

Back in 2008 a version of the following memo was sent to all WELS parishes and schools along with a free copy of a DVD, *Children Making Music*. With permission from those who initiated the 2008 project, three videos are now available for online viewing. The comments that follow are edited from 2008 to reflect the new mode of delivering video content. The content of the videos is timeless—with valuable inspiration and information for the triple audience of children, parents, and congregational leaders.

Children Making Music



DATE: June 1, 2019
FROM: Rev. Bryan Gerlach
Director, WELS Commission on Worship

“Next after theology, I give to music the highest place and the greatest honor.” —Martin Luther
“Sing joyfully to the Lord.... Play skillfully....” —Psalm 33:1,3

The Commission on Worship (C/W) is pleased to provide three video segments under the title *Children Making Music*.

As you will discover, this is an absolute gem designed to help encourage musical interest in children. But children aren't the only audience intended. There are also segments for parents and for church/school leaders.

The C/W has long recognized the need to do a better job of cultivating future musicians. Several WELS districts have called attention over the years through formal resolutions to a worsening shortage of church musicians.

These videos are one way to help encourage future musicians. But there is value for WELS parishes even if some children who begin music lessons do not continue to play an instrument in their adult lives. Musical training during childhood increases the musical literacy of average people in the pews—whether or not they continue to play an instrument later in life. Since so much of Lutheran worship involves active participation by all worshippers, increased musical literacy is valuable even apart from potential to cultivate musical leaders.

Consider also the positive impact when a greater variety of musical instruments is used in worship. As you consider the topics of music in worship, future musicians, and worship enrichment, note the connection between worship and the broader mission of the church. Many are firmly convinced that improvements in worship will bear much fruit in almost every other aspect of parish life, including outreach, stewardship, assimilation, and member retention (youth and adult).

How might you use these videos? Show segments at a board meeting: Education, Worship, Elders (if responsible for worship). Schedule viewing and discussion at a parent/teacher organization meeting. Show the “children” segment to Sunday school students or to the lower grades of a Lutheran Elementary School. Use segments in conjunction with a music curriculum or ChristLight lesson. Send a link to parents of children who are considering piano or other musical instrument lessons.

The DVD was developed primarily by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod with input from WELS and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) to assure that the finished product would be usable in WELS and ELS. The Marvin M. Schwan Charitable Foundation provided funding.