



A Superb Resource for 21st Century Lutheran Worship

Why a new hymnal?

1. **A curated and consolidated collection of hymns.** God blesses his Church in every generation with talented poets and composers who add their voices to those from past generations. The new hymnal retains the best of old treasures (from our current hymnal and supplement) while making room for new treasures. Careful curation assures not only doctrinal faithfulness but also a good balance across seasons and themes. God's love in Christ remains at the center of worship that clearly proclaims law and gospel.
2. **A complete and flexible musical psalter.** In the late 20th century denominations throughout the world (re-)discovered the value and delight of singing psalms. One happy surprise with our 1993 WELS hymnal was that psalm singing became widely appreciated. But only one musical style was used. The new psalter features multiple musical settings in a variety of styles for all 150 psalms.
3. **A singer's book.** In contrast to some of the musical settings in our current hymnal, more hymns are set in straightforward and familiar four-part harmony, making it easier for people to sing in harmony. Some familiar canticles appear in harmony rather than melody-only: 157, 167, 169, 208, 210.
4. **The blessing of digital resources.** *Christian Worship: Service Builder* will streamline the work of worship planners and church offices. In many cases the time saved easily pays for the annual cost. Two additional products are: *Musician's Resource* (downloadable files for involving a wide variety of instrumentalists) and an app (still in feasibility) that brings hymnal resources to smartphones or tablets for various personal and family uses.
5. **Stay ahead of the curve.** When our current hymnal arrived in 1993, we were long past the time when a new hymnal was needed. The wisdom and benefit of staying ahead of the curve was apparent in 2008 when adoption of the hymnal supplement far outpaced expectations. Simply put: it is good to keep liturgical worship both fresh and strongly rooted in our heritage.
6. **Reflect our unity in Christ.** Sharing the same hymnal is not necessary for spiritual unity. But there are benefits when we do share common worship resources. Think of WELS guests or transferring members at churches throughout our country. A familiar core of worship resources and a shared worship philosophy are welcome touchpoints of familiarity and comfort.

Common questions

- What spurred the desire for a hymnal? (Numbers below refer to the key points above)
 - Creativity (#1, 5. New hymns, staying fresh while retaining heritage, new translations)
 - Consolidation (1993 hymnal, 2008 supplement, new additions; #1, 6)
 - Curation (#1, 2. MDS quote: "I am strongly biased toward having the congregation predominantly (not exclusively) sing the hymns, psalms, and ritual songs that have been curated and published by our church body." *Worship the Lord* #107 <https://worship.welsrc.net>)
 - Adjustments to 1993/2008 (#3 singer's book, #1 rarely used hymns, #6 logical flow of communion service)
 - Accompaniment options (#1, 5, 6)
 - Technology (#4, 5)

What are the major changes?

- One third are new hymns.
cw.c/resources – What’s New for November 2020: Tentative Hymn List & Cut and Retuned Hymn List.
- Thematic Sundays in new lectionary: not only the readings but also.... Lectionary is available at cw.c/Resources (Look Inside #9 – Year C planner), via Logos software, and at builder.christianworship.com
- Standardized communion service (logical flow and rationale) with extensive flexibility and variety. Comprehensive rationale by Prof. James Tiefel at cw.c.
- Variety in accompaniment options: three communion settings in pew edition, two more in Service Builder plus numerous metrical versions (hymn versions of canticles), numerous hymn settings, *CW: Musician’s Resource*
- Variety in musical styles, especially expanded in the new psalter. See Psalter Psalm 118 – six options! Some best with choir or cantor.
- Technology
- Exceptional design / beauty. TLH to CW93 to CW21.

Rationale for choosing songs

Hymn index (page 299 in hymnal)

- Five general categories vs one list of church year plus various themes
- Two new or divided categories. Day of Pentecost / Work of the Spirit. Holy Baptism / Baptismal Life.
- Vocation, beginning with hymn 734. Your vocation isn’t the same as your job. We all have many vocations, all the ways God has assigned us to serve friends, families, church, community, and nation. A Christian’s service in all areas of life, to the glory of God, was a key rediscovery of the Reformation.
- Where is Reformation? Saints Triumphant? Death and Burial?
- What’s included in Discipleship? CW93: Commitment; Invitation; Draw Us to Thee (fr. Ascension); Let Me Be Yours Forever (fr. Confirmation. Nikolaus Selnecker)
- Why move hymns from these sections: Confirmation, Death and Burial?

What happens if we include four wonderful new Easter hymns?

Further reading/rationale: WTL#105 at cw.c/resources. “There Is Room in the Choir: Hymn Selection Criteria and Variety,” by Prof. Aaron Christie, chair of the Hymnody Committee. And from FIC, 12/19: “The Hymnody Committee searched through dozens of hymnals, books of religious poetry, and websites. Over the last six years, their eyes have viewed literally tens of thousands of hymns. Of those, more than four thousand were voted upon at the subcommittee, Hymnody Committee, or Executive Committee level. Roughly 1,900 hymns received more thorough review. Of those, 900 received full text and musical treatment. Of those 900, the best 655 were awarded a place in the new hymnal” <https://wels.net/for-the-lords-glory-2/>

What are the liturgical changes?

Not many!

The Common Service (157) and Morning Praise (208, 210): canticles restored to 4-part harmony.

Evening Prayer: two settings of the Song of Mary, CW93 and new (218).

Compline 2, CWS 2008, is included (225).

“The Service”

- Standard flow, three musical settings; more settings and alternate canticles in *CW: Service Builder*.
- New
 - Two options for Confession
 - Three musical settings include Kyrie and Preface; option to speak
 - Gospel Acclamation replaces Verse of the Day. Seasonal or appointed. More than a dozen alleluia refrains
 - Prayer of Thanksgiving (168)
 - Scripture dialogue follows distribution (170)
- Alt
 - Creed stays in same place in each setting
 - Prayer of the Church (seated) before the offering
 - Create in Me and Song of Simeon are not included (but may be added)