

**TO STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH
IN FORMING LEADERS FOR WORSHIP**

A Strategic Three-Year Proposal

November 15, 2007

Association for Reformed



of Liturgical Worship

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Summary

Over the course of three years, the Association for Reformed & Liturgical Worship (AR&LW) and interested participants will meet to discern how worship leaders are formed and imagine how they *might be*. AR&LW invites into the life and learning of the organization persons invested in the formation of liturgical leaders. These include all who have interest in things liturgical: members of local congregations, pastors, musicians, officers of the local church and judicatories, and seminary faculty and staff.

With this focus we seek to refresh a particular aspect of the covenantal life of the Reformed church: the common enterprise of forming worship leaders for service in congregations. It is our judgment that this covenantal relationship has, for a variety of reasons, become attenuated and needs attention. Our hope is to strengthen the mutual relationship of all parties within the church with responsibility for this formation.

Through this process AR&LW hopes to encourage sensitivity on the part of all to the task and joy of worship as primary theology.

Mission, Strategy, and Tactic

From 2007 to 2010 the Association for Reformed & Liturgical Worship will seek to implement its mission through a defined strategy and a focused tactic.

Mission

The Mission Statement of AR&LW reads: *The Association for Reformed & Liturgical Worship, a voluntary association of congregations and individuals, covenants with God's help, to cultivate, practice, and promote worship that offers a foretaste of the fullness of God's Reign. This worship is Trinitarian, ecumenical, incarnational and sacramental; it is both universal and local and sends the church to live its liturgy, bringing God's justice and grace to all of God's creation.*

Strategy

To further our mission by strengthening the church's commitment to, and practice of, the faithful formation of worship leaders

Tactic

Our tactic for implementing this strategy is an intentional process of conversation and discovery. We are eager to provide a time, venue, and format where the essential participants in this covenantal process— congregation , seminary, and judicatory—can be encouraged to listen to, and learn from, each other. The Association commits the next three years of its common life, and in particular its Annual Meetings, to nurture ways for these key players to engage with one another. It is hoped that best practices will be shared and new practices of cooperation and growth will be developed.

Background

While this commitment follows directly from the mission (see above) and vision (see Appendix II) of the Association, it became compelling at our 2005 Annual Meeting. With great interest and enthusiasm, Dr. Stan Hall, Associate Professor of Liturgics at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and Dr. Dianne Reistroffer, Professor of Ministry and former dean of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, spoke to the question of teaching worship in Reformed theological seminaries. They rejoiced at the opportunity to speak on this topic in a public forum for the first time and found mutual benefit in their exchanges. At the same time, those assembled from the Association were highly energized by this engagement. Our commitment to strengthen the church in forming leaders for worship grows out of this moving encounter.

The 2007 annual meeting laid the groundwork for the three-year focus. The Rev. Dr. Gregg Mast, Presiding Member of the Association's Steering Committee and President of New Brunswick Theological Seminary, shared a plenary address with the membership. The full membership was then invited to respond to the vision and create the energy and ideas essential to make this process happen. The clear and compelling direction that emerged from the 2007 Annual Meeting is being used to invite key participants in the formation process, as well as funding partners, to take part in the years to come.

As an organization AR&LW has two foci: advocacy and support. The three-year strategy concerning the formation of worship leaders reflects our commitment to advocacy. We are eager to share our life for this purpose and happy to adapt our meeting patterns to further it. Though for the past four years AR&LW has met in tandem with the Summer Institute for Liturgy and Worship sponsored by Seattle University, Seattle, Washington, our newly refined vision will move us to new locations. At the same time, however, we will not neglect our other focus: support for our members. Thus Annual Meetings will still be planned

around continuing education events, offered by organizations or institutions other than AR&LW but of interest to our members. Our meetings will either precede or follow such nourishing events. We will continue the pattern developed in Seattle of gathering the membership of the organization for enrichment and support as we explore specific topics of interest. Finally, we remain committed to developing AR&LW cluster groups around the country.

Process

Overview

In the summers of 2008 and 2009 AR&LW will invite three groups to gather for an engagement around the formation of worship leaders:

1) persons with responsibility for creating and leading worship services in congregations, 2) individuals from the twenty-five seminaries of the Reformed community (see Appendix III) with responsibility for forming ministerial students in the area of worship, and 3) representatives of judicatories with the responsibility for ordination. Given the crucial role of seminaries in this process of formation, special effort will be made to insure their representation. In turn a process will be developed to encourage significant participation from worship leaders and interested members of local congregations, especially small member congregations, as well as judicatories.

Years 2008 and 2009 will focus on the role of seminaries and congregations, respectively, in the formation of worship leaders. At the same time, AR&LW will strive to display sensitivity to the unique role judicatories play in regards to the formation of worship leaders.

Then in 2010 AR&LW will engage in a process that will produce a report summarizing what we have discovered.

The Association's Role

The members of AR&LW believe that their role is integral to effect and sustain substantive conversation about the formation of worship leaders. They will serve both as hosts and as eager participants in the process just outlined. On the one hand, they will provide a safe and discerning environment in which folk will be able to listen to, and learn from, each other. Specifically, they will provide a time, place and format in which conversation partners can experience a theologically deep and contextually relevant engagement. On the other hand,

AR&LW will provide in its members active participants, who will bring richly diverse experiences and perspectives to the table.

Participating Parties

As participants in this process of engagement around the formation of worship leaders for congregations, we in the Reformed church are mutually bound to one another.

- Congregations both form persons in worship and have expectations for worship leaders that are formed by others. On the one hand, congregational worship constitutes the primary experience of worship for most seminary students, including those entering the pastorate. As such it becomes a factor in ministerial training. On the other hand, congregations have claims upon both the seminary that trains and the judicatory that ordains their prospective worship leaders. Included within this group of participants are all those persons responsible for or involved in the worship life of a congregation: ministers, lay worship leaders, musicians, catechists, field education supervisors, and bodies responsible for worship (worship committees, for example).
- Persons entering the pastorate receive their formal training at seminary—through classroom instruction, supervised fieldwork, and the models that seminary worship presents. By these means, ordinands are prepared to meet the standards of the ordaining judicatory and the expectations of congregations they will serve. Included within this group of participants are all persons in the seminary setting with responsibility for training worship leaders: presidents, deans, professors of worship, chapel directors, fieldwork coordinators, and the like.
- The judicatory that ordains implements the doctrinal and liturgical standards that a ministerial candidate must meet. As such it relies heavily upon the

training ordinands receive at seminary and exercises a responsibility toward the congregations where they will pastor. Included in this group of participants are paid judicatory staff and committee members with responsibility for maintaining ordination standards.

While all three of these parties care for the church's liturgy in its fullness, they also each focus on a particular aspect of it: worship, teaching, and order, respectively. In that sense they are complementary; they are also reliant one upon the other. Congregation, seminary, and judicatory are each, at one and the same time, both 1) involved in forming future worship leaders and 2) affected by actions of the other two. Given this interdependence, the process of formation for worship leadership is greatly enhanced when these three parties act with mutual accountability.

Time-line and Commentary

The time-line of this process is as follows:

July, 2007 Seattle, Washington	The three-year focus was defined and accepted as the Association's focus for the next three years.
July 2008 Columbia Theological Seminary Atlanta (metro), Georgia	A conversation will involve representatives from all parties to address the question: How might seminaries form worship leaders for congregations?
August 2008 – July 2009 Dispersed around the country	Cluster groups of AR&LW members will wrestle with generative questions identified by the 2008 meeting in Atlanta.

<p>July 2009 Columbia Theological Seminary Atlanta (metro), Georgia</p>	<p>A conversation will involve representatives from all parties to address the question: How might congregations form worship leaders for congregations?</p>
<p>July 2010 Calvin Institute of Christian Worship Grand Rapids, Michigan</p>	<p>AR&LW members will produce a report on what has been learned. This report will to be shared generously with all partners and Reformed seminaries.</p>

2007-2008 The Steering Committee of AR&LW is using this year to prepare for this engagement.

2008-2009 One may think of this year, running from July to July, as one continuous conversation on the topic of the formation of worship leader for congregations in the Reformed tradition. Framing the year are the two meetings at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, annual meetings of AR&LW for the years 2008 and 2009. To both of these gatherings AR&LW invites representatives from congregations, seminaries, and judicatories. To encourage participation funds for subsidizing attendance have been sought and obtained. A \$500 subsidy is provided on a first come/first served basis to the first twenty (20) representatives of seminaries to register. Room and board is provided for the first twenty (20) representatives of congregations to register. In receiving their subsidies, seminary and congregational representatives are asked to make a two-year commitment, to be present at the meetings held in both 2008 and 2009.

The same question will be posed in both of these years, though concerning different parties. The overriding question is: How might we form worship leaders for congregations? In 2008 the gathering will ask how one of the covenantal parties, seminaries, might do this? In 2009 how another of the covenantal parties,

congregations, might? See Appendix V for a sampling of the kinds of particular questions we hope will be addressed in these two years.

2008-2009 Interim. To insure an ongoing conversation, we are going to continue it over the interim between the 2008 and 2009 meetings. AR&LW members around the country will invite representatives of the various parties into ten (10) to twelve (12) cluster groups, to meet four (4) times over the course of the year. These groups will wrestle with generative questions identified at the 2008 meeting and addressed at the 2009 meeting. Groups will number eight to twelve (8-12) and gather for a day to discuss a particular question. Recordors will report the thrust of their discussions.

2010. At the annual meeting concluding the final year of the process AR&LW will outline a report that takes into account the entire three-year focus and provide a summary of what we have learned. Best and new practices will be identified and generously shared with all participants in the conversation, the twenty-five seminaries in the Reformed community, and funding partners.

Funding

To fund this conversation, AR&LW has already received a \$10,000 grant from the David and Carol Myers Foundation of Holland, Michigan to subsidize representatives from seminaries. In addition, \$5000 has been donated by Fritz West to subsidize the participation of congregational representatives. Funding for the cluster groups is being sought from the Worship Renewal Grants Program of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship (CICW). A separate contract for services to CICW is being pursued to fund both a writer and ecumenical guests. The writer would generate stories out of this process for posting on the CICW website. The ecumenical guests may include scholars with an interest in our conversation, representatives of professional societies with affinity to our conversation, or an observer from an ecumenical partner.

APPENDIX I: HOW TO LEARN ABOUT AR&LW

There are five ways to learn about the Association for Reformed & Liturgical Worship (AR&LW).

- 1) **Annual Meeting.** In each of the past four years, the AR&LW has held a gathering just prior to the Summer Institute on Liturgy and Worship, an ecumenical gathering held under the auspices of Seattle University, Seattle, Washington.
 - In 2004 we focused upon our identity, and asked presenters from the PCUSA (David Batchelder), RCA (Emily Brink), and UCC (Marty McMane) to speak about the history, theology, and pastoral import of AR&LW, respectively.
 - In 2005 we became advocates for the teaching of liturgical worship in seminaries. With Dr. Stanley Hall of Austin Theological Seminary and Dr. Diane Reistroffer of Louisville Theological Seminary presenting, we sought ways to speak on this issue in love to seminaries.
 - The 2006 annual meeting promoted the formation of AR&LW regional groups. Through input, modeling, and reflection, persons were resourced to create groups in their area. Then, during the Summer Institute on Liturgy and Worship following, AR&LW arranged for members of the faculty to meet with us over lunch for more intimate conversation of its theme "Worship and Culture in the Global Community: Diversity as Gift," and direct application to Reformed worship — Kimberly Long, Keith Watkins, and Gláucia Vasconcelos-Wilkey.
 - In 2007 we picked up the conversation begun in 2005, between seminaries and the church. This was the start of our three-year focus, whereby AR&LW will provide a safe and inviting environment for congregations, seminaries, and congregations to address the question: how might worship leaders be formed for Reformed congregations? . Following this meeting, during the Institute itself, we once again engaged with its theme, "The Sacraments and the House That Holds Them: Sacred Space and the Arts as Theology," in informal, focused settings under the leadership of Gordon Lathrop, R. Kevin Seasoltz, OSB, and Fritz West.

- 2) **The Journal *Liturgy*.** In a gesture of ecumenical generosity, the Liturgical Conference offered us one issue of its journal *Liturgy* in two consecutive years as an "AR&LW Issue." We took advantage of this offer and the February issues in both 2005 and 2006 were so dedicated. The first, edited by Harold Daniels, includes both the presentations of the 2004 annual meeting and articles by founding members. The 2006 issue, edited by Peter Bower, contains articles exegizing our commitments, as found in the AR&LW constitution. In each subsequent year *Liturgy* has published a one-page report on the life of the Association. A number of these articles are available on the AR&LW web site.

- 3) **Call to Worship.** Two articles have appeared in a publication of the PCUSA, *Call to Worship*. In 2003 Harold Daniels, the editor of the *Book of Common Worship* and one of the founding fathers of our association, wrote "Association for Reformed & Liturgical Worship: A New Venture in Liturgical Reform and Renewal" by Harold M. Daniels. In 2004 Arlo Duba, formerly professor of liturgy at Princeton Theological Seminary and Dean of the Theological Faculty of the University of Dubuque as well as a founding father, published "THE ASSOCIATION FOR REFORMED AND LITURGICAL WORSHIP. Recapturing the Liturgical Essence of the Reformed Tradition." Both of these articles can be found on the AR&LW website <arlw.org>
- 4) **Newsletter.** Twice a year AR&LW publishes a newsletter for its members and friends. While primarily a house organ, it includes features written from the perspective of musicians, laypersons, denominational executives, and seminary teachers. With the fall 2005 issue began a series by our founders, which includes extended articles by Harold Daniels, Arlo Duba, and Gláucia Vasoncelos-Wilkey. With the fall 2006 issue the Rev. Fred Anderson, senior pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, began an extended series reflecting upon his experience of moving two congregations to the celebration of weekly Eucharist. Available on the AR&LW website <arlw.org>
- 5) **Web Site <arlw.org>** Our web site provides information about the current life of the association, its founding documents, copies of recent newsletters, notices of upcoming worship events throughout the church, articles of interest, and links to web sites that provide worship resources.

APPENDIX II: AR&LW VISION OF WORSHIP

As members of the Association for Christian Worship,
we envision worship that:
is the work of the people of God gathered in assembly,
and is thus communal in outlook
even when used as personal devotion;
finds expression in cultural context,
but is never bound to or limited by cultural claims;
manifests the love, peace, mercy, generosity, and justice of God
by being invitational and welcoming,
inclusive and participatory;
demonstrates the startling truth of the Reign of God,
and thereby offers a vision
that scrutinizes worldly values and human societies;
enunciates the reality of God's glory and goodness
and therefore avoids whatever is artificial and contrived;
holds up the primary symbols of our faith
so that they can be seen clearly
and can communicate profoundly;
is ordered around the central sacred activities of word, bath, and meal,
in which God's grace is proclaimed
and our identity is bestowed
and our unity is manifest,
utilizes speech and silence,
music and gesture,
stillness and movement,
time and architecture,
to point to that which is invisible, transcendent, and beyond human definition;
takes seriously both human perplexity and the Christian hope
by transforming the common and the temporal
into lenses of the holy and the eternal;
and prompts us, through the fresh work of the Holy Spirit,
to serve others,
whatever their status or condition,
as Christ has lovingly and compassionately

APPENDIX III: SEMINARIES OF THE REFORMED COMMUNITY OF CHURCHES

UCC	Andover Newton Theological Seminary 210 Herrick Road Newton Centre, MA 02459-2243	DOC	Lexington Theological Seminary 631 South Limestone Street Lexington, Kentucky
PCUSA	Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary 100 East 27th St. Austin, TX 78705	PCUSA	Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary 1044 Alta Vista Road Louisville, KY 40205
UCC	Bangor Theological Seminary P.O. Box 411 Bangor, ME 04402-0411	PCUSA	McCormick Theological Seminary 5460 S. University Ave. Chicago, IL 60615
DOC	Brite Divinity School TCU Box 298130 Fort Worth, TX 76129	RCA	New Brunswick Theological Seminary 17 Seminary Place New Brunswick, NJ 08901-1196
CRC	Calvin Theological Seminary 3233 Burton Street SE Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4287	PCUSA	Pacific School of Religion 1798 Scenic Ave. Berkeley, CA 94709
UCC	Chicago Theological Seminary 5757 S. University Ave. Chicago, IL 60637-1507	DOC	Phillips Theological Seminary 901 N. Mingo Road Tulsa, OK 74116
DOC	Christian Theological Seminary 1000 W. 42nd Street Indianapolis, IN	PCUSA	Pittsburgh Theological Seminary 616 North Highland Ave. Pittsburgh, PA 15206
PCUSA	Columbia Theological Seminary 701 Columbia Drive Decatur, GA 30030	PCUSA	Princeton Theological Seminary 64 Mercer St. Princeton, NJ 08540
PCUSA	Dubuque Theological Seminary 2000 University Ave. Dubuque, IA 52001	PCUSA	San Francisco Theological Seminary 105 Seminary Road San Anselmo, CA 94960
UCC	Eden Theological Seminary 475 E. Lockwood Ave. St. Louis, MO 63119	PCUSA	Union Theological Seminary-PSCE 3401 Brook Road Richmond, VA 23227
PCUSA	Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico 776 Ponce de León Avenue San Juan, Puerto Rico 00925	UCC	United Theological Seminary 3000 5th St. NW New Brighton, MN 55112
PCUSA	Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary 700 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SW Atlanta, GA 30314	RCA	Western Theological Seminary 101 East Thirteenth Street Holland, MI 49423-3622
UCC	Lancaster Theological Seminary 555 W. James St. Lancaster, PA 17603-2897		

APPENDIX IV: 2007-8 AR&LW STEERING COMMITTEE

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APPENDIX V: KINDS OF PARTICULAR QUESTION TO BE ADDRESSED

- How are candidates formed for worship leadership by their home congregations?
- How are pastoral candidates identified?
- How are candidates formed for worship leadership by field education placements?
- How might continuing education help those already in the field?
- How might we encourage and support liturgical leaders to join with members of the assembly in living faithful worship lives?
- What do local congregations and judicatories expect from a new pastor?
- What understanding of music's role in worship do congregations expect of a new pastor?
- What level of music competence and/or knowledge do congregations and judicatories expect in a pastor?
- What role is the pastor expected to play with regards to music in worship?
- How might directors of music and musicians contribute to the formation of worship leaders?
- What worship leadership qualities and competencies does a seminary hope to form in its students?
- What are your seminary's requirements in the area of worship?
- What musical training do pastors-in-training receive?
- What understanding of music in worship does the school seek to impart?
- Are worship courses and chapel life integrated in any way? If so, how?
- Is there any integration between what is taught in worship classes (and/or chapel life) and what happens in field education placements?
- Are field education supervisors given any guidance with respect to forming worship leaders?

- How do historically-denominational seminaries address diversities of tradition or style in the practice of worship?
- How does the seminary work with the predilections for worship that students bring with them to seminary?
- How do questions of diversity (race/ethnicity, gender) inform the way worship is taught?
- How do these questions about diversity—religious/liturgical or racial/ethnic—inform decisions regarding chapel life?