

Tres Dias, Inc.
PO Box 635
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
Phone: 845-384-6451

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 20, 2007

TO: All Chartered Tres Dias Communities, Delegates and Secretariat Members

FROM: Jeff Mehl; Chairman, Policy Committee (PolicyChair@tresdias.org)

RE: Blessings to the tune to “Edelweiss” is a violation of copyright laws

Tres Dias, Inc (TDI) is aware that many Tres Dias communities have developed a non-Essential tradition of singing “Blessings” and “Thanks” before and after meals to the tune of the Rodgers & Hammerstein song “Edelweiss.”

TDI has just learned that this practice is a copyright violation and the copyright holder, Williamson Music, has gone on record as threatening to file lawsuits against anyone, including churches, who use the melody without permission. They have, in fact, denied permission to religious groups when requested. It is important to note that the CCLI license, which most Tres Dias communities utilize, only permits the use of the melody with the actual words of the song. Thus, using the melody without the actual words is not covered by CCLI and is therefore a copyright violation.

As it is the practice of TDI to abide all applicable laws, all communities are hereby directed to immediately discontinue the practice of using the melody of Edelweiss without the actual words for any reason whatsoever during any Tres Dias functions.

We also ask that any sponsoring communities advise their non-chartered communities of this policy.

We realize that the practice of singing “Blessings” and “Thanks” for meals has become an important and loved tradition and will be missed by those communities who utilize the practice. However, as it is not an Essential, it is outside the realm of TDI to develop a replacement. Communities are free to develop their own alternatives as long as they are not in violation of any applicable copyright laws. For instance, a community might want to consider having the rector approach team members and candidates to say the blessings prior to and/or following meals. This is used by many communities in lieu of singing Edelweiss and serves as an additional means of including candidates in the activities of the weekend.

The following websites are offered to serve as background and a starting point for anyone desiring to research this decision:

- <http://www.upperroom.org/chrysalis/article/edelweiss.asp>
- http://www.gbod.org/worship/music/articles.asp?act=reader&item_id=1764&loc_id=17,19

Thank you for your attention.

