins and other worship material while cooperating with copyright license and law. The district office holds a licensed copy of this software for district use.

Out of common concern and in Christian love, the District President should be consulted regarding specific practices which may be in less common usage or which fall outside of these guidelines. In addition, the District Committee on Worship and Spiritual Care exists to advise and cooperate with the district, its committees, and agencies.

It is desired that these guidelines assist the District to put into action the words offered in the introduction to this hymnal:

Lutheran Service Book is offered with the prayer that it may be used in all its fullness to give voice to the prayer, praise, and thanksgiving of God's holy people as they are graciously served by Him through Word and Sacrament.

The Committee on Worship and Spiritual Care
May 19, 2008