

Sounds of Joy

BC Synod Worship Committee

December 2016

How Shall we Sing God's Song?

Light Shone in the Darkness ELW 307

Epiphany, meaning manifestation, celebrates the revelation of the infant Jesus to the Gentiles. Epiphany can be defined as the Christian festival celebrated after Christmas, and also “a moment in which you suddenly see or understand something in a new or very clear way”, Miriam-Webster Dictionary. The imagery of the star shining brightly to lead the three kings through the darkness to the Savior fits with both of these definitions of Epiphany. *Light Shone in Darkness*

This lovely hymn captures the feeling of both wonder at the revelation of the Christ child and jubilation in the realization of what this means for us

is the hymn I have chosen to suggest some ways to look at it in a “new” way.

The text written by Delores Dufner, an American organist and composer of this hymn is based on a latin phrase *et lux in tenebris lucent et Tenebrae am con comprehendurunt* meaning the light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it. The musical setting is by Mark Sedio, an American composer and music director at Central Lutheran Church in St. Paul, Minnesota.

There are several things about the writing in this hymn that I appreciate. Sedio uses a two measure rhythmic theme throughout, which gives it a steady, walking pulse. It uses

A joint Catholic-Lutheran “Common Prayer” for 500 years of Reformation

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (PCPCU) have invited Lutheran and Catholic communities across the world to make use of a jointly-developed *Common Prayer-2015* liturgy to help emphasize the theme of reconciliation and the importance of Christian unity during this year of commemoration. The document is the first jointly developed liturgical order prepared by a liturgical task force of the Lutheran Catholic Commission on Unity.

The Common Prayer includes materials that can be adapted to local liturgical and musical traditions of churches in the two Christian traditions.

The resource may be accessed for free here: www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/dtpw-lrc-liturgy-2016_en.pdf

mostly the dorian mode which means that the 6th of the scale is raised, giving a brightness to the sound which suits the theme of light. The melodic line rises to the middle of the verse, and the climax of the theme of the verse is also the highest point of the melodic line. The melody then gradually descends back to the tonic by the end of the verse, ending with the lowered 7th to tonic on the final "Amen".

The accompaniment is written simply which

works well, so it isn't necessary to get complicated as far as finding ways to sing it. The modal feel to the piece lends itself to having a simple drum beat, or a bass ostinato pattern (D to A) beneath it. Handbells add a nice colour in songs like this, and having an open fifth on D and A alternating by the bar with C and G could create a mystical and contemplative atmosphere. These patterns can be set up as intros and interludes, so that the singing of the

verses could be fairly free, especially with a soloist.

Whether this is sung by the entire congregation, as a solo, or with a children's choir or adult choir, this is a lovely piece that captures the feeling of both wonder at the revelation of the Christ child and jubilation in the realization of what this means for us.

Siri Olesen is a jazz vocal instructor at Capilano University and serves as Director of Music at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Vancouver.

Worship Notes

Report from the National Worship Conference, Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario July 24-27, 2016

Formation and Reformation: Worship, Justice and God's Mission

People who attended the 2016 National Worship Conference were treated to an inspiring event. Held in July 24-27 at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo ON, the Conference featured two guest speakers: Canadian Lutheran pastor Rev. Dr. Stephen Larson, and South African Anglican priest Rev. Dr. Bruce Jenneker. Various other experts offered workshops covering a range of topics. We were challenged with many questions and encouraged to open our hearts

and minds to new possibilities.

Often we have heard liturgy defined as "the work of the people," but Jenneker pointed to more recent biblical research that yields a new definition: "what we do publicly." The liturgist is like a disc jockey who chooses songs and words which make hearts beat faster and make feet dance. The traditions of the church are repeated and rehearsed; we refuse to forget our past.

These traditions are joined by innovation to make the words jump out at the listener anew. Larson noted that, just like us, Jesus was privileged with a time of formation. He was taught prayers by his parents, was taken to synagogue regularly, and was given scripture to memorize. Jesus "grew up in the church" as most of us have done.

In worship we are taken on a journey. We begin with the

Gathering: who is here, who is absent? We hear the Word, which is both denunciation and annunciation. We sing songs and hymns of praise, justice, lament, and encouragement. The Prayers are responses to the Word. And then we share the Meal. Now, here's a question for all of us to consider: Is the Meal a bread line or is it Eucharist? The Sending could include a word or phrase taken from the worship, such as "worship urgently," or perhaps "the worship has ended, the service begins."

The space in which we worship also influences our faith journey. Does it welcome people? Are there barriers? While we're at it, let's also ask just whose land is it that we worship on. Our evaluation of our worship spaces and the impact they have on all the worshippers resonates with our newly-informed definition for liturgy: "what we do publicly."

The house of God is extraordinary space. There are four main elements that ground our worship: font, ambo (pulpit), table (altar), and presider's chair. How do

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we experience these things anew as we move from season to season in the church year?

The symbol of Christ in the church is the people. Therefore, every worship experience will be an expression of the people present. No two worship experiences will be the same nor should they be. Each gathering of people will create worship that is unique to them and their context.

Music at the Worship Conference was energized and infectious, with many opportunities for singing in both worship and workshops. Of particular note was the world music choir, *Inshallah*, led by Debbie Lou Ludolph. It provided leadership at the opening worship and throughout the entire Conference.

As I write this report I am once again inspired and excited by the speakers, the discussions, and the experience of being at the National Worship Conference. I encourage everyone to attend the Lutheran and Anglican National Worship Conference. The next one will be held in 2018, in Victoria (much closer to home!). I look forward to seeing many of you there!

Lorraine Reinhardt is a member of Spirit of Life in Vancouver and sits on the National Church Program Committee for Worship.

Reformation 500 Hymn Sing

2017 is a big year in the Lutheran church. We are celebrating 500 years of the Reformation. Already there are many activities and initiatives being planned at every level of our church. Many of those events include others who have been

influenced or affected by the Reformation -- Catholics, Anglicans, Mennonites, to name a few.

The BC Synod has a committee dedicated to all things Reformation. If you have ideas for

commemorations in your area, please contact Pastor Jennifer Marlor mailrevj@gmail.com or Pastor Michael Rodgers marodgers051@gmail.com.

The BC Synod Worship Committee is planning a

Reformation Hymn Sing for Saturday Oct 21, 2017 at 7 pm. It will be held at Queen's Avenue United Church which will be relatively easy access for many people in the Lower Mainland. The organ there is an amazing instrument and will be one of the featured instruments of the evening.

Of course there will be lots of opportunity to sing. It will be a feast for the ears, the eyes and the soul.

The Hymn Sing will be followed by a reception befitting Martin Luther, for which tickets will be available. More details will be announced in the coming months.

The BC Synod Worship Committee also has plans for a similar Hymn Sing in other centers in the Synod.

If you are interested in hosting or joining the organization of such an event in your community, please contact Lorraine Reinhardt lorrainereinhardt@shaw.ca.

*My heart for very joy now leaps;
my voice no longer silence keeps;
I too must sing with joyful
tongue the sweetest ancient
cradle song.*

from "From Heaven Above" text by Martin Luther

Lorraine Reinhardt is a member of Spirit of Life in Vancouver and sits on the National Church Program Committee for Worship

Did you enjoy this newsletter? Do you have ideas or suggestions for future issues? Then contact one of the committee members below:

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