

Putting *Christian Worship Foundations* to Work

WELS National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts

Carthage College, July 30-Aug 2, 2024

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Foreword

Imagine what our church services look like to someone who's never been to church before. The front of the church is usually adorned with unusual looking furniture. The preacher typically wears a white robe and a long, colored scarf. Sometimes he faces the people. Sometimes he turns his back to them. In parts of the service there is a prepared dialog between the preacher and the congregation. The music and the songs people sing aren't like anything you hear anywhere else. People stand and sit at various times. At one point, everyone recites a prepared statement of religious beliefs.

There's an easy way to explain what's going on. One passage from scripture says it all. We're letting the message of Christ dwell richly among us as we "teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in [our] hearts" (Colossians 3:16-17).

But don't stop there. Unpack what it means to let the message of Christ dwell richly among us. Trace the influence of the message of Christ on everything we see and hear in our worship space, everything we do in a church service, everything that happens in a church year. Not only will you be a blessing to those who ask you about worship, but you'll be better equipped to sing to God with gratitude in your heart whenever you come to church.

Whether you're brand new in church or you've attended all your life, whether you regularly participate in the service or you also plan it, it's good for all of us to examine the whats, the whys, and hows of worship.

The volume you hold in your hand is the first in a set of four volumes all designed to help God's people do just that.

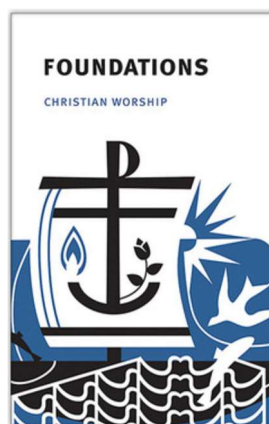
Christian Worship: Foundations is primarily for pastors, but that shouldn't stop others from reading it. Pastors play a unique role in worship life since they are called to administer the means of grace to the flock under their care. Each pastor must ask and

answer questions about worship. There are questions related to his role in worship: How will my preaching connect to the rest of what happens in worship? How can I give my best when it comes to presiding? How will I organize and equip others to serve in worship? There are philosophical and practical questions: What is the value of the Liturgy? Why follow the church year? How can worship connect to my unchurched guests? As those called to preside at worship, it is natural for pastors to take an interest in

the topics covered in this volume, but worship is not for pastors alone. *Christian Worship: Foundations* is for anyone who is interested in examining what happens when God's people gather together regularly around Word and sacraments.

In this volume you will be refreshed in the theology of worship. You will see how the wider church has handled the many questions we all must ask. You will gain insights into the whats and whys and hows of worship. As interesting as all this may be in and of itself, there is a point, and the point is simple: Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly.

Jon Zabell, *editor*



Companion Volumes

- **GUIDEBOOK**
- **MUSICIAN'S MANUAL**
- **OUR WORTH TO HIM**

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Ch. 15-17	The Music, Art, and Symbols of Worship
Ch. 18	Worship Creativity
Ch. 19	Worship and Outreach

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Using *Foundations*

- **PERSONAL GROWTH**
- **NEW PASTORS**
- **PASTORS NEW TO CW₂₁**
- **CIRCUIT MEETINGS**
- **WORSHIP COMMITTEES**
- **SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY**
- **SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY**
- **ONLINE BOOK CLUB**

Other ideas?