
INTRODUCTION

With One Voice has been prepared as an additional volume of resources for Lutherans at worship. It is intended to stand beside the principal worship book presently in use and to supplement its contents.

Several premises underlie the preparation of this collection. *With One Voice* is oriented primarily to the principal weekly assembly of God's people. These new liturgical settings, hymns, and songs are offered to assist those who gather around the Word and Sacraments, and to support the lectionary as it unfolds the saving story through the seasons of the Christian year.

The title suggests another focus of the volume. The letter to the Romans contains the exhortation to "live in harmony with one another...that together you may with one voice glorify...God" (Romans 15:5-6). A quick glance at this resource will reveal that to sing "with one voice" does not imply uniformity of expression. The "one voice" of the Church represents an amazingly diverse fabric, many songs of many cultures in many styles, woven together by the one Spirit. The size of *With One Voice* allows only a sampling of these many songs, but the breadth represented here is a witness to the Church's unity in diversity and an encouragement to communities to cultivate a variety of expressions when they gather, rather than dividing themselves by style of worship or music.

The liturgy of Holy Communion in *With One Voice* continues to "embody the tradition of worship which received its characteristic shape during the early centuries of the Church's existence and was reaffirmed during the Reformation era" (Introduction, *Lutheran Book of Worship*). The design of the services in this volume aims to reveal this characteristic shape. Two services of Holy Communion (*Light of Christ* and *Bread of Life*) are presented with complete musical settings. Holy Communion: *All Times and Places*, Setting 6, follows the model of Martin Luther's Chorale Service and suggests the insertion of service music from a wide variety of sources to be used for the principal musical elements. It is a flexible structure enabling the celebration of Holy Communion with integrity while allowing for adaptation to various circumstances.

This resource includes also a Service of Word and Prayer, incorporating service music, proclamation of the Word, creed and confession, offering and prayer.

The many songs gathered together in the hymn collection of *With One Voice* include a large number that have already found their way into the repertoire of many Lutheran assemblies. In addition to well-loved hymns from several traditions, there are contributions from the diverse cultures of North America as well as a representative sampling of materials from other parts of the world. Songs that center around a repeated refrain (choruses, materials from Taizé) stand alongside the lively poetry and new melodies of the "hymnic explosion" of the last two decades. Strong and singable melodies have been prized in every genre represented. Accompaniments

are included throughout for the hymns and songs in order to enable the use of these materials in a variety of settings and to enable singing in harmony where appropriate.

Throughout this supplementary resource careful attention has been given to the use of language that includes all God's people and employs a broadened palette of images for the persons of the Trinity. Liturgical texts are in continuity with those prepared for *LBW*, incorporating several further revisions of the English Language Liturgical Consultation (an ecumenical group representing major English-speaking churches) published in *Praying Together* (1988). The ELLC versions of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are provided on pages 54–55, and congregations are encouraged to study them for possible use.

Thirty years ago, Lutherans in North America entered into a significant process in the development of common worship resources as the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship undertook work leading toward a renewal in the worship life of the Lutheran churches. In the intervening years, the rapid change of contemporary society has confronted the world and the Church. While the fundamental pattern of the Church's worship does not change, the ways that Christians at worship express themselves in word, music, and gesture are always unfolding. Developed by the Publishing House and the Division for Congregational Ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, with consultation and review provided by congregations and lay persons, church musicians and pastors, theologians and ecumenical partners, *With One Voice* is offered as a further vehicle for the richly varied and constantly emerging praise and prayer of the Church.

May *With One Voice* be a useful instrument so that “joined together in harmony and having received the godly melody in unison, you might sing in one voice through Jesus Christ...that you might always partake of God.”

(*Ephesians IV*, Ignatius of Antioch, c. 35–c. 107 A.D.)

It is the voice of the Church that is heard in singing together.
It is not you that sings, it is the Church that is singing,
and you, as a member of the Church, may share in its song.
Thus all singing together...serves to widen our spiritual horizon,
make us see our little company as a member
of the great Christian Church on earth,
and help us willingly and gladly to join our singing,
be it feeble or good,
to the song of the Church.

Dietrich Bonhöffer, *Life Together*

In addition to the Pew Edition, an Accompaniment Edition with complete liturgical music and the entire collection of hymns and songs with additional alternate harmonizations is available, as well as a Leaders Edition, which supplies materials needed by those who plan and conduct worship. All three editions are necessary in order for *With One Voice* to be used to its full potential.