

THE PEER LEARNING PROJECT IN WORSHIP AND MUSIC OF THE CHURCH MUSIC INSTITUTE

Call for Applications

WORSHIP AND MUSIC SCHOLARS AT THE CHURCH MUSIC INSTITUTE

A project to inform, energize, and engage congregations and their leaders in a more vital worship life, based in proven practices, using local resources.

Description of Project:

Groups of 4-8 persons, consisting of pastor/musician teams from 2-4 congregations commit to a year of learning in worship and music with their congregations. Each team has a project specific to their congregation that runs the duration of the project. The project begins with a course, Music in Christian Worship, taken either for credit or audit, and culminates with a second course, Congregational Song. Groups meet monthly for a year for learning, discussion and sharing of project progress, determining their course of study from a list of pre-determined readings and their own preferences.

Timeline:

Fall, 2022 – Program Announcement

February 15, 2022 – Intent to Apply Deadline

February 28, 2022 – Deadline for Applications

March 31, 2022 – Awardees Announced

June 13-24, 2022 – Music in Christian Worship course, with Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth

June, 2023 – Congregational Song course, with Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, TX

Leaders:

The project is housed at the Church Music Institute in Dallas, TX; Dr. Charlotte Kroeker, Executive Director of CMI is project director. Rev. Dr. Paul Westermeyer is curriculum director.

Call to Participants Who Aspire to Servant Leadership

Clergy and Musician

We follow the advice of Peter Marty in his Christian Century editorial of February, 2017, in looking for participants for this project: "The best pastors [in this case, musicians too] I know are those who possess a desire to learn from others. They have a teachable spirit, a thirst for growing virtue, and a lifelong eagerness for feedback." Conversely, "The least admirable pastors [musicians] I know are those determined to appear in command, display unwarranted amounts of self-assurance, and exercise authority they believe is owed the office." The need for combining theology and music in worship, the necessity of congregational involvement, and available research show collegial relationships produce best results for worshipping congregations. Another quality in participants is their capacity for servant leadership, as stated by Avery Dulles quoting Robert Adolfs in Models of the Church: "The Church, if it is to be like Christ, must similarly renounce all claims to power, honors, and the like; it must not rule by power, but attract by love." (p.102)

We are looking for people who are curious about the riches of worship and music, and who want to explore how they best can be utilized in their worshipping congregation, a combination of striving for excellence and effective practice. We are also looking for people who are well trained in their respective fields of theology and music who want to delve more deeply into interdisciplinary work with the other, and especially to understand how their work together enables their congregation to grow in ability to worship.

Congregations:

We are looking for a lay leadership group within a congregation to explore growth in their worship lives by expanding resources, either by challenging the status quo to grow or by adding new means to achieve excellence and depth in worship. Answering a few questions will get you going!

1. Are there musical "traditions" important to our congregation?
2. Are there characteristics of our music that are unique?
3. What resources are available to us (1) in the church (2) in the community? Which have we taken advantage of and which could we utilize?
4. What resources could we reclaim or develop from the past?
5. Does our planning serve us well?
6. How does the congregation understand itself as a singing community (or not)?
7. Where are our growing edges to make music more integral to worship?
8. What one project would we like to work on in the next 12 months?

Proposing a project that will have foundations set within the 12 months but be far-reaching beyond that time period will be most effective. The project needs to be a natural outgrowth of existing resources and persons already in place in the congregation, building on worship and music traditions valued by the community. Examples could be (not meant to be exclusive!):

- Acquiring materials for a congregational hymn study to acquaint the congregation with their role in congregational song that would teach history and repertoire. Structured so it could be repeated every few years, perhaps in a new member class.
- Establishing a children's choir program integrated with the Christian Education program designed to teach children hymns and incorporate them into congregational worship.
- Choir training to recruit and strengthen choral leadership within the congregation for worship that is integrated with congregational song, with a goal of choral excellence that both enhances congregational singing and adds to worship what the [unrehearsed] congregation cannot sing.
- Establishing and educating of a congregational worship and music planning group to coordinate liturgy and music.
- A project to teach the congregation Psalm singing and seasonal settings of service music over a year's time to enrich the Scriptural and liturgical understandings with music.

The budget should not be used to compensate staff or volunteers, major equipment purchases, materials for resale, production of web-based resources, building renovations/construction, food costs not connected to a learning or reflection process, or attending or hosting a one-time event that is not part of a yearlong learning process.

Financial Considerations:

Scholars will receive full tuition and expenses during the time of the project; congregations will receive up to a \$5,000 grant to underwrite the congregational project. Credit for the courses can be applied to a degree program of the participant's choosing, either at the master's or doctoral level.

BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

Clergy participants will have opportunity to:

- Develop understanding for working with music and musicians
- Develop a common language to use with musicians
- Develop skills for ease in planning and coordination of music in worship
- Acquire an overview of the content and workings of the field of church music
- Strengthen collegiality and communication with their musician
- Understand the importance of music as it relates to the spoken word
- Determine how musical expertise fits into the landscape of worship
- Understand and access the resources of CMI

Musician participants will have the opportunity to:

- Understand their dual role as worship and music leader
- Enhance communication with clergy
- Acquire/expand a theological language and understanding of the liturgical year
- Develop a theology of music
- Develop an understanding of the role of the congregation in worship
- Determine how theological expertise fits into the landscape of worship
- Understand and access the resources of CMI

Congregational participants will have the opportunity to:

- Experience enhanced worship in word and music
- See pastor and musician working as a team
- Find actionable ways to enhance their music program
- Embrace and celebrate liturgy as the work of the people
- Discover resources within their congregation for augmenting excellence in music in worship