



CONCORDIA CURRICULUM GUIDE



GRADE
8

Performing Arts

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P R E F A C E

Ministry of Christian Schools

Parental expectations of Christian schools include

- excellent discipline;
- high academic standards;
- low teacher-student ratios;
- dedicated, conscientious teachers.

Many Christian schools offer these advantages. But the real distinction is that Christian schools proclaim Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world. Teaching Jesus Christ, then, is “the real difference” between Christian and public schools. In Christian schools, teachers and students witness personally and publicly to their faith in Jesus Christ. Students study the Bible and worship God daily. Teachers relate Jesus Christ to all aspects of the curriculum. Teachers and students share Christian love and forgiveness.

Those who teach in Christian schools are privileged with the opportunity to

- teach the Word of God in its truth and purity;
- acknowledge the Bible as God’s infallible Word and the Confessions as the true exposition of the Word;
- identify God’s Word, Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper as the means through which God creates and sustains faith;
- emphasize Law and Gospel as the key teaching of Scripture;
- seek to apply Law and Gospel properly in daily relationships with students, parents, and other teachers;
- teach all of what Scripture teaches (including Christian doctrines) to all students, no matter what backgrounds they have;
- share with students what Jesus the Savior means to them personally;
- equip students to proclaim the Good News to others;

- encourage students to find the support and encouragement found only in the Body of Christ, of which Jesus Himself is the head.

In Christian schools, Christ permeates all subjects and activities. Religion is not limited to one hour or one class. Teachers seek opportunities to witness in every class and to relate God’s Word to all aspects of life. Through this process, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, students grow in faith and in a sanctified life, and view all of life, not just Sunday, as a time to serve and worship God.

In summary, it is intrinsic to ministry in a Christian school that all energies expended in the educational process lead each child to a closer relationship with the Savior and with other members of the Christian community.

How to Use This Guide

The Concordia Curriculum Guide series is designed to guide you as you plan and prepare to teach. The introductory chapters provide foundational information relevant to the teaching of the performing arts (music, theatre, and dance) to students in a Christian school. But the majority of the pages in this volume focus on performing arts standards and performance expectations together with ideas and activities for integrating them with various aspects of the Christian faith. This volume does not provide a curriculum plan or lesson plan for any particular period or day. Instead, it provides a wealth of ideas from which you can choose and a springboard to new ideas you may create. You may use this curriculum guide with any textbook series.

The performing arts standards included in this book are informed by the standards developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations and are provided as a compilation of the performing arts standards and performance expectations adopted by the individual states. In order to offer a well-coordinated curriculum design, the performing arts objectives for this grade level relate to and connect with the standards provided at other grade levels.

The standards, then, can serve you and your whole faculty in several ways. They can help you

1. plan your teaching in an organized way;
2. coordinate your teaching of a subject with the teaching in other grades in your school;
3. select textbooks and other learning or teaching materials;
4. evaluate your current instruction, materials, and objectives;
5. implement procedures for school accreditation;
6. nurture the Christian faith of your students as you teach performing arts.

We assume that teachers will use materials in addition to those included in the guide, but since many materials do not integrate the Christian faith, we have provided suggestions for specific methods to use as you teach day by day. Everyone has a different teaching style. No one will be able to use all the ideas in this volume. As you think about practices that will work for you and would be helpful in your classroom, consider these possible ways to find and use ideas from this volume:

- Read the entire volume before school starts. Highlight the ideas you think you can use.
- Write ideas in your textbooks. List the page numbers from this volume that contain suggestions you would like to use in connection with a lesson or unit.
- Throughout the year, designate periods of time, perhaps at faculty meetings, to discuss portions of this volume as you seek to improve your integration of the faith in the performing arts. Brainstorm, develop, and implement your ideas. Then follow up with other meetings to share your successes and challenges. Together, find ways to effectively use the suggestions in this volume.

- Plan ways to adapt ideas not closely related to specific lessons or units in your secular textbooks. Inside your plan book, clip a paper with a list of suggestions from the volume that you would like to use, or list each idea on a file card and keep the cards handy for quick review. Use those ideas between units or when extra time is available.
- Evaluate each suggestion after you have tried it. Label it as “use again” or “need to revise.” Always adapt the suggestions to fit your situation.
- Think about integrating the faith each time you plan a lesson. Set a goal for yourself (e.g., two ideas from this volume each week), and pray that God will help you to achieve it. You will find the index at the back of this volume especially helpful in finding faith-connecting activities relative to specific topics.
- If the ideas in the Concordia Curriculum Guide series seem overwhelming, begin by concentrating on only one subject per month, or attempt to use the suggested ideas in only two to four subjects the first year. Add two to four subjects per year after that.

Probably the most effective teaching occurs when teachers take advantage of natural opportunities that arise to integrate the faith into their teaching. In those situations, you will often use your own ideas instead of preparing a lesson plan based on teaching suggestions in this guide. Use the white space on the pages of this book to record your own ideas and activities for integrating the Christian faith. We hope this volume will be an incentive to you to create your own effective ways to integrate the Christian faith into the entire school day.

We believe that Christian schools are essential because we believe that our relationship with Jesus Christ permeates every part of our lives. That is why our Christian faith permeates our teaching. That is why we teach in a Christian school.

CHAPTER 1

The Performing Arts— Transcending Time and Space

There are many arts (such as the visual arts and the performing arts of music, theatre, and dance), with many forms of each. This look at the performing arts begins by focusing on music, which is especially resonant with Lutheran schools because the Lutheran Church is known as the “singing church.” Music can be divided into the sacred and the secular. Our use of either one can be reflective of our Lutheran perspective. We begin this exploration specifically with sacred music. What can be learned about the power and influence of sacred music from leaders in the Church throughout the ages? Consider the following paraphrased comments of several renowned Lutheran musicians: Martin Luther (sixteenth century), Paul Gerhardt (seventeenth century), Johann Sebastian Bach (eighteenth century), and Jeffrey Burkart (twenty-first century). This is what might be heard if one could eavesdrop on a conversation between these fellow Christians about their love of music.

Burkart: Sacred music transcends time. Its purpose—to worship the Lord—is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Our lives are enriched by the music of long ago as well as the music of today.

Bach: When I was nine years old, my mother died. A year later, my father died as well. I buried eleven of my own children. At the death of my uncle, I wrote the cantata “God’s Time Is Best,” which includes these words of hope from Scripture: “In Thee, O LORD, do I put my trust” (Psalm 71:1 KJV). All glory, praise, and majesty to Father, Son, and Spirit!

Gerhardt: We look at God in confidence, receiving His peace in the midst of turmoil. After attending the funeral of a pastor friend who had died suddenly of a stroke, the words of Romans 8:38–39 inspired me to write this hymn (*LSB* 724:1, 8–10):

If God Himself be for me,
I may a host defy;
For when I pray, before me,
My foes, confounded, fly.
If Christ, my head and master,
Befriend me from above,
What foe or what disaster
Can drive me from His love?

No danger, thirst, or hunger,
No pain or poverty,
No earthly tyrant’s anger
Shall ever vanquish me.
Though earth should break asunder,
My fortress You shall be;
No fire or sword or thunder
Shall sever You from me.

No angel and no gladness,
No throne, no pomp, no show,
No love, no hate, no sadness,
No pain, no depth of woe,
No scheming, no contrivance,
No subtle thing or great
Shall draw me from Your guidance
Nor from You separate.

My heart with joy is springing;
I am no longer sad.
My soul is filled with singing;
Your sunshine makes me glad.
The sun that cheers my spirit
Is Jesus Christ, my King;
The heaven I shall inherit
Makes me rejoice and sing.

Luther: Even in times of trouble we can rejoice, for “The Word they still shall let remain Nor any thanks have for it; [God]’s by our side upon the plain With His good gifts and Spirit. And take they our life, Goods, fame, child, and wife, Though these all be gone, Our vict’ry has been won; The Kingdom ours remaineth” (*LSB* 656:4).

Burkart: Everyone experiences difficult times. We still experience sickness and disease, catastrophe, and death; yet we also still find comfort, joy, and hope through the same Gospel message. Music binds people together—sharing the same feelings, sharing empathy, and sharing a message of hope. Take hymns for example. Hymns come to us from around the globe. The desire to praise God and respond to His grace through Jesus is universal. The stories behind hymns are fascinating. “Come, Let Us Eat” (*LSB* 626) was first sung in a call-and-response style in Liberia. It was written by Pastor Billema Kwillia, tape-recorded, and then translated by Margaret Miller, a literacy worker in Sierra Leone.

Luther: Hymns are to be sweet sounds that are rich in meaning, proclaiming the Word of God. As Scripture speaks in Colossians 3:16, “Let the word of Christ *dwell* in you *richly* . . . singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God” (emphasis added). Sacred music is yet another abundant and rich source for hearing and proclaiming God’s will for us in Christ Jesus, who dwells in us not just on occasion but, rather, dwells in us richly through His Word, written, spoken, and sung.

The noble art of music is a great treasure. It affects our minds, hearts, and spirits. Music is a precious gift from God that we can, in turn, use for the expressed purpose of praising our Lord and Savior.

Burkart: Music calls for purpose. It invites the performer to become engaged, body, soul, and spirit. Music involves the whole person. Much of what we do is left-brained—rational and analytical. The right brain involves subjectivity and intuition and creativity. Music is quite logical and mathematical, but it is also creative and emotional. When we perform, music allows us to use both hemispheres and provides a greater opportunity for learning. Both the parts and the whole are incorporated. With music, what comes out is more than what’s written on the page.

When we talk about a performance of sacred music, there is a short-term and a long-term goal. First, there is a sense of purpose and urgency to

lead worship and share the Gospel message, but the main purpose is always to glorify God.

Bach: Yes, the sole aim of music is the glory of God. It is for that reason I printed *J. J.* or *J. N. J.* at the top of all my musical compositions, even the secular ones, praying *Jesu Juva* (*Jesus, help me!*) or dedicating them *In Nomine Jesu* (*in the name of Jesus*), emphasizing that “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Colossians 3:17 KJV).

Burkart: Music is a lifelong activity! Unlike many activities where skills decline with age, music skills often improve with age and experience. Music appreciation and enjoyment last a lifetime. It’s the message of comfort, trust, and hope found in music that makes it endure.

Like sports, performing requires teamwork. Performers are dependent upon one another. It is a community effort. There is built-in collaboration between people within the fine arts. Music is also collaborative in the curriculum. It is connected to hymnody, poetry, art, doctrine, ancient and modern history, and language arts. It can contain doctrine and Church history and much more.

As instructors in the arts, we are just like coaches. It’s important to insist on a good performance and have high expectations, while remembering to always be supportive of the kids we are guiding. Music is enjoyable *and* is a means to serve God and to share God’s Word with others. It’s a win-win-win situation.

Bach: When we produce, hear, and sing devotional music, God is always at hand with His gracious presence as we proclaim His Word. People often remember me saying, “There is nothing to it. You only have to hit the right note at the right time, and the instrument plays itself.” But I recognize the importance of study, experience, and practice. Art is human creativity under the grace of God. My oft-delivered prayer, “Jesus, help me,” was as much a prayer for the performance of the music as for its composition in the first place.

Burkart: Music is comprehensive. From the beginning of time, God has been praised through song.

And to the end of time throughout all eternity, God will be praised. “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting” (Psalm 106:48a). “Every knee should bow . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Philippians 2:10–11). “Let all the people say, ‘Amen!’ Praise the Lord!” (Psalm 106:48b). “Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!” (Psalm 150:6).

Bach: Music is a beautiful reminder of God, an opportunity to reflect on Him. It is a mirror of divine orderliness and majesty; it is a foretaste of the heavenly harmony, which we will join with choruses of angels and saints.

Gerhardt: Join me now in prayer and praise: “Our hands and feet, Lord, strengthen; With joy our spirits bless Until we see the ending Of all our life’s distress. And so throughout our lifetime Keep us within Your care And at our end then bring us To heav’n to praise You there” (*LSB* 754:6).

Burkart: What we do lives on. Sometimes, performing involves delayed gratification; we do not always receive a round of applause in church; much of what we do does not get recognition. Yet our purpose continues: to give God the glory.

But we can’t underestimate the impact of the music we play or perform. The message may make a life-changing or lifelong difference in others’ lives, and the message may live on for generations. We are still performing Luther, Gerhardt, and Bach pieces today!

The applause goes on and on.

Give us lips to sing Thy glory,
Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats that shout the hope that fills us,
Mouths to speak Thy holy name.
Alleluia, alleluia!
May the light which Thou dost send
Fill our songs with alleluias,
Alleluias without end!

(*LSB* 578:5)

Characters

Dr. Martin Luther. Luther is considered the founder of Protestantism. Luther’s public debates of his staunchly held belief that the Bible is the one true source of religious authority challenged the Roman Catholic Church in the sixteenth century. He was an internationally known teacher, author, priest, theologian, and musician whose ideas changed the Church and history with his focus on justification by faith in Christ Jesus and his understanding of *Sola Gratia* (Grace Alone), *Sola Fide* (Faith Alone), and *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone).

In addition to his voluminous writings, such as commentaries, catechisms, and German translation of the Bible, Luther composed numerous hymn texts and tunes, including “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”; “Welcome to Earth, O Noble Guest”; “Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord”; “O Lord, We Praise You”; “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”; “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”; “From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee”; “Our Father, Who from Heaven Above”; and “Isaiah, Mighty Seer in Days of Old.”

Rev. Paul Gerhardt. Gerhardt was an influential German hymnwriter of the seventeenth century. He often collaborated with church musician Johann Crüger. He composed numerous hymn texts and tunes, including “Awake, My Heart, with Gladness”; “A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth”; “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded”; “Upon the Cross Extended”; “Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me”; “Entrust Your Days and Burdens”; “If God Himself Be for Me”; and “Now Rest Beneath Night’s Shadow.”

Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach is regarded as a master and genius in the music community and as one of the great composers of all time. His skill as an organist was recognized during his lifetime, but his gifts as a composer, particularly of organ music and church music, were not fully appreciated until over a century after his death. The depth and beauty of Bach’s baroque and contrapuntal style are widely respected throughout the world today.