
PUBLICATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

Our Calling

The Publication Coordinating Commission (PCC) has the task of coordinating and prioritizing the publishing and media production of the synod's boards and commissions and NPH in order to avoid duplication of effort. In the past we have solicited publishing proposals for material that are not funded by the budgets of WELS boards and commissions or would not recover the cost of production. When these projects are deemed to be important, their production costs are evaluated. We have also evaluated publishing proposals of NPH which were deemed valuable but could not recover the cost of production. We reviewed and evaluated those proposals and awarded funds from the Publication Fund to those projects we considered vital.

Our Current Situation

President Schroeder appointed new members to the PCC in order to facilitate new projects and approved projects to move forward. After those appointments the Commission reviewed the philosophy and priority guidelines. Two significant new projects were also discussed: the new catechism and the new hymnal. In both cases, the development costs for all the components of each proposal exceeded the resources of NPH and the PCC. NPH agreed to continue funding development of the core projects for each but additional funds were needed for auxiliary projects. These included curriculum for the catechism and for the hymnal project's various print products (pastor's companion, psalter, manuals) and digital products: a "service builder" computer program, a "musicians' resource" (a powerful tool that allows musicians to print scores for a wide variety of instruments), and a personal digital edition of the hymnal (an app for tablet or smartphone).

The PCC adopted a proposal to request \$400,000 from the Synodical Council (SC) for the auxiliary hymnal projects, but chose not to request additional funds for the catechism projects. In addition the PCC requested the SC continue to place the Publication Fund of the PCC on the Unfunded Projects Priority List. Since that time the SC approved \$400,000 from undesignated funds for the hymnal project and that it

be administered by the Hymnal Committee in cooperation with NPH. Subsequently, the SC also granted \$50,000 for the Publication Fund of the PCC.

The Commission also adopted a resolution to follow the previous model of funding large future projects. That older model was a cooperative funding model that provided funds from NPH and WELS, rather than depending on NPH to fund large synodwide projects. The rationale was to protect the future financial viability of the publishing house by expecting it to fund projects that could not recover development and production costs in the future.

The following projects in production or development have been approved for publication and subsidized from PCC funds:

- Thessalonians
- Mental Illness 2
- Scroll of Isaiah
- Collected Essays on the Role of Man and Woman
- Christian Leadership
- Wauwatosa Theology Essays IV
- Come Worship Christ
- Koehler Commentary on John

At the present time the PCC Publication Fund has \$70,845.65. In the current world of digital publication, discussion of digital projects confronts high development costs, the PCC is currently unable to fund such projects.

A Look Ahead

The WELS convention in 2017 resolved to adjust references to the PCC in the constitution. We await the implication of those changes. Although the Commission lacks sufficient funds for publication of many projects, we still believe that publishing plans of the boards and committees of the synod should be channeled through the Publication Coordinating Commission in order to maintain some coordination and consistency. Yet we understand the difficulty of implementing that concept when boards and committees are able to find funding from other sources. Publishing today involves digital formats and technological innovations which are expensive and time

consuming to create. We also face challenges in reaching a new generation of digitally savvy readers. Sadly we have limited resources to pursue these opportunities. While the future may not be clear at this point, we simply rely on the Lord's blessing so that we can continue to proclaim his gospel with quality materials that reflect our Scriptural and confessional standards.

Commission Members include: J. Braun (NPH and Chair), C. Jahn (NPH), B. Gerlach (CS), B. McKenney (Parish Pastor), J. Werre (BHM), T. Plitzuweit (CLS), T. Kock (BME), and N. Seiltz (MLP).

Rev. John Braun, reporter
