



A service of the
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Youth Supports

A resource to encourage and empower youth
leaders for the expansion of the Lord's kingdom.

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Bringing Music and Ministry Together

Music is an incredible tool for teaching, learning, sharing, communicating, and celebrating. It provides a means for expressing what is really going on in our hearts as we come to God in worship, in prayer, in thanks, and in need. In Sunday School the youngest children learn a lot of what they know about who God is and how He feels about them through the songs they are taught. How many of us still remember all the verses to *Jesus Loves Me*? In the words of that song is a simple yet profound description of the truth of God's loving care and concern for His people. Songs like this become lifelong teaching tools. As we sing them over and over to ourselves, what they tell us about God becomes imbedded in our hearts and memories. Some time later, if we find ourselves wondering about whether God really does care about us, God brings to mind the words of this or other songs we know to reaffirm His love and concern for us. Other songs focus on what God has done for us, or on our need for His forgiveness and grace. Still others focus on our response to what God has done and what He continues to do for us today. As we sing and share these songs other people around us get the benefit of learning what the songs have to teach. They gain access to the same Good News God has shared with us, and they experience the same comfort in His promises. The music and the words together create a powerful means to help us remember and share God's love and commitment.

The Church is a place where the gift of music can grow into vital ministries for those who are members as well as a tool to reach out to the surrounding community. There are several options for using music in ministry within the church. Most churches have a choir which is a good place to learn to read sheet music and sing in harmony. This kind of training can really make a difference in being able to work effectively in other music ministries your church might have available. A lot of churches have some kind of Contemporary Worship experience and need people to lead, both vocally and by playing instruments like guitars, keyboards, drums and bass. Learning to read music can really help fill out the sound of a smaller ensemble because you'll be able to take advantage of different vocal parts that are already written instead of always having to come up with your own harmony. There are all kinds of resources for Contemporary Worship music available. Some of the best collections are *The Other Song Book* and *The Best of the Best in Contemporary Christian Music* both published by *Fellowship Ministries*. You can find information about these resources on their web site at: www.thefellowship.com. Additional resources can be found through *Worship Music*, *Vineyard Music*, *Maranatha Music* and *Integrity Music* ministries. One of the best Contemporary Resources I use is a subscription service called *Song Discovery* which includes a CD and booklet of Lead

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E-Newsletter from Board of Youth Ministry

Sheets for some of today's most current contemporary worship songs. You can find information about these resources at their respective web sites: www.vineyardmusicusa.com, www.worshipmusic.com, www.maranathamusic.com, www.integritymusic.com, and www.songdiscovery.com. The final resource you need to make sure you have in place is a copyright license through CCLI that allows you to legally reprint the words to songs you want to sing and lead in worship. Get information on their web site at: www.ccli.com.

Leading worship is a task that can be shared across generations in a Church community. Having an all-youth worship team is great, or an all adult team, but mixing generations can help build relationships, understanding and appreciation for different generations of church music, all of which has its value. Consider bringing all of your worship leaders and teams together once or twice a year and combining all their resources in one mass worship team. We call them "Mega-Groups" and organize them twice a year to lead the Sundays before Christmas and Easter.

Finally, take advantage of opportunities to take your music ministry outside the Church walls. Take a group Christmas Caroling to member shut-ins or to people around your neighborhood. It's a great way to introduce yourself! Take a group to a local nursing home, or get a spot on stage at a local street fair. We participate in an annual Christmas Concert on the beach, play at local Youth Gatherings, and provide music for a float that we enter in a local parade. Look into your community activities and find places where you can plug in your ministry. You're just as much a part of the local area as the hardware store or the supermarket, but the Word you have to share is a life-changer. Be willing to work together to develop and encourage young musicians. As your ministry gets going you may be surprised at how many instrumentalists and vocalists you had "hiding in the woodwork". Above all, have fun. Music is a tremendous tool. The more you use it the more you will find ways to use it, and the more your Church and your community will be blessed!

—Jeff Kranich, Director of Christian Education at Hope Lutheran Church in Seattle, Washington <HopeSeattle@aol.com>

Find past issues of Youth Supports at:

http://www.nowlcms.org/educational_services/NetworkingMinistries/YouthSupports.aspx

E-Newsletter from Synod Board of Youth Ministry

The Board of Youth ministry for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has a monthly e-bulletin with youth ministry information. To subscribe to it, go to <http://www.lcms.org/enews/> and follow the directions.

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