



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT
51st Biennial Convention + June 12-13, 2018
Looking Back... at a Century of God's Grace
Moving Forward... with Prayer and Resolve

District President's Report

To: The 51st Biennial Convention of the Southeastern Wisconsin District of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod Assembled at Wisconsin Lutheran College, June 12 and 13, 2018

Centuries of Grace

Certainly a highlight of the past biennium was our Reformation 500 observance last fall. What an opportunity to praise our Lord for those five centuries of grace. If you were among the 4,500 people who gathered at the Miller High Life Theatre on November 5, 2017 for our Reformation 500 festival worship service, I pray that it was a meaningful experience for you. Through Word and song we were built up and encouraged as we praised God for his unfathomable mercy in nailing our sins to the cross.

Thank you to all the congregations which made financial contributions to make it possible to rent the theatre and to appoint the "chancel" for worship. These contributions and district funds designated for the service covered the entire cost. In addition, the Reformation 500 offering of about \$25,000 was given in total to our District Mission Board to enhance mission projects in our Southeastern Wisconsin District. For this we praise God. God bless us all as we continue to rejoice that we are heirs of the Lutheran Reformation, and God give us joy as we continue to pass on that heritage of faith to the people of God in our churches and schools.

This week we observe the century of grace that God has given us as a Southeastern Wisconsin District of the WELS. One year after the 1917 merger of the Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin Synods, the Southeastern District of the new Joint Ev. Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States met for the first time at St. John, Burlington. I pray that our opening service, which sought to mirror that first service in 1918, filled you with the joy that comes from knowing that the truth of the simple gospel of Jesus' forgiving love has set you free.

I also pray that the various pieces of anniversary information contained in the convention materials, as well as Vice-President Joel Leyrer's guided discussion of the paper which Prof. August Pieper gave at that 1918 convention, will help you appreciate anew God's grace to you personally and to us as a church body. As we look back with gratitude, we have every reason to look forward with confidence. Thank you in advance to Pastor Leyrer for all his work in presenting this essay to us.

Appreciation

I would like to express my appreciation to all of you for your prayerful support during these two years I have served as your district president. In many ways it has been a learning experience together with you, as we have all sought to follow up on the twenty-four years of dedicated service of our previous district president, David Rutschow. I am especially appreciative of the assistance of the two vice-presidents, Joel Leyrer and Michael Woldt, and secretary, Billy Carter. Pastor Woldt agreed to fill the 2nd Vice-President vacancy after Pastor Jonathan Kolander accepted a call to another district. (Jon did continue to help us determine the convention agenda.)

Also much appreciated – and valued – are the nineteen circuit pastors who serve alongside the praesidium in our district. Their follow-up and oversight of the congregations in their charge is a very important aspect of our shared work. You have perhaps already received information about the election of your circuit's circuit pastor which will take place during this convention. If you have not yet received information about that, please be alert to announcements about it during the convention. The same appreciation goes to our various district board chairmen and board members. God bless you for serving in these extra ways above and beyond your other service to the Lord and his people. (The board chairmen and circuit pastors constitute our district council.)

In connection with the work involved in presiding over this district and the other two Wisconsin districts (Northern Wisconsin and Western Wisconsin), I am pasting in below Synod President Schroeder's comments in a recent Together article. Please note that the impetus for this did not come from the presidents of those districts, but from the Congregations' Committee of the Conference of Presidents: "It is becoming increasingly clear that the workload for presidents of the largest synodical districts has grown to the point where steps need to be taken to provide assistance and relief. Since we continue to believe that it is extremely vital that the district presidents remain in parish ministry, any solutions considered would maintain that approach. The COP hopes to have proposals for providing assistance to the presidents of the Western Wisconsin, Southeastern Wisconsin, and Northern Wisconsin Districts by next fall. The type of assistance may vary from district to district."

Pray for Workers

God has blessed us with over 51,000 communicant members in our district, as well as over 1,100 called workers, nearly 150 congregations, sixty grade schools, five area Lutheran High Schools, one College, our Seminary, and many early childhood centers. While a number of our congregations and schools are struggling from a human perspective, many others are expanding their ministries by adding associate pastors and more teachers due to expanding school enrollments and mission opportunities. (Please look forward to hearing about the increasing number of mission starts and enhancements in our district when the District Mission Board gives its report. Please also pray for Shoreland Lutheran High School and the congregations in the southeastern part of Wisconsin as they prepare for the arrival of FoxConn – and the thousands of jobs it is hoped will accompany that arrival during the course of the next decade.)

As has been often noted recently in synodical publicity, the challenge in connection with this blessing of ministry expansion is being able to supply enough called workers for all these ministry positions. While there might be several reasons for that, the simplest reason is that we have fewer candidates graduating from Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. This year, for example, the Seminary had 29 candidates, but there were 68 requests to receive a graduate. At the present time there are approximately 120 pastoral vacancies throughout the synod. The number of teacher vacancies is about 80, with 24 of them being principals and 7 being early childhood directors. In our district 24 congregations are seeking a pastor, though a few of them are "on hold" at the moment. The number of teacher vacancies in our district is in the 35-40 range.

We have seen this shortage coming, but by way of contrast, note that in the convention report two years it was stated that 24 pastoral graduate requests could not be filled, and that our overall vacancies were at 60 for teachers and 67 for pastors, with 20 and 8 of those being in our district, respectively.

One of the blessings of this challenge is that there has been an increasing number of former teachers who are requesting information on synod recertification, as well as other educators who are asking about synod certification. We are thankful for this, and we pray that this will gradually assist us in dealing with our present shortage. Special thanks in this connection goes to Dr. John Meyer and his staff at Martin Luther College. Dr. Meyer oversees our ministry certification program.

Another blessing of this challenge is the reminder to keep praying for more workers to enter the field of harvest, and to keep encouraging our young people to consider the public ministry. In addition to praying and encouraging, also ask for God's strength to model the joy that is yours as a child of God, who has the additional privilege of serving in the gospel ministry.

Perhaps the primary blessing of this challenge is the opportunity it gives us to put our trust in God's promises to provide for his people. There is very understandable worry and anxiety on the part of pastors, principals, church councils and school boards when they wonder when and how positions will be filled. I pray that we can encourage each other to calmly entrust our cares to the Lord, who so dearly cares for us. Please know that this is a daily concern of our Lutheran Schools office and the Conference of Presidents. God bless all the administrators and staff at Lutheran Schools for their great work – work which is carried out with an attitude of service to God's people.

One additional encouragement: With so many call meetings and call lists, it is a good reminder to practice discretion and confidentiality when talking about call meetings afterwards. That is one of the reasons, for example, that we ask for the call list information to be destroyed after each meeting. In this regard, please refrain from telling people that they were on a certain call list – or that they were not on a particular list. That can cause unnecessary confusion and misunderstanding. Thank you for your help on this.

Welcome to New Workers

I mentioned above the fact that we were not able to fill all the requests for graduates that we received. However, we thank God for the graduates of MLC and the Seminary that we were able to assign to our district at our assignment meetings during May. We received two pastor graduates, one staff minister candidate, and to this point fifteen teacher graduates (five men and ten women). Their names and assignments are listed elsewhere in the report. It is possible that none of the newly assigned candidates are present today, but if they are, I would ask them to stand so that we might acknowledge and welcome them. I would also like to acknowledge Stephen Wiesenauer, who was recently received by colloquy from the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. While studying at the Seminary, he provided assistance for one of our vacant congregations. He has accepted a call to serve in Southeast Asia. God bless Steve and his family.

In this connection, about thirty pastors and some two hundred teachers and staff ministers have accepted calls into our district in the past biennium. That is a lot of call activity! If any of you have started a new calling since June 2016, please stand so that we might also acknowledge you.

Updating Biographical Information in the WELS Database – Present Workers

One big help in the entire call process is having up to date information about our called workers, so that the district presidents and Lutheran Schools have that at their disposal when developing call lists. If you have not updated your information in a while, please consider making a note of it now and have it be an “action item” when you get back home.

Here is the information which the synod office provides for getting to the database.

Go to: cloud.wels.net/me

If you don't know your User Name, call WELS or:

- Go to the online synod directory
- Get to the file with your name and address information
- Click on your name at the top of the information
- Your user name will show up

If you don't remember your password, you can:

- Hit "Reset Password" after your User Name brings it up.

Congregational Mission Offerings

As you know, our Congregational Mission Offerings (CMO) are the foundational source of support for the work we do together in WELS. In 2017, the CMO of \$21.4 million was 0.7% more than commitments from congregations and 1.4% above 2016's receipts. That truly was a blessing.

For 2018, subscriptions show a 0.5% decrease from 2017 actual offerings. As a result, our challenge is keeping up with the 3.5% annual increase in the cost of maintaining current gospel ministry. Increases in operating costs such as wages, benefits, insurance and utilities continue to outpace the growth of CMO. Shortfalls mean that we have to use a greater amount of reserve funds to sustain ministries at our current levels. CMO growth of more than 3.5% would allow for the expansion of support programs for congregations, missions and our ministerial education schools. As we have done in the past, we encourage each of our congregations to consider designating 10 percent of the general fund offerings that they receive during the year as their CMO subscription. Some congregations are working toward that goal. Congregations that are already at or have surpassed that goal are encouraged to strive toward a higher goal and increase their percentage year by year, if the Lord gives them the ability to do so. God bless all your ministry work in your local congregation and our shared partnership in our synodical work throughout the world.

Key Emphases

Two items have received particular emphasis during the past two years: our Urban Schools and discussions about the relationship and roles of men and women according to God's Word.

Urban Schools

Our twelve urban schools in the Milwaukee County Parental Choice program would be by themselves the fourth largest district of schools in WELS, meaning that in essence we have "two districts" of schools in our Southeastern District. In addition, the challenge involved in securing and maintaining teachers can be a difficult one. Over the past two years the district president and the administrator of Lutheran Schools, Jim Rademan, have met at least seven or eight times with the principals of the schools. These meetings have provided good discussion and potential frameworks for more collaboration among the schools.

These meetings also resulted in a February 2017 meeting in Brookfield, at which a group of over forty representatives from the WELS praesidium, the Seminary, MLC, WLC, Bethany, Lutheran Schools, and urban school principals met to discuss possible ways to help with teacher recruitment, encouragement of students in the schools to consider public ministry themselves, and a possible satellite presence for MLC in Milwaukee, among other items. Ministerial Education Administrator Paul Prange is overseeing four different committees which have been working on these issues.

Thank you to all the urban school leaders for their mutual concern for the ministries they carry out. It truly has been a joy to prayerfully reflect on these important items with you.

Relationship and Roles of Men and Women

The other item which has resulted in many meetings and study sessions concerns the Bible's teaching on the relationship and roles of men and women. Most discussions have involved questions raised by some regarding the correctness of our stated doctrinal position that the head/helper relationship of men and women as interdependent people of God is a universal principle which applies to all areas of family, church and society. Since it is difficult to apply this principle in a world that does not operate on the basis of the gospel - and since the Bible gives specific applications of the principle only in the areas of marriage and the church -- there have been questions about whether it applies to society at all. Other questions have involved the biblical understanding of authority and whether women may serve on the boards of various organizations in our church body.

For the past nineteen months the praesidium has had extensive conversations, discussions and study periods with seminary professors, those questioning the doctrine, and others. The discussions have been cordial and brotherly. While there is no change in our position that what we believe is correct according to God's Word - that the principle does apply to home, church and society - what has become apparent is that there is lack of clarity among some about exactly how to explain that. For that reason we encourage you to study the "Heirs Together" Bible study that is now in its fourth edition, since it is seeking to regularly address current questions and concerns. As is continually the case, we also need to keep reviewing our public doctrinal statements so that they clearly state to people in our generation what we are saying - and what we are not saying - from God's Word.

We always need to continue reclaiming for ourselves the doctrines and principles of God's Word. We want to do so in a way that maintains the unity among us. At the same time, we need to give a clear biblical witness to those who raise questions regarding our established doctrine and also to those who might apply these principles in a legalistic manner.

Please continue to pray for all those involved in these discussions so that we might state and apply God's teaching accurately and in an evangelical way that leads all of us to value our high callings as God's children - both men and women.

Miscellaneous Items

The following informational items have been highlighted in the last year or so by Synod President Schroeder and/or the COP in the Together or through other publicity. They are repeated here for your reference.

NPH

Copyright Sensitivity

At our recent Conference of Presidents meeting we learned of the negative financial impact NPH is experiencing from churches and schools duplicating and reusing Christ-Light lessons and other materials. When NPH budgets the development costs for materials it produces, it bases its assumptions on anticipated sales of the materials. When churches and schools reuse or make copies of these materials, NPH is unable to offset its development costs. Simply stated, NPH loses money needed to sustain its ministry. Additionally, copyright laws exist to protect publishers from the negative financial impact of their materials being copied; copying NPH materials takes something “for free” when it should be purchased.

Reusing Christ-Light materials poses another concern. The Christ-Light Student Lessons are developed to provide an opportunity for parents to reinforce the lessons students learn in the classroom. Encouraging parents’ involvement and support can at times be challenging for a teacher. However, reusing the student lessons and not sending them home with students undermines a key objective of the curriculum and the important role parents play in the spiritual growth of their children.

Thank you for your attention to this concern and for your encouragement of the appropriate use of these important resources.

Store Closing and Other Changes

As you are likely aware, Christian publishing has faced many challenges in recent years. Overall interest in Christian books has deteriorated. Publishers affiliated with church bodies have declined significantly in number and size. For many retailers, there has been a dramatic shift by their customers toward purchasing online rather than at physical retail store locations.

Northwestern Publishing House is not immune to these broader trends. Additionally, NPH is affected by trends within our own synod. Declining church membership and school enrollment have directly impacted demand for materials for our members and students. Despite many cost saving steps expenses continue to increase, compounding the impact of these trends.

In response to these challenging realities, the NPH Board of Directors and management have had to make a number of difficult decisions with the objectives of exercising good stewardship of limited resources, ensuring continuation of NPH’s ministry, and fulfilling the synod’s purpose of publishing literature that maintains our Lutheran doctrine and practice.

After much prayerful deliberation and consideration, it has been determined that the NPH retail store in Milwaukee will close this fall. We apologize for any inconvenience this change may cause.

You will still be able to order the resources and materials that you value from NPH. NPH will continue to publish new books, music, and other materials for our pastors, teachers, and WELS members. These new materials along with previously published NPH books, Bible studies, and curriculum will continue to be available through NPH’s website www.nph.net and by phone at 1-800-662-6022.

NPH will also continue to make church supplies and a selection of books and materials from other publishers available through its website www.nph.net and by phone at 1-800-662-6022. In addition, NPH will continue to publish *Forward in Christ*, *Meditations*, and *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* periodicals.

We encourage you to visit the NPH website regularly to discover resources that will support your ministry and materials that will strengthen the faith of your members.

Please contact me at Bill.Ziche@nph.net if you have any questions regarding this change.

Serving you in Christ,

Bill Ziche
President, Northwestern Publishing House

John Hartwig
Chairman, NPH Board of Directors

Merging Congregations

The COP has begun to work with the Commission on Congregational Counseling to provide guidance to congregations seeking to merge or consolidate. The intent is to help those congregations to reconfigure their ministries in a way that results in healthy and, with God's blessing, growing congregations.

Scouting

The COP has received questions about whether the Scouting organizations have changed in a way that would make it possible for WELS members to participate. In response, the COP has begun a review of the current nature and organizational statements of those organizations to determine whether conflicts with biblical principles remain. The COP will release a report and Bible study once the study is completed.

Recent Synodical Council Recommendation Due to 2018 Tax Changes

The Synodical Council approved the policy change to reimburse called workers for the tax on moving expenses, since those are now considered taxable income: an additional 20% of moving expenses for called workers with minister of the gospel status (pastors, male teachers & staff ministers - additional amount to them due to being considered self-employed for social security purposes) and 13% for workers without minister of the gospel status (female teachers & staff ministers) to help defray the additional tax liability. This is the case whether the moving expense is paid to the moving company or to the called worker.

Guidelines for Special Conferences

As a growing number of individuals and groups within our fellowship are organizing special events and conferences, the COP offers the following guidelines:

If the event is solely for your district or regional in nature, please contact your district president well in advance and actively involve him as you begin making plans for the event because he is responsible for doctrine and practice in his district. If it is multi-district in nature, contact the synod president who will, in turn, contact the Conference of Presidents.

Give careful thought as to whom you ask to give presentations. As much as possible, we encourage using WELS presenters. We recognize that there may be people outside of our fellowship who have expertise in a particular field that may be helpful to your audience. If you feel compelled to recruit such a presenter, you will want to determine whether false doctrine could be brought into the presentation or spiritual truths could be taught. If that is the case, such a presentation should be avoided. Be sure to instruct presenters who are outside our fellowship about not opening or closing the presentation with prayer. It may be best to ask at the outset of your planning, "Is there someone in our fellowship who can share the same information, but with a Lutheran and scripturally sound point of view?"

We recognize that women may well be more appropriate for teaching women in many contexts. Be careful to observe the biblical roles of man and woman so that women are not teaching men in such a way as to exercise authority over men.

Good scriptural and Lutheran theology partnered with gospel motivation should drive all biblical presentations. Because we are rightly sensitive to "church growth" philosophy and methodology, evangelicalism, Romanism, a theology of glory, and other such false teachings, do any of your presentations appear to come from those backgrounds? Will people who see your promotional materials draw wrong conclusions? What message is being sent? What confession is being made?

Finally, the COP thanks you for keeping these guidelines under consideration as you plan events. The members of the COP want to support your efforts and are confident of your brotherly cooperation. They are always willing to answer any questions about these guidelines and will gladly offer clarification. May our Lord Jesus be glorified by all we do!

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor David P. Kolander

Membership Changes

The following have accepted calls into the district during the biennium:

Pastors:

Peter Prange (Bethany, Kenosha) from South Atlantic District
Michael Berg (Wisconsin Lutheran College) from Minnesota District
Bill Limmer (Victory of the Lamb, Franklin) from Western Wisconsin District
Johnold Strey (Crown of Life, Hubertus) from Arizona-California District
Jacob Schwartz (Star of Bethlehem, New Berlin) from Michigan District
James Hoogervorst (St. Lucas, Kewaskum) from Northern Wisconsin District
Jonathan Loescher (Bethany, Hustisford) from Arizona-California District
Benjamin Reichel (Kettle Moraine LHS) from South Central District
Colin Rieke (Palos, Palos Heights) from Arizona-California District
Brian Doebler (Wisconsin LHS) from Arizona-California District
Jonathan Hein (WELS Congregational Counseling) from South Atlantic District
Samuel Degner (Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary) from Northern Wisconsin District
Seth Haakenson (Immanuel, Waukegan) from Nebraska District
Brady Coleman (Siloah, Milwaukee) from Arizona/California District
Brian Schmidt (Trinity, Caledonia) from Western Wisconsin District
Peter Leyrer (Risen Savior, Milwaukee) from Minnesota District
Donn Dobberstein (WELS Discipleship) from South Atlantic District
Daniel Herold (Glory to God, Tinley Park/Our Redeemer, Grant Park)
from South Central District
Preston Heuer (First, Elkhorn) from Northern Wisconsin District
Nathanael Bourman (Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee) from South Central District
Scott Miller (Light of Life, Greenwood) from Michigan District
Michael Schneider (Zion, Crete) from Minnesota District
Heath Butler (Wisconsin LHS) from North Atlantic District
Seth Bode (Bethlehem, Carmel) from Minnesota District
Benjamin Golisch (St. Paul, Slinger) from South Atlantic District
Paul Micheel (St. Paul, Grant Park) from Northern Wisconsin

Teachers:

Daniel Aswege (Calvary, Thiensville) from Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Timothy McEachern (Wisconsin LHS) from Western Wisconsin District
Joseph Greefkes (Kettle Moraine LHS) from Michigan District
Jason Hagedorn (Shoreland LHS) from Western Wisconsin District
Mark Nolte (Kettle Moraine LHS) from Northern Wisconsin District
Casey Pufahl (Wisconsin LHS) from Minnesota District
David Zuberbier (Wisconsin Lutheran School, Racine) from South Atlantic District
Mark Shambeau (Wisconsin LHS) from Western Wisconsin District
Theodore Glodowski (First, Elkhorn) from Minnesota District
John Schleis (Star of Bethlehem, New Berlin) from South Atlantic District
David Leonard (Friedens, Kenosha) from Western Wisconsin District
Greg Obermiller (St. John, Lomira) from Northern Wisconsin District
Aaron Trimmer (Our Savior, Grafton) from Michigan District
Jeffrey Falck (Illinois Lutheran Schools, Crete) from Nebraska District
Zackary Cvikel (Morning Star, Jackson) from Western Wisconsin District
Matthew Sonntag (Shoreland LHS) from Arizona/California District

Bradley Jensen (Morning Star, Jackson) from Nebraska District
Levi Dunsmoor (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) from Western Wisconsin District
Brian Humann (St. John, Milwaukee) from Pacific Northwest District
Joshua Walker (St. Jacobi, Greenfield) from Michigan District
Philip Adickes (Illinois Lutheran Schools, Crete) from Nebraska District
Craig Breitreuz (Faith, Antioch) from Western Wisconsin District

Staff Minister:

James Boggs (St. John, Lannon) from South Central District

Teacher Mark Ricke (Wisconsin LHS) became a member of the district when he transferred his membership to a congregation in our district from Western Wisconsin District.

The following candidates were assigned by the Synod Assignment Committee to calls in the district in 2017 and were received into membership of the district at the last synod convention.

Pastors

Christian Marquardt (St. James, Milwaukee)
Jardan Patrick (International Friendship Center, Pewaukee)
Nixon Vivar (Christ, Milwaukee)
Aaron Voss (Living Water, Wind Lake)

Teachers

James Christensen, Jr. (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) (*midyear assignment*)
Joshua Lindner (Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson)
Michael Martens (Trinity, Caledonia)
Jeffrey Rick (Illinois Lutheran Schools, Crete)
David Roekle (Good Shepherd, Downers Grove)
Seth Zoellner (Trinity, Waukesha)
Travis Kretsch (Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson)

The assignments of the following candidates were made permanent by the Synod Assignment Committee in 2017.

Pastor Jason Free (associate to the District President)

Teachers

James Christensen, Jr. (St. Marcus, Milwaukee)
ChiSeon Kim (Jerusalem, Morton Grove)
John Kujath (Our Savior, Zion)
Jeremy Maas (St. Marcus, Milwaukee)
Christopher Stollfus (Word of Life, Milwaukee)

The following candidates were assigned by the Synod Assignment Committee to calls in the district in 2018 and have applied for membership in the district:

Pastors

William Schubert (Heritage, Lindenhurst)
W. Russell Scoggins (New Hope, Racine/St. Luke – Oasis Youth Center, Kenosha)

Teachers

Garrett Buch (Trinity, Waukesha)
Nathan Hensler (Zion, South Milwaukee)
Jacob Lash (Illinois Lutheran Schools)
Raine Vrable (Christ-St. Peter, Milwaukee)

Staff Minister Andrew Carter (Grace, Milwaukee)

The assignment of Teacher David Roekle (Good Shepherd, Downers Grove) was made permanent by the Assignment Committee in 2018.

The following accepted calls within the district during the biennium:

Pastors:

Daniel Leyrer (Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary) to St. Marcus, Milwaukee
Paul Steinberg (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) to Chaplains in Schools, Milwaukee
Robert Wendland (Malawi) to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon
Nathan Strobel (Wisconsin Lutheran College) to St. Paul, Muskego
Eric Roecker (Pilgrim, Menomonee Falls) to WELS Evangelism

Teachers:

Mark Hesse (Atonement, Milwaukee) to St. Lucas, Kewaskum
Andrew Becker (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) to Dean of Instruction/Curriculum (*additional charge*)
Charles Ungemach (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) to Siloah, Milwaukee
Timothy Sonntag (Mt. Calvary, Waukesha) to St. John, Burlington
Paul Scriver (Shoreland LHS, Somers) to President
Daniel Nolte (First, Elkhorn) to Shoreland LHS, Somers
Michael Koestler (St. Lucas, Milwaukee) to Shoreland LHS, Somers
Andrew Baxter (St. Lucas, Milwaukee) to Principal, *additional charge*
Troy Yerks (Christ-St. Peter, Milwaukee) to Salem, Milwaukee
Mark Kjenstad (Illinois Lutheran Schools) to Activities Director, *additional charge*
Samuel Schlicht (Word of Life, Milwaukee) to Atonement, Milwaukee
Matthew Linton (Illinois Lutheran Schools, Crete) to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson
Christopher Avery (Bethany, Kenosha) to St. John, Burlington
Micah Walz (St. Jacobi, Greenfield) to Star of Bethlehem, New Berlin
Todd Jahns (Kettle Moraine LHS) to Wisconsin Lutheran College
Stephen Schultz (Faith, Antioch) to Bethany, Kenosha
Jeffry Roloff (St. Jacobi, Greenfield) *call made permanent*
Nathan Krug (Illinois LHS, Crete) to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson
Justin Gut (Trinity, Waukesha) to Principal, *additional charge*
Mark Moldenhauer (St. Philip, Milwaukee) to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee
Justin Walz (St. Paul, Muskego) to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee

David Stoltz (St. Lucas, Kewaskum) to Crown of Life, Hubertus
Joshua Metzger (Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee) to St. Marcus, Milwaukee
Michael Pingel (Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee) to Mt. Calvary, Waukesha
Eric Fillner (Zion, South Milwaukee) to Star of Bethlehem, New Berlin
Matthew Rydecki (Trinity, Waukesha) to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson
Joshua Nelson (Christ-St. Peter, Milwaukee) to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee
James Brandt (Wisconsin Lutheran College) to North Shore Christian Academy, Milwaukee
David Leonard (Friedens, Kenosha) to Principal, *additional charge*
David Zank (Friedens, Kenosha) to Vice-Principal, *additional charge*
Adam Harvey (Garden Homes, Milwaukee) to Principal, *additional charge*

Staff Ministers:

Randel Fink (Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee) to St. Paul, Muskego
Kevin Poston (St. John, Lannon) to Atonement, Milwaukee
Mark Blauert (Trinity, Crete) to Wisconsin Lutheran School, Racine
Paul Berger (Christ-St. Peter, Milwaukee) to Chaplains in Schools, Milwaukee

The following inactive workers accepted calls to district congregations or schools during the biennium:

Pastor William Schaefer to St. John (Vliet), Milwaukee

Teachers:

Jeremy Bock to Wisconsin Lutheran College
Fredrick Luehring to St. Philip, Milwaukee
Jacob Unke to Lord and Savior, Crystal Lake
Jeffrey Roloff to St. Jacobi, Greenfield

Staff Minister Jason Fry to Shepherd of the Hills, West Bend

The following accepted semi-retirement calls in the district during the biennium:

Pastors:

Roger Zehms (emeritus) to St. John, Lomira
David Rutschow (Good Shepherd, Downers Grove)
Dale Baumler (emeritus) to Christ, Pewaukee
Mark Braun (emeritus) to Wisconsin Lutheran College
Robert Pasbrig (emeritus) to Peace, Hartford
Donald Thompson (Point of Grace)
James Naumann (emeritus) to Christ, Big Bend
John Warmuth (emeritus) to St. John, Lomira
Paul Reede (emeritus) to St. Paul/St. Peter, West Bend
James Castillo (emeritus) to St. John, Woodland
Donald Thompson (emeritus) to St. John, Mukwanago

Teachers:

William Braun (emeritus) to Wisconsin Lutheran College
Kenneth Proeber (emeritus) to Christ the Lord, Brookfield (*interim*)

The following uncertified teachers accepted provisional calls in the district during the biennium:

Teachers:

*Kurt Stielow** (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) to Dean of Instruction/Curriculum (*additional charge*)
*Garret Mandeville** (St. Marcus, Milwaukee)
*Ryan Halter** (Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee)
*James Weiland** (St. John, Libertyville)
*Brian Kent** (Atonement, Milwaukee)
Peter Schwichtenberg (St. Lucas, Milwaukee)
*Aaron Anonsen** (Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee)
*Jeremy Zima** (Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee)
*Ryan Latterman** (Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee)
*Elijah Riddle** (St. Marcus, Milwaukee)
*Bradley Reinhardt** (St. Marcus, Milwaukee)
*Andrew Schmiege** (Wisconsin Lutheran College)
*Micah Hernandez** (Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee)
*Cornelius Whiteside II** (Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee)
*Michael Wiechmann** (Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee)
*Kevin Festerling** (Kingdom Prep, Milwaukee)
*Robert Ceasar** (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) to Mount Lebanon, Milwaukee
*Ryan Oertel** (Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee)
*Shawn Sprewer** (Kingdom Prep, Milwaukee)
*Josh Lepke** (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) to St. Paul, Muskego
*Randall Strutz** (Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee)
*Nathan Bauer** (Garden Homes, Milwaukee) to Dean, (*additional charge*)
*Cody Harms** (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) to Atonement, Milwaukee

The following have accepted calls out of the district during the past biennium:

Pastors:

David Waterstradt (Palos, Palos Heights) to Arizona-California District
James Langebartels (emeritus) to Western Wisconsin District
Alan Gumm (Hope, West Chicago) to South Atlantic District
Keith Tullberg (Siloah, Milwaukee) to Northern Wisconsin District
Philip Janke (New Hope, Racine) to Northern Wisconsin District
David Rockhoff (Friedens, Kenosha) to Michigan District
Aaron Dolan (First, Racine) to Northern Wisconsin District
Luke Italiano (St. Luke, Kenosha) to Michigan District
Emile Burgess (Trinity, Caledonia) to Minnesota District
David Ernest (Glory to God, Tinley Park/Our Redeemer, Grant Park)
to Western Wisconsin District
David Rau (First, Elkhorn) to Minnesota District
Tod Vertz (St. Paul, Grant Park) to Northern Wisconsin District
Jonathan Kolander (Bethlehem, Menomonee Falls/Germantown) to Arizona/California District
Nathan Cordes (St. Matthew, Niles) to Minnesota District
Kenneth Bittorf (crm) to Western Wisconsin District
Ian Headrick (Christ, Big Bend) to North Atlantic District
Paul Zell (Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary) to South Atlantic District
John Stelljes (Light of Life, Greenwood) to Minnesota District

Daniel Babinec (St. John, Woodland) to Michigan District
Benjamin Kuerth (Victory of the Lamb, Franklin) to South Atlantic District
David Peters (Epiphany, Racine) to Minnesota District
Martin Bentz (Trinity, Crete) to Minnesota District
Joshua Bishop (Peace, Kokomo) to Michigan District
Jeremy Mattek (Garden Homes, Milwaukee) to Northern Wisconsin District
Robert Jensen (Gethsemane, Milwaukee) to South Central District
Matthew Schwartz (Good Shepherd, Downers Grove) to Northern Wisconsin District
Michael Helwig (Crown of Life, Hubertus) to Western Wisconsin District
Peter Metzger (First, Lake Geneva) to Dakota-Montana District

Teachers:

Benjamin Raddatz (Our Savior, Grafton) to South Central District
Matthew Heyn (Illinois Lutheran Schools) to Arizona/California District
John Ganey (Trinity, Waukesha) to Western Wisconsin District
Paul Kelm (Risen Savior, Milwaukee) to Minnesota District
Tyler Weinrich (St. John, Libertyville) to Northern Wisconsin District
Scott Wagner (Resurrection, Aurora) to Dakota-Montana District
Jacob Unke (Lord and Savior, Crystal Lake) to South Central District
Nathan Hochmuth (Shoreland LHS) to Northern Wisconsin District
Michael Marquardt (Peace, Hartford) to Minnesota District
Bryan Scriver (Good Shepherd, Downers Grove) to South Central District
Brandon Stubalt (Mt Lebanon, Milwaukee) to Arizona/California District
Chad Marohn (St. John, Lannon) to Northern Wisconsin District
David Dodge (Garden Homes, Milwaukee) to Western Wisconsin District
Jeffrey Uhlenbrauck (Illinois LHS, Crete) to Northern Wisconsin District
Brian Mensching (St. Jacobi, Greenfield) to Minnesota District
David Liebhard (Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee) to Northern Wisconsin District
Darrell Roecker (Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee) to Northern Wisconsin District
Alan Uher (Mt. Calvary, Waukesha) to Minnesota District
Shawn Riesop (Star of Bethlehem, New Berlin) to Northern Wisconsin District
Scott Stevenson (St. Lucas, Kewaskum) to Arizona/California District
Daniel Schulz (Shoreland LHS, Somers) to Northern Wisconsin District
Robert Buss (St. Marcus, Milwaukee) to Western Wisconsin District
Steven Bremer (Wisconsin LHS) to Nebraska District
Scott Anthony (Siloah, Milwaukee) to Arizona/California District
David Habeck (emeritus) to Pacific-Northwest District (*semi-retired*)
John Melso (Christ the Lord, Brookfield) to Western Wisconsin District

Travis Kretsch (Kettle Moraine LHS) received an assignment from the Assignment Committee in 2018 to Pacific-Northwest District.

The calls of the following workers expired or their positions were eliminated during the biennium:

Teachers:

Scott Wagner (Resurrection, Aurora) (6/30/17)
Stephen Schultz (Faith, Antioch)
Elijah Riddle (St. Marcus, Milwaukee)

The call of the following worker was terminated during the biennium:

Staff Minister *Steven Schroeder* (Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee)

The following called workers resigned their calls during the biennium:

Pastor Rodrigo Concha (6/24/2016)

Teachers:

David Reinemann
*Eric Condia** (6/30/2016)
Douglas Stellick (6/30/2016)
Alan Scharrer (7/16/2016)
Evan Eisenmann (8/6/2016)
Andrew Mundt (9/1/2016)
Joel Moeller (12/4/2016)
Jason Lowrey (6/30/2017)
Michael Sebald (6/30/2017)
Micah Ricke (6/30/2017)
Zach Wiegman (6/30/17)
Christian Ristow (6/30/17)
Jeffrey Roloff (3/31/17)
Fred Pahmeier (6/30/17)
Mark Heckendorf (9/1/17)
Matthew Rieck (8/16/17)
Jeremy Maas (9/22/17)

The following members of the district have announced or entered retirement.

Pastors:

David Rutschow (7/2016)
Joel Jaeger (6/2017)
Walter Oelhafen (10/2016)
Ronald Mehlberg (6/2017)
James Korthals (8/2017)
Michael Hintz (12/2017)
Mark Braun (6/2017)
Charles Papenfuss (6/2017)
Mark Anderson (6/2017)
John Mattek (6/2017)
Peter Kassulke (8/2017)
Roger Zehms (7/2017)
Kenneth Kolberg (12/2017)
Donald Thompson (10/2017)
Steven Staude (12/31/2017)
Stanley Weinrich (11/2017)
George Ferch (6/2018)
James Becker (6/2018)

Thomas Knickelbein (6/2018)
Paul Reede (1/31/2018)
Robert Jensen (5/31/2018)
Joseph Schlawin (5/31/2018)

Teachers:

Mel Friske (10/19/2016)
Carl Nolte (12/2/2016)
Jeffrey Inniger (6/2017)
Roger Festerling (6/2017)
Daniel Schmal (12/2016)
Terry Treuden (6/2017)
Leonard Collyard (6/2017)
William Braun (12/2017)
David Habeck (6/30/2018)
Jay Schwall (6/2018)
Eric Troge (6/2018)
Steven Zellmer (6/2018)
Ned Goede (6/2018)
Timothy Paschke (7/31/2018)

Staff Minister Fritz Horn (6/2018)

The following retired called workers transferred their membership to congregations in our district during the biennium:

Pastors:

Hermann John (emeritus) from Arizona-California District
Gerald Hintz (emeritus) from Western Wisconsin District

Staff Minister Dennis Fletcher (emeritus) from Western Wisconsin District

The following retired called workers transferred their membership to congregations in other districts during the biennium:

Pastors:

Charles Papenfuss (emeritus) to Evangelical Lutheran Synod
James Korthals (emeritus) to Western Wisconsin District
Joel Jaeger (emeritus) to Western Wisconsin District
Stanley Weinrich (emeritus) to Northern Wisconsin District
Leonard Freeman (emeritus) to Arizona-California District
Kurt Grunewald (emeritus) to Western Wisconsin District
John Mattek (emeritus) to Northern Wisconsin District
Peter Kassulke (emeritus) to Western Wisconsin District

Teachers:

David Neujahr (emeritus) to Arizona-California District
Merlyn Kruse (emeritus) to Minnesota District

The following members of the district entered the Church Triumphant during the biennium.

Pastors:

Herbert Kruschel (8/19/2016)
David Beckman (10/20/2016)
Charles Tessmer (10/27/2016)
Harry Wiedmann (12/13/2016)
Paul Manthey (10/21/2016)
Martin Janke (12/10/2017)
Wernor Wagner (1/22/2018)
William Bernhardt (4/14/2018)

Teachers:

Walter Sebald (2/20/2017)
Melvin Schwartz (6/7/2017)
Harold Hosbach (2/12/2018)
Ronald Unke (4/26/2018)
Robert Adrian (5/7/2018)

Staff Minister:

David Niederstadt (11/8/2016)

The request of David Peters for restoration of pastor call eligibility status was granted by the praesidium during the biennium.

The following called workers completed requirements for synod certification during the biennium:

Teachers:

Ned Farley (Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee)
John Werner (Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee)
Scott Zondag (Shoreland LHS, Somers)
James Henkel (Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee)

Staff Ministers:

Michael Schuessler (Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee)
Martin Rosewicz (Institutional Ministries)

The praesidium made the following appointments to district positions during the biennium.

Pastor Martin Bentz as Circuit Pastor (Chicago Conference: Southern Circuit)
Pastor Matthew Kiecker as a member of the District Evangelism Committee
Teacher Steven Schultz to fill a vacancy on the Michigan Lutheran Seminary Governing Board
Pastor Daniel Leyrer to fill a vacancy on the Martin Luther College Governing Board
Pastor Michael Woldt as Interim Second Vice President
Pastor Jonathan Kehren as Circuit Pastor (Chicago Conference: Central Circuit)
Layman John Stark as a member of the District Constitution Committee
Pastor Thomas Kneser as Chairman of the District Board of Appeals

Pastor Lon Kuether as Circuit Pastor (Chicago Conference: Southern Circuit)
Pastor Raymond Kimbrough as Circuit Pastor (Milwaukee Urban Conference: Timothy Circuit)

Other:

The following congregations merged during the biennium:

Calvary, Thiensville and Trinity, South Mequon merged to become
Christ Alone, Mequon/Thiensville

The following congregations closed during the biennium:

Emmanuel, Hartford (11/13/2016)
Hope, West Chicago (12/2016)
Zum Kripplein Christi, Iron Ridge (6/11/2017)

The following school closed during the biennium:

St. Paul, Brownsville (5/31/2018)



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 51st Biennial Convention + June 12-13, 2018

Minutes of the 50th Biennial Convention June 14-15, 2016

Tuesday, June 14

The 50th Biennial Convention of the Southeastern Wisconsin District opened with a communion service held in the gymnasium of Wisconsin Lutheran College. Outgoing District President David Rutschow was the preacher. Pastor Martin Wildauer served as the presiding minister. The district officers served as lectors. Valerie Floeter served as organist. A festival choir directed by Teacher Michael Marquardt and the worship ensemble "Soli Deo Gloria" led by Patricia Backhaus also accompanied the service.

After the worship service, President Rutschow introduced Vice-President John Kolander of Wisconsin Lutheran College who welcomed the delegates to the campus and showed a video about the college and its work.

After a break, President Rutschow called the convention to order in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Pastor John Borgwardt, chairman of Floor Committee #1 - Elections, highlighted the duties of district president listed in the district by-laws and conducted the nominating ballot for the office of district president. After the ballots were cast and collected, he declared the nominations closed.

President Rutschow asked Vice President Joel Leyrer to take the chair while he presented the President's Report. During his report, President Rutschow introduced the graduates of our ministerial education schools who have been assigned to our district who were in attendance. He asked us to welcome them to the district with the singing of a hymn prayer. President Rutschow asked the delegates to double check the list of membership changes included in his report. He also asked the delegates to thank the Lord for the work of the pastors and teachers who were called to their eternal home to heaven during the course of the biennium with the singing of a hymn.

After the President's report, President Rutschow spoke to the delegates about the elections for circuit pastors that would take place during the lunch break. Secretary Billy Carter also made several announcements.

President Rutschow then introduced Pastor Michael Schultz, director of the WELS Hymnal Project, who showed a video that provided an update on the progress of the committees working on the various components of the project.

Elections Chairman Borgwardt reported that the top four candidates nominated for district president were Pastors Aaron Christie, David Kolander, Jon Kolander, and Joel Leyrer. Ballots for this election were distributed, cast, and collected.

President Rutschow closed the morning session with a meal prayer.

At the beginning of the afternoon session, Elections Chairman Borgwardt reported the need for a runoff ballot for district president. The three remaining candidates were David Kolander, Jonathan Kolander, and Joel Leyrer. The ballots were cast and collected.

Mr. Timothy Snyder, the district's lay representative on the Synodical Council gave a report on the work of the Council. He briefly reviewed the work the Council does in our behalf to manage the finances of the Synod. He highlighted recent work on the new Long Range Plan and the synod's Compensation Plan.

President Rutschow introduced Pastor Peter Prange, a former member of our district who currently serves at Living Word in Gray, Tennessee, who presented the first part of his keynote essay, "Embracing the Cross: A Reformation in the Pastor's Study."

During a break in the essay, Elections Chairman Borgwardt reported the need for another runoff election for district president. David Kolander and Joel Leyrer were the remaining candidates. After the ballots were cast and collected, the election was declared closed.

At another break in the essay, Elections Chairman Borgwardt reported the election of David Kolander as district president. Pastor Kolander thanked the delegates for the trust they placed in him with their votes. He also asked for some time to discuss this call with his family, the current officers, his associate and his congregation's lay delegate, and the circuit pastors. He told the delegates that he expected to be able to announce a decision after the afternoon break.

At the conclusion of Part One of the essay, Pastor Joel Voss, second vice president of the synod, spoke on behalf of the synod praesidium about the challenges and opportunities we face as a church body. He thanked the delegates for the trust that has been shown the leaders of the synod as they serve in our behalf and for the commitment to the gospel shown by the members of our congregations. He also thanked President Rutschow for his years of service to the district and the synod.

Pastor Prange returned to the podium for Part Two of his keynote essay, "Embracing the Cross: A Reformation in the Pastor's Study."

Vice President Leyrer took the chair after the afternoon break. The delegates were given the opportunity to react to Pastor Prange's keynote essay. It was moved and seconded to receive the essay with thanks. The motion carried and Pastor Prange was thanked with a round of applause.

Mr. Mark Schultz, member of the synod's board for World Missions, presented a report from the board that highlighted work in mission fields all around the world. He introduced Pastor Richard Krause, who serves as the chairman of the SE Asia Administrative committee. After noting the countries where his committee oversees our missions, he introduced retiring Missionary David Beckman and thanked him for his work. He also introduced Dr. Patrick Jordan from Pakistan, who is now living in the United States and enrolled in the Pastoral Studies Institute. Dr. Jordan introduced his wife, Aneela, who serves as a translator, and his son John, who is in the pastor track at Martin Luther College. He gave a report on the tremendous need for the Gospel in Pakistan and some of the work that is taking place there.

Pastor David Kolander announced his decision to accept the office of District President. He asked the delegates to pray that the Lord would bless his work and that he would allow everything he does as president to be done to God's glory. Vice President Leyrer expressed thanks to the Lord, on behalf of the presidium and the delegates, for Pastor Kolander's decision and pledged their support for Pastor Kolander's work as our president.

Elections Chairman Borgwardt read the district by-laws that described the responsibilities of the vice presidents. Nominating ballots for the office of first vice president were cast and collected.

Dr. Glen Thompson, academic dean of Asia Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong, reported on work being done there and across Southeast Asia.

Pastor Paul Prange, administrator for the synod's Board for Ministerial Education, reported on the work of our ministerial education schools. He especially emphasized the continuing need for students to train for the teaching and preaching ministry.

Pastor Don Thompson, who served The Point of Grace, the campus ministry in the Milwaukee area, reported on work being done with students on several college campuses.

Elections Committee Chairman Borgwardt reported that the three candidates for the position of first vice president were Pastors Aaron Christie, Jonathan Kolander, and Joel Leyrer. Ballots were distributed, cast, and collected.

Pastor Robert Hein, chairman of WELS Christian Aid and Relief, showed a video focusing on the tenth anniversary of the help provided by the committee and others after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. He also gave a report that summarized other ways the committee helps and serves.

Elections Chairman Borgwardt reported that Pastor Joel Leyrer was re-elected as first vice president. Vice President Leyrer thanked the district for their confidence in him and prayed that the Lord would continue to bless his work. Chairman Borgwardt noted that the nominating ballot for second vice president would take place immediately after the morning devotion the next day.

After several announcements from floor committee chairmen and Secretary Carter, the Tuesday session closed with a devotion led by Circuit Pastor Christian Winkel. The devotion made use of the Gathering Rite on the Word of God and focused on Our Great Heritage of God's Word with a devotion based on Matthew 7:15-27.

After the close of the session, Pastor Jon Balge served as master of ceremonies for a celebration of the ministry of outgoing district president David Rutschow. Speakers included several of the officers who had served with President Rutschow during his time in office. Vice Presidents Leyrer and Kolander presented President Rutschow and his wife Pauline with a plaque commemorating his service and a monetary gift gathered from members of the district.

Wednesday, June 15

The Wednesday session opened with a devotion led by Circuit Pastor Nathan Cordes. The devotion made use of the Service of Morning Praise and focused on Our Great Heritage of Christian Education with a devotion based on 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

Elections Chairman Borgwardt highlighted the sections of the district by-laws that described the responsibilities of the vice presidents that especially apply to the office of second vice president. Nominating ballots for the office of second vice president were cast and collected.

Secretary Carter pointed the delegates to the minutes of the Wednesday session of the 2014 convention, which had not yet been approved. It was moved and supported to accept those minutes. That motion carried.

Secretary Carter presented the 2014-2015 Financial Report. He especially noted the cost savings we were continuing to experience from the decision to stop printing convention materials for all delegates. He mentioned the recent decision of the District Council to make an additional assessment to cover the cost of an annual training session for circuit pastors that had previously been covered by grant moneys.

Secretary Carter also presented the slate of delegates, congregations, and alternates who would represent the district at the 2017 Synod convention at Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, Wis-

consin. He noted one correction that needed to be made and asked if any delegates noticed any others. It was moved and supported to approve the slate of delegates. The motion carried.

Pastor Kurt Lueneberg, Administrator of the WELS Ministry of Christian Giving, presented a report on the work of his commission. He highlighted the One in Christ debt elimination offering, the work of the Christian giving counselors, and resources available from the MCG office.

Elections Committee Chairman Borgwardt reported that the three candidates for the position of second vice president were Pastors Aaron Christie, Jonathan Kolander, and Jeremy Mattek. Ballots were distributed, cast, and collected.

Pastor Lueneberg also presented the report of the WELS Foundation and WELS Investment Funds.

Secretary Carter noted a correction for the dates of the 2017 synod convention on the report of the slate of convention delegates.

Pastor Mark Wagner, chairman of the District Mission Board and member of the WELS Board for Home Missions, presented the board's report that highlighted the work of quite a few WELS mission congregations around the country. He also noted highlights from the work of some of the mission congregations in our district.

Elections Chairman Borgwardt reported that Pastor Jonathan Kolander had been re-elected as second vice president of the district and asked the Lord's blessing on his continued service. Vice President Kolander thanked the delegates for the privilege of continuing to serve in this office.

Chairman Borgwardt noted the responsibilities of the district secretary listed in the by-laws. Nominating ballots for district secretary were cast and collected. Chairman Borgwardt also reminded the delegates of the larger ballot for the remaining district offices that was included in the convention materials and asked them to take some time to look over the ballot before those elections would take place.

Mr. Joshua Peterman, director of WELS Benefit Plans, reported on the work the commission does to administer our benefit plans. He especially noted all the work the committee was doing to ensure compliance with the Affordable Care Act and the committee's decision not to proceed with the previously announced decision to discontinue Plan #1 in the health plan.

Elections Chairman Borgwardt reported that the three nominees for district secretary were Pastors John Bortulin, Billy Carter, and Andrew Fix. Ballots for this election were distributed, cast, and collected.

Mr. Dan Nommensen presented a report on behalf of WLCFS: Christian Family Solutions.

Mr. Martin Spriggs, WELS Chief Technology Officer, reported on the work of the WELS Technology Group. He especially noted the work being done on the new database, WELSource, the use of WELSCloud for updating called worker information, and the new WELS mobile app.

Elections Chairman John Borgwardt announced that Pastor Billy Carter had been re-elected as district secretary and asked the Lord's blessings on his continued work. Pastor Carter thanked the delegates for the privilege and joy of using his gifts in this way and asked that the Lord bless his work with President Kolander as he had blessed his work with President Rutschow.

President Rutschow conducted the installation of the district officers and circuit pastors.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor William R. Carter, SEW District Secretary

Secretary Carter was excused for the remainder of the convention and Pastor Robert Pasbrig recorded the minutes beginning at 10:48 a.m.

President David Rutschow called the assembly to order after the morning break.

Pastor Bryan Gerlach reported for the Congregational and Ministry Support Group. He, and nearly all of the following presenters, used power-point as part of their presentations. Gerlach also presented information about the Commission on Worship.

Pastor John Borgwardt, Chairman of the Elections Committee, directed the election ballot for various district positions. After ballots were collected, he declared the election closed.

Pastor Michael Hintz reported for the Commission on Evangelism.

Pastor David Pagel shared a number of district evangelism efforts and opportunities.

Pastor Gerlach presented a report for the Commission on Congregational Counseling.

Pastor James Behringer reported for the eight divisions of the Commission on Special Ministries.

Pastor Gary Pufahl reported for the Commission on Adult Discipleship.

Pastor Borgwardt conducted a run-off ballot for two district positions. After the ballots were collected, the election was declared closed.

Pastor Bryan Gerlach presented the report for the Commission on Youth and Family Ministry.

James Rademan reported for the Commission on Lutheran Schools.

Pastor Jason Hacker reported for the Lutheran Ministry Support Group. Those present who have served our county in the military were asked to stand. They received a round of applause.

Pastor Borgwardt presented one more run-off election. After the ballots were collected, the election was declared closed.

At 12:01 p.m., President Rutschow led the group in a dinner prayer. The session adjourned for the noon meal, box lunches served in the meeting room.

The afternoon session was called to order at 12:35 p.m. by President Rutschow.

William Ziche presented a report for Northwestern Publishing House. He also shared information about the Reformation 500 celebration plans. A two-minute trailer promoting the PBS two hour Luther movie was shown.

Mr. Bill Flickinger offered information about the WELS Shepherd Plan.

Pastor Joseph Radsek presented the report for Institutional Ministries (Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries) using power-point. The ministry is celebrating its 115th anniversary. A short video was viewed.

Mr. Bill Truebenbach presented a video depicting the work of The Lutheran Home Association.

All of the speakers were thanked for their presentations.

Teacher Paul Patterson, Chairman of Floor Committee #2, District President's Report, presented the committee's printed report.

Resolution #1 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #2 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #3 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #4 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #5 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #6 was moved, supported and carried. The assembly gave a standing round of applause to Pastor and Mrs. David Rutschow and joined in singing the Common Doxology. President Rutschow, also for his wife, thanked the group.

Seminary Professor Bill Tackmier, Chairman of Floor Committee #3, Church of the Lutheran Confession, presented the committee's printed report.

Resolution #1 was moved, supported and carried. A wording revision was accepted by the committee.

Pastor John Borgwardt, Chairman of Committee # 1, Elections, presented the committee's final report. After amendments, it was moved and supported to adopt the report. The motion carried.

Pastor Robert Pasbrig, Chairman of Floor Committee #4, Compensation Review, presented the committee's printed report.

Resolution #1 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #2 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #3 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #4 was moved and supported. The resolution was defeated.

Resolution #5 was moved, supported and carried with a slight wording revision.

Chris Avery, Chairman of Floor Committee #5, Long Range Plan, presented the committee's printed report.

Resolution #1 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #2 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #3 was moved, supported and carried.

Resolution #4 was moved, supported and carried.

All committees were thanked for their work.

President Rutschow thanked the group for their attendance and for coming to order promptly. He also expressed another special Thank You for the gift given by the district to himself and his wife last evening.

It was moved and supported and carried to adjourn at 2:35 p.m.

The closing devotion was led by Pastor George Ferch and included a special blessing to retiring District President David Rutschow.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Robert W. Pasbrig, Secretary pro tem



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT
51st Biennial Convention + June 12-13, 2018

2016-2017 Financial Report

Balance, 12/31/2015, Checking Account	\$7,022.20	
Balance, 12/31/2015 Savings Account	\$20,087.19	
Funds Available, 1/1/2016		\$27,109.39

Income, 2016

Dues	\$38,336.95	
Convention Offering	\$2,645.75	
Farewell Gifts	\$6,592.50	
Thrivent Choice Deposits	\$0.00	
Interest	\$8.45	
Total Income, 2016		\$47,583.65

Expenses, 2016

Office expenses	\$0.00	
Postage	\$159.80	
Internet Hosting	\$347.10	
2016 Convention		
Arrangements	\$42,414.71	
Printing	\$3,068.00	
Worship	\$1,259.94	
Offering - WELS (One in Christ)	\$2,645.75	
Gifts	\$6,692.50	
Circuit Pastor Training	\$2,183.75	
Reformation (2015/2016)	\$2,000.00	
Counseling	\$950.00	
Total 2016 Expenditures		\$61,721.55

Balance, 12/31/2016		\$12,971.49
Balance, Checking Account	\$875.85	
Balance, Savings Account	\$12,095.64	

Income, 2017

Dues	\$37,798.25	
Conference Offering	\$1,860.00	
Reformation 500 Pledges	\$40,442.30	
Reformation 500 Thank Offering	\$24,747.72	
Thrivent Choice Deposits	\$0.00	
Interest	\$6.22	
Total Income, 2017		\$104,854.49

Expenses, 2017

Office expenses	\$377.52	
Postage	\$188.00	
Bank Charge	\$16.08	
Internet Hosting	\$252.00	
2017 Conference		
Arrangements	\$16,676.03	
Printing	\$2,624.00	
Worship	\$1,676.08	
Offering	\$1,860.00	
Gifts	\$100.00	
Circuit Pastor Training	\$1,895.80	
Reformation 500		
Publicity	\$2,640.75	
Venue	\$20,029.56	
Worship	\$13,985.73	
Honoraria	\$4,850.00	
SEW District Mission Board	\$24,747.72	
Counseling	\$650.00	
Total 2017 Expenditures		\$92,569.27

Balance, 12/31/2017

		\$25,256.71
Balance, Checking Account	\$5,154.85	
Balance, Savings Account	\$20,101.86	
Circuit Pastor Training Balance		\$1,532.45
General Fund Balance		\$23,724.26

Notes from the Financial Report

Conference and Convention costs

The main reason we even have a district treasury is to cover the costs of our conferences and conventions. After several years of reducing costs and adjusting dues, we seem to have hit the “sweet spot” where we shouldn’t need to increase district dues again for a long time. The higher balance at the end of 2017 is right where we should be between the lower expenses in a conference year and the higher expenses in a convention year.

Other Expenses

In the last several years, and especially in this biennium, we have used our treasury to cover other costs and to gather and disburse funds for some special gifts and projects, including...

- 1) Several years ago, the district resolved to use district funds to pay for transition **counseling** for called workers who have left the ministry. This is the same kind of counseling that Help Teams are offering to transitioning called workers in other districts. The additional expenses in this category in this biennium went to cover the costs of some counseling for called workers seeking to re-enter ministry and for other counseling recommended by the presidium for current called workers. These expenses have been reported to and approved by the district council.
- 2) The district council has also approved an additional dues assessment for congregations to cover the cost of continuing to schedule annual **training sessions for the circuit pastors** after the grant money that was available to all twelve districts for such training had been used up. We reduced that assessment this year because costs for this training have come in below budget.
- 3) In 2016, our treasury was used as a place to hold the gifts that congregations and individuals directed toward a **farewell gift** for President and Mrs. Rutschow as his 24 years of service as district president came to a close at the 2016 convention. Note: the additional money in this expense category each year went to gifts presented to district officers as they either observed ministry anniversaries or stepped down from the presidium (to accept a call to another district).
- 4) The money listed in the expense category for **Reformation** in 2016 went to reimburse circuits and/or conferences for special services in the years leading up to the 500th anniversary in 2017. A plan for these services was approved by the district council several years ago.
- 5) The 2017 report includes the much larger expenses for the **district-wide service** for the 500th **anniversary of the Reformation** at the Miller High Life Theater in downtown Milwaukee last November. Congregations pledged about \$40,000 in donations to help cover the cost of publicity, renting the venue and planning and preparing for the special service. We needed to use about \$1,000 of district funds to cover the costs, not because those costs came in over budget, but because several congregations didn’t send the amounts they had pledged.
- 6) We also gathered a **thankoffering** for mission work within the district at that service. Individuals and congregations also sent in other gifts for that thankoffering, which brought the total amount directed to the district mission board to just under \$25,000.

It would probably be good for the district to approve/ratify the decisions to use the district funds for these other purposes. Please know also that Secretary Carter intends to speak to the other district secretaries about other ways that they might be using their district funds.

District Dues

At the time this report was prepared, there were eighteen congregations that had not yet paid their 2018 district dues, including two who had not yet paid their 2017 dues. If you have misplaced your notices, please ask Secretary Carter to print you another copy.

Other Items from the District Secretary

District Membership List

I'd like your help in making sure that the membership list on pages 23-41 of the Information section of the convention materials is as accurate as it can be. Besides checking that your name is spelled correctly and that you are listed with the correct serving body, please also check the following...

Non-Parish Workers – All those serving joint schools, high schools, and post-secondary schools, as well as all those serving as synod administrators or other institutions, agencies, or para-synodical groups should be listed as a member of the congregation where they hold membership in the "Serving Other Ministries" section of each circuit.

Certification Status- Called workers who are not yet certified should be listed in italics on this roster. Please check to make sure that your own certification status, as well as that of those who serve your congregation or school, is listed correctly

Semi-Retirement Calls – Please also check to make sure that I've got any workers serving in semi-retirement calls listed correctly. Because the by-laws use the words "permanent call" to determine whether a worker is a member of the district who's eligible to serve in elected positions or as synod delegates, it's important to know if there's anything that's less than permanent about the calls that are issued to retired workers. Please let me know.

Retired Workers – Because conferences like to invite retired called workers to their conferences, it's also good to know that we have retired called workers listed in the correct congregations. Please check to see if the retired workers who are members of your congregations are listed correctly.

Membership Not (Yet) Known

Please also check this section (mostly newer workers) to see if you can provide any missing information.

If you find discrepancies in any of the situations listed above, please contact me, so that I can have the correct information, and so that I can (see below) make sure that the WELS database also contains the correct information.

District Secretaries Subsite on the COP Cloud Site

Earlier this year, I had the privilege of working with WELS Tech guru Sallie Draper and Carla Martin, President Schroeder's executive assistant, to develop the first of what will eventually be a full complement of reports from the new WELS database that will help district secretaries in their work.

The initial results of this effort far exceeded the expectations I had going into it. Instead of static reports downloaded in Excel format, we've been given SSRS "live-look" reports with completely up-to-date information. The queries that were developed give us an accurate list of the voting membership of the district with all the information/fields that district secretaries will use in their work, including contact information, membership congregation and calling body, and all the dates needed to put together delegate rotations.

All of this is available on a secure subsite of the COP cloud site that also has the option of a shared documents folder that should help us share resources that we've discovered or developed that we think will be helpful for our brother secretaries. The way these tools have been designed will make them a tremendous blessing to our work. Having the access to these reports ourselves, without having to go through Carla Martin every time we need something from the database, will save her and us many hours per year.



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

51st Biennial Convention + June 12-13, 2018

2019 Synod Convention Delegates

The 2019 WELS Convention will meet at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota the week of July 29 - August 1, 2019. Of the 400 voting delegates, the Southeastern Wisconsin District is to provide 69 delegates: 23 laymen, 19 pastors/professors, and 27 male teachers/staff ministers.

About a week after this convention, these called workers and congregations will receive an email from Secretary Carter with needed information and a link to an online pre-registration. Called workers should complete the online form as soon as possible. Congregations should select delegates and substitutes and have those men complete the online form before February 1, 2019.

Everyone listed below, including alternates, should clear their calendars and be prepared to attend the convention. Alternates may be asked to fill a slot anytime up till about six weeks before the convention. Please respond quickly if Secretary Carter informs you that you need to fill a slot.

Pastor Delegates/ Alternates

Chicago Conference

Jonathan Kehren *Kevin Raddatz*
Andrew Bauer *Troy Swenson*
Thomas Schultz *Lon Kuether*

Kettle Moraine Conference

Kurt Ebert *Joshua Kesting*
Joel Pless *Mark Rohrback*
Don Scheuerlein *Kurt Schaser*
Peter Schmidt *Johnold Strey*

Metro Milwaukee Conference

Paul White *Joshua Yu*
Daniel Marshall *Greg Pufahl*
Randal Siegel *Eric Schroeder*

Milwaukee Urban Conference

James Buske *Brady Coleman*
Christian Winkel *Thomas Kock*
Christopher Doerr *Chad Walta*

Shoreland Conference

Peter Prange *David Wierschke*
Michael Gorte *John Roekle*

Western Lakes Conference

David Kuehl *Bruce Marggraf*
Peter Panitzke *Gary Pufahl*
Richard Krause *Michael Schultz*
Gary Koschnitzke *John Bortulin*

Lay Delegate Congregations /Alternate Congregations

Chicago Conference

Glory to God, Tinley Park, IL
Light of Life, Greenwood, IN
Christ the King, Palatine, IL
Immanuel, Waukegan, IL
Bethlehem, Carmel, IN

Kettle Moraine Conference

Zion, Theresa
St. Lucas, Kewaskum
St. Paul, Lomira
Redeemer, Cedarburg
St. John, Lomira

Lamb of God, Lafayette, IN
Victory, Lexington, KY
St. Andrew, Chicago, IL
Trinity, Crete, IL
Peace, Kokomo, IN

St. John, Woodland
St. Peter, Kekoskee
St. Peter, West Bend
Trinity, Hartford
Trinity, West Mequon

Milwaukee Metro Conference

St. Mark, Brown Deer
 St. John, Oak Creek (Howell Ave)
 St. Jacobi, Greenfield

Centennial, Milwaukee
St. John, Wauwatosa
St. Lucas, Milwaukee

Milwaukee Urban Conference

St. Philip, Milwaukee
 Redemption, Milwaukee
 Christ, Milwaukee

Siloah, Milwaukee
St. Marcus, Milwaukee
St. Matthew, Milwaukee

Shoreland Conference

St. John, Oakwood
 Peace, Wilmot
 Trinity, Caledonia

First, Elkhorn
Faith, Antioch
Bethany, Kenosha

Western Lakes Conference

Reformation, Dousman
 St. Paul, Franklin
 Star of Bethlehem, New Berlin

Pilgrim, Menomonee Falls
Christ, Pewaukee
Christ, Big Bend

Teacher/Staff Minister Delegates**Teacher Delegates**

Luehring, Frederick M
 Aswege, Daniel D
 Burmeister, Paul R
 Lueck, Eric J
 Bock, Jeremy D
 Maciejcak, Kurt E
 Ricke, Mark E
 Matson, James M
 Hagedorn, Jason T
 Miller, Martin M
 Zank, David J
 Woldt, Jon D
 Gorsline, Todd D
 Groth, James S
 Buege, Joel A
 Meihack, Marc J
 Schafer, Stephen F
 Bauer, Aaron J
 Bauer, Joshua J
 Gut, Justin G
 Luebke, Christopher J
 Dorn, Jeffrey O
 Nowack, James A
 Nommensen, Bradley A
 Pufahl, Casey D
 Roloff, Jeffrey L
 Scriver, Paul B

First Alternates

Amundson, Nathan K
 Johnson, Daniel R
 Poston, Kevin S
 Schulmeister, Nathan F
 Wetzal, Bradley P
 Albrecht, Michael P
 Allerheiligen, David L
 Avery, Christopher J
 Beck, Paul N
 Beyersdorf, Scott D
 Bitter, Alan A
 Bowe, Keith R
 Hering, Thomas P
 Johnson, Daniel W
 Noon, Edward E
 Winkel, Jonathan W
 Zilisch, Jeffrey D
 deRuiten, Michael P
 Finkbeiner, Ryan B
 Langebartels, Peter A
 Walz, Micah J
 Kramer, Joshua R
 Martin, John E
 Schable, Jacob R
 Schapekahn, Jason L
 Schultz, Nathan L
 Wetzal, Jeffrey W

Second Alternates

Anderson, Robert C
 Brohn, James R
 Frisque, Paul A
 Grulke, Joel A
 Kaesmeyer, John L
 Kuehl, Timothy D
 Sawall, Robert L
 Schaper, Blair D
 Steffen, Kurt J
 Timm, Lyle W
 Toth, Steven F
 Uecker, Scott E
 Voight, Timothy A
 Weber, Daryl A
 Boggs, James R
 Fillner, Eric J
 Greefkes, Joseph R
 Gumm, Peter A
 Hackbarth, Keith J
 Herrmann, Seth E
 Hunter, Samuel A
 Mueller, Timothy P
 Nolte, Mark R
 Schramm, Benjamin J
 Mielke, Timothy M
 Harvey, Adam A
 Hochmuth, Timothy R



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 51st Biennial Convention + June 12-13, 2018

Report of the District Mission Board

In the Spring BHM 2018 meeting, the SEW made five requests for New Start Enhancements, four of which were approved and funded:

- **Epiphany & First Evangelical Lutheran Racine, WI** – Parental Choice Campus Pastor; Staff Minister Mark Blauert has received and accepted that call.
- **Trinity, Waukesha, WI** – Hispanic Bilingual Pastor; Not assigned from the Seminary, will be calling again soon.
- **Jerusalem Lutheran Morton Grove, IL** – Korean Cross-Cultural School Outreach funded by the Joint Mission Council (JMC); Teacher Gabby Moon (Kim) has received and accepted that call.
- **Grace Milwaukee, WI** – Outreach Pastor; Pastor Aaron Strong has already started his work at a Third Ward Theatre; Pastor Jon Scharf has received and is contemplating the call to replace him.

We praise the Father, the Spirit and our Lord Jesus for the opportunity to start these new mission efforts in our Southeastern Wisconsin District!

Grace, Milwaukee, WI (Pastor Aaron Strong) 05-2018

Grace's second site ministry called, *Grace in the Ward*, began meeting in April using a rented second-floor salon at the Broadway Theatre Center located in the Third Ward (158 N. Broadway). Each week Grace volunteers set up chairs, equipment, banners, and coffee to turn the salon into a place suited for church. An average of 40 people attends with new faces checking out the ministry each week. Already this ministry has connected with the unchurched, de-churched, and even Grace members who have lost connection to the church family.

The service is a reflection of Colossians 3:16, "Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts." Each Sunday is a unique blend of Bible study, preaching, and hymns that seeks to connect people to Jesus in a simple way.

Mount Lebanon, Milwaukee, WI (Pastor Aaron Bublitz) 10-2017

Nate Bourman was installed at Mt Lebanon by his father, Pastor Jim Bourman, on April 16. Nate will take on administrative role as associate pastor so that Pastor Aaron Bublitz can be freed up to serve as campus pastor of our MPCP school. Vicar Adam Lambrecht has served this past year as vicar through the ViMS (Vicar in Missions) program. When the SEW DMB met at Mt. Lebanon in May, we heard powerful life stories from Brandi & Duane about how the school and ministry there has enriched their families. We also heard story after story about baptisms / confirmations through the outreach of the school.

Lamb of God, Lafayette, IN (Pastor Nick Schmoller) 05-2018

In connection with our building project, in January we presented the building options to the congregation after a worship service and spent the next couple weeks gathering feedback through conversations and visits with the members. We have given a few revision requests to our architect and

are currently waiting to hear back from him regarding those. We introduced and set a goal for our capital campaign project at our annual congregational meeting. Our current goal is to raise \$70,000 for our down payment in cash and pledges by the early fall of 2019. We hope to have Builders for Christ help us with construction Spring 2019.

We had a fun fellowship gathering a few months ago where we did a movie night at our church to screen A Return to Grace: Luther's Life and Legacy. The kids who attended watched the movie "The Star" (an animated Christmas movie.) We had 25 people in attendance and had popcorn and theater boxed candy for snacks so it was a really fun atmosphere. Everyone suggested we do more of those sorts of things in the future.

Our Mornings with Mommy program is still going well with 15-20 kids attending each session. We have about 80 kids currently signed up for our summer soccer camp. We are receiving a group of helpers from Wisconsin Lutheran High School in Milwaukee this year. We have about 15 signed up already for our summer art camp too.

Immanuel, Waukegan IL (Pastor Seth Haakenson) 10-2017

Pastor Seth Haakenson arrived in Waukegan in the middle of August and was installed on September 24. His role is to serve Immanuel's congregation as the Pastor for Hispanic Outreach using his time to reach the Hispanics of Waukegan with the gospel. Immanuel's grade school is the primary outreach venue for the church consisting of a large Hispanic presence. Pastor Haakenson has been well received by the school's families and is in the process of setting up meetings with school parents. Another avenue for outreach is Immanuel's ESL class which meets weekly on Tuesday evenings. The class continues to bring in new prospects which can then be followed up with by Pastor Haakenson.

Of course, the Holy Spirit works in his own way and wherever he wants to. This became apparent when one of Immanuel's English-speaking members told Pastor Haakenson that he should follow up on her neighbor who speaks Spanish. Pastor Haakenson made a cold call and, lo and behold, the woman said, "Pastor, my family has been blessed with so much. The only thing we lack is God." Pastor Haakenson said he could help with that and adult information classes are now being held on Monday evenings.

Even more interesting is that during the evening of the first class, a friend came over and interrupted. She was invited to stay by the host and now she is attending weekly as well. Even more interesting is that the two daughters who at first did not participate have since begun participating along with a friend they brought along. So, from one Anglo member who does not speak Spanish, we now have five people studying the Bible on a weekly basis. Praise God!

Light of Life, Greenwood, IN (Pastor Scott Miller)

Pastor Stelljes left in late October, having taken the divine call to serve at Mt. Olive in Shakopee, MN. By God's grace, Pastor Scott Miller accepted the call to replace John, and was installed by Pastor George Ferch (who served as the vacancy pastor) on March 5.

Living Word, Waukesha, WI (Pastor John Borgwardt) 05-2018

At Living Word, Waukesha, WI, we continue to rejoice at the blessings of our Savior God. We've been stressing friendship evangelism since our founding, calling it the "Philip Plan." It reminds us of when Philip told his friend Nathanael to "Come and see" who Jesus was. Our members have been doing a great job of it recently, so we have several families in instruction classes.

As we look forward to a building, we want that “Philip Plan” mentality to continue. So we are planning to build a facility with a coffee shop so our own members will have a reason to invite friends and neighbors to our church that will be acting really as a community center. Although we’ve had to scale back our plans for our first building due to cost, we’ll still be able to have all the ministry we’ve envisioned in our first build. Those ministries include:

- a place for high school students to “hang out” after school through our partnership with Lighthouse Youth Ministries—and a ministry plan and harvest strategy to reach out to them and their families
- professional counseling through our partnership with Christian Family Solutions
- our children’s church called Faith Quest that is run by amazingly dedicated members
- a contemporary-style worship that is meant to attract a segment of our target area that other area WELS congregations haven’t been reaching

We hope all our ministries will be a complement to the ministries already being run at area WELS congregations with the intent that as we partner with them we will reach more of the unchurched with the gospel message.

We thank the Lord for his blessings: our CEF loan request was approved; Waukesha County gave us construction access to our land to build; despite the fact that the developer of the subdivision won’t be building this year, we still plan to move forward. We plan on breaking ground by September 30 and being able to dedicate our first facility to the proclamation of the gospel in late spring of 2019. We thank you for your prayers!

La Iglesia Luterana San Pedro, Milwaukee, WI (Pastor William Dunn) 05-2018

One of the blessings that I have found at St. Peter (San Pedro) as I am nearing the end of my second year, is that we have to do very little to search for ministry opportunities. There is so much opportunity in and around our community that the challenge is prioritizing where to put our concentrated efforts. With this in mind, earlier this year in January, we completed our mission and vision planning process. We now have a three-year vision that will help us focus our efforts. The plan is now to work the plan. We already have several events that resonate with the community. Our challenge is to turn use these contacts and relationships that are being formed into souls that are being won for Christ! We are continuing to reach out to our school families through our baptism program, we have started friendship Sundays, and we have started a youth group (as pictured). These are just a few of the ways we are seeking to better connect with families. God has already blessed us greatly through the conversations and excitement created as we developed our new mission and vision. We pray that God continues to pour out his blessings on us as we seek to “Build lives on Christ the Rock” over the next several years!

Christ, Milwaukee - Hispanic (Pastor Chad Walta) 05-2018

Pastor Nixon Vivar completed his Seminary PSI training and was installed as our new associate pastor in June 2017. Pastor Joel Jaeger retired on June 30th. Pastor Chad Walta who was originally called to serve chiefly as the Hispanic Pastor at Christ has moved into the Lead Pastor role and Christ is now blessed with two Spanish Speaking pastors who are currently working to learn their respective roles doing bilingual ministry. Christ-St. Peter had a great 8th Grade Catechism Examination and Baptismal Sunday. Pastor Vivar baptized three students from CSP, and I baptized one eighth grader. A week later, four of the eighth graders were confirmed at Christ, and a week after

that, four at St. Peter's. So this year, eight of the 23 eighth graders of CSP were confirmed, which is a major improvement over what has previously been done among us.

There is one ongoing ministry goal at Christ and that is to work to unify both English speaking and Spanish speaking families into one Christ Lutheran Church. Up to this point, ministry has been done in a separate way between the two families. However, the age of the English-speaking family at Christ, it's diminishing membership coupled together with the spiritual growth of the Spanish Speaking Family requires us to think of doing our ministry in a more unified way. Coupled together with this is a generation of Latino Young people who will carry forward the cross in the English language because it's their mother tongue while many of their parents and grandparents are chiefly English speakers. Continue to pray for this transition and we continue to give thanks for the support that our Mission Board offers!

Amazing Love, Frankfort, IL (Pastor Dustin Blumer) 10-2017

Amazing Love had the privilege of completing sanctuary renovations. The renovations included better lighting, sound, seating, and technology. It also included an altar that displayed "IT IS FINISHED" engraved on the side, along with Hebrews 10:10 engraved on the top. Jesus is the one sacrifice needed for all people given once for all. We encourage you to visit to see the completion of these renovations if in the area.

In September we moved to two Sunday services - a 9:00am and a 10:30am with the goal of reaching more people. By God's grace we've seen more visitors in September and we are thankful that with more options, more are opting in. We will re-evaluate this structure at the end of December and weigh its effectiveness.

Mornings with Mommy continues to be a great hit with an average of 35 moms and their children in class. Last year we met over 70 new families through that outreach, and one of the moms is in our BIC or Starting Point class. Reaching new people with the Gospel continues to be a joy! Like reaching Stacy who paused to thank me for teaching on the Trinity, because before she was confused that I was referring to three people during the service. We gave her a Bible and continue to emphasize God's saving grace. Working beside you all, we're still working and planning so that many more who we have yet to reach will hear about their Savior's love.

Crossroads, Chicago, IL (Pastor Mike Borgwardt) no report

Victory of the Lamb - Franklin, WI (Pastor Bill Limmer) no report

Point of Grace, Milwaukee (Pastor Don Thompson) 10-2017

- By God's grace, we have started our 2017-18 school year with a bang. We have had some of our best attendances ever at UWM and MSOE since I was called in 2012 to serve at TPOG, and our Marquette Bible class has experienced growth as well. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless our efforts to keep college students connected to their Savior through our ministry.
- New this school year is the involvement of St. Marcus congregation is our ministry at TPOG. Pastor James Hein leads our 7:15pm Wednesday night Bible class at the UWM Campus House. Part of our vision is to get local congregations involved and committed to campuses near their church. Last year Pastor Strong took over the Bible classes at MSOE and is doing extremely well in getting Grace congregation more involved in the campus ministry at MSOE. We're thrilled that St. Marcus is now getting involved with our ministry at UWM. Besides Bible class

with Pastor Hein, some members are serving a supper prior to Bible class. We are very thankful for St. Marcus's support and look forward to their continued involvement in the future.

- The renovation of the lower level of the Campus House is almost complete with a kitchen makeover done this past summer. Board members Sam Unnasch and Daniel Schroeder spear-headed the work.
- As mentioned in previous reports, with the help of a grant from the Siebert Foundation, TPOG has joined a consortium of four other WELS non-profits to discover better practices in raising funds for our ministry needs. With the grant our consortium hired Mr. David Wolfson, a professional consultant for non-profits. We've met with him three times over the past several months. He's become acquainted with our ministry through listening sessions, has helped us discover where we can improve, and has given us guidance and steps for making these improvements. One example of his help is a new "Board of Directors - Member Responsibilities and Roles" document that came about as a result of weaknesses we identified in our Board of Directors. That document is attached at the end of this report. In the near future we will identify our vision and create a plan to also identify donors to help us carry out that vision. Mr. Wolfson has been a blessing to us.
- Paul Burrie, a computer engineering student at UWM, has done a fantastic job of refurbishing and updating our website. His work is not done, but it already has a great new look and is much easier to find the various videos of past *Gathering* speakers. We are thankful that God has blessed us with Paul's talents before he graduates at the end of this current semester.
- Pastor Thompson and Concordia University of Wisconsin (CUW) Professor Patrick Steele (a WELS member) recently met with CUW President Dr. Ferry and Campus Pastor Smith to talk about starting a TPOG chapter at CUW. Although they support our efforts, they cannot allow us to have a WELS chapter on campus because that would then open the door for other denominations to do the same thing. As a result, Pastor Thompson has been in contact with Mequon area WELS pastors to discuss the possibility of a local congregation dedicating time, space and staff for a campus ministry dedicated to serving students at CUW. We pray God will bless these efforts.
- Daniel Schroeder, a recent graduate of WLC and now a grad student at UWM is our new financial secretary and administrative assistant. He lives in the upstairs apartment of the Campus House rent free in return for his services. Since taking over in June, Daniel's energy and work ethic has become very evident and much appreciated. Daniel has done a fantastic job of updating our newsletters for donors and partners, and also with the weekly TPOG Happenings that gets sent out to all the students on our student email lists. He also has been a great blessing to our staff and ministry. If you would like to receive either of these items, please email Daniel at daniel@tpog.net.
- Pastor Thompson is retiring at the end of the 2017-18 school year. The Board is working on plans to replace him for the 2018-19 school year.

Encouraging Mission Starts & Looking for Mission Potential - Your District Mission Board is always ready to assist any congregation in our District with outreach opportunities - large or small. We continue to explore new areas where we could plant or assist in the start of a new congregation - our primary function together with the Board for Home Missions. We will gladly meet with, talk with or advise any congregation or group of believers who would like to explore mission potential. We encourage a cooperative spirit among congregations to seek the lost for Christ, including coop-

erative cross-cultural ministry, multi-sites, campus pastors in voucher schools and exploration of new ministry starts.

Praise the Lord! – At one point (2012) we dared to consider 20 new mission ministries by the year 2020. At the time that would have seemed to be a stretch for the whole synod, let alone our SEW District. But, by God’s grace this year the BHM added 14 new ministries. In the past two years we’ve had 6 new ministries approved and funded in Southeastern Wisconsin. What an amazing God we have! What a field ripe for harvest before us! What blessings lie ahead of us! God has both the plan and the resources to build his kingdom, to save souls. We have the privilege of proclaiming and watching the seed (Word of God) take root and grow. Please pray for the mission efforts of our SEW District and throughout the nation as the church **“grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”** (Eph. 4:16)

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SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 51st Biennial Convention + June 12-13, 2018

Report of the District Ministry of Christian Giving

See Report to the Twelve Districts Online

As I write this report, the call service at Martin Luther College is a week and a half in the past. The Assignment Committee, the Conference of Presidents, is meeting at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary to issue calls for the candidates graduating in a couple of days. These are exciting days for all involved, including the teacher and pastor candidates, their families, the worker training schools, the congregations receiving new pastors and teachers, and the Conference of Presidents.

There is one more group involved. The entire synod has reason to celebrate each spring as new workers are assigned to their first calls. As a synod we all work together to train workers who will continue to teach the truth of Scripture purely in our churches and schools. A large portion of Congregational Mission Offerings goes to ministerial education. This is a good thing. We all wish that we could support the worker training system even more. Every congregation is blessed by the training our pastors, teachers, and staff ministers receive. Every congregation is blessed to have the opportunity to support the training of workers in God's harvest fields.

By emphasizing ministerial education, I do not intend to slight the other areas of our synod's work. They are all important because they all have to do with the spread of the gospel. What great work the Lord has given us to do! What a privilege every member of every congregation has, from the toddler to the homebound senior, to participate in the mission of making disciples of all nations through their prayers, through their words of encouragement, and through their offerings.

CMO Subscriptions

Thank you for submitting your CMO subscriptions and statistical reports in a timely manner. Please do so again next winter. Each year the synod office sets the deadline for submitting Congregational Mission Offering subscriptions and information for the Statistical Report. This is a hard deadline. This is why so many reminders are sent out in advance. As soon as your congregation sets the number, go to your computer and submit it on <http://mcg.welsrc.net/cmo>. If you function on a fiscal year (e.g. 7/1 - 6/30), check periodically for this form to open and send in your information as soon as possible.

Deadline for CMO and Stats next year will be Noon Central Standard Time, Friday, February 1, 2019.

As you plan your congregation's financial plan for ministry for the next year, look at the CMO page on the WELS Resource Center <http://mcg.welsrc.net/cmo>. A section called "Resources for Encouraging CMO" includes all kinds of helpful tools.

2018 CMO synod-wide through end of April: \$6,128,082 100.9% of subscriptions, up 1.6% from last year at this time. SEW District: \$1,015,860, 98.7% of subscriptions. The Lord enable us to meet and exceed our subscriptions for the support of his work.

Other Christian Giving Efforts
WELS Endowment Fund Emphasis

The Lord continues to bless Missions and Ministerial Education through current and/or expected gifts to these funds, as well as investment gains. With God's blessing, WELS Foundation plans to make its eighth consecutive annual distribution from these endowments in July, 2018.

Report of Endowment Fund Totals as of April 30, 2018

Endowment Funds	December 2006-2017	2018 Thru 4/30/18	Cumulative Totals	Expectancies
WELS Min Education	4,993,947	64,828	5,058,775	10,613,441
MLC	2,915,600	-6,821	2,908,779	7,798,422
MLS	382,621	-798	381,823	138,356
WLS	1,884,522	-2,045	1,882,477	9,317,100
LPS	723,382	-1,789	721,593	547,750
WELS Mission	10,510,269	62,619	10,572,888	14,488,273
Home Missions	479,557	49,476	529,033	10,290,309
World Missions	2,499,270	46,734	2,546,004	5,271,428
Total	24,389,168	212,204	24,601,372	58,465,079

Distributions*	2015	2016	2017
WELS Min Education	142,915	157,561	169,443
MLC	90,323	96,873	101,433
MLS	12,925	13,587	13,898
WLS	62,335	64,619	65,777
LPS	18,218	19,629	22,116
WELS Mission**	347,472	361,810	370,844
Home Missions	14,288	15,308	16,258
World Missions	45,855	58,057	72,568
Total	735,331	787,444	832,338

*Distributions based on the three-year rolling average as of June 30

**Distributions are considerably higher since Mission Expansion Endowment balance as of 6/30/2007 was rolled into the new WELS Mission Endowment Fund

WELS Gifts/Bequests for the Fiscal Year

Unrestricted:	17-18	\$ 6,105,596	Apr 30, 2018
	16-17	\$ 8,804,116	
	15-16	\$ 7,076,727	
	14-15	\$ 9,870,572	
	13-14	\$ 8,675,351	

Temporarily Restricted:	17-18	\$ 8,239,057	Apr 30, 2018
	16-17	\$ 8,661,542	
	15-16	\$ 9,799,452	
	14-15	\$10,182,931	
	13-14	\$10,704,249	

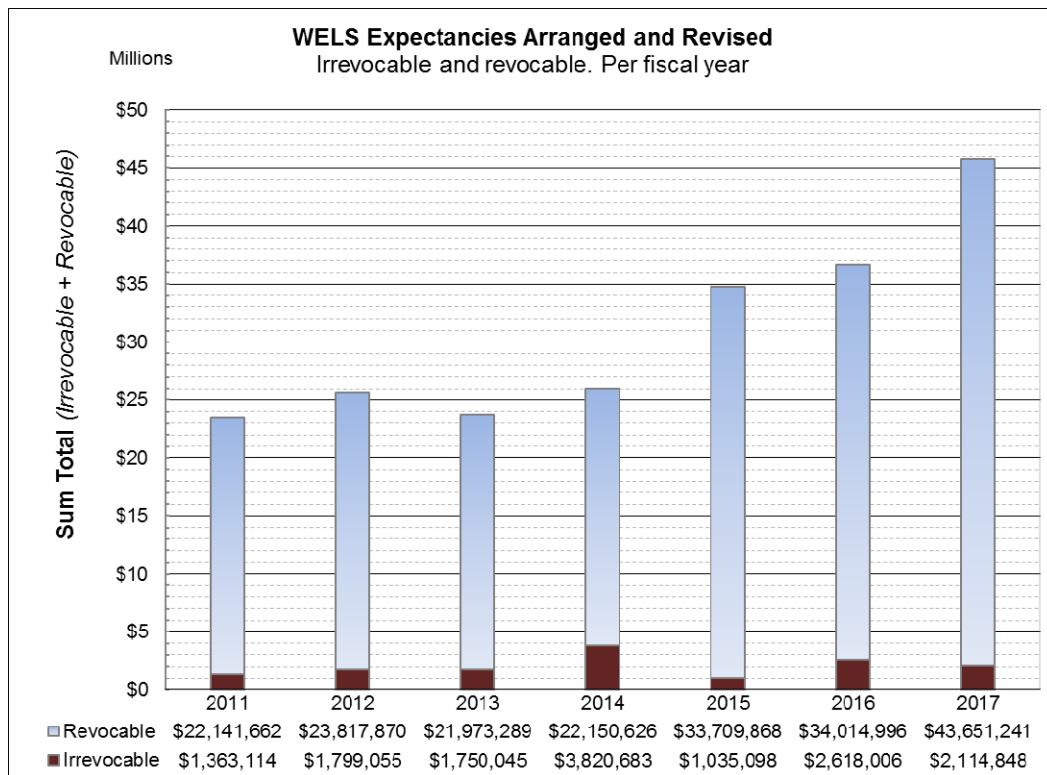
Permanently Restricted:	17-18	\$ 989,898	Apr 30, 2018
	16-17	\$ 885,117	
	15-16	\$ 1,659,298	
	14-15	\$ 5,386,733	
	13-14	\$ 1,119,948	

Gifts and/or bequests come from individuals/foundations who support WELS now with direct gifts or who arrange to make bequests after their souls enter heaven. These offerings to the Lord are precious responses to Christ's love for us! For assistance in encouraging such gifts/bequests, request a "Different Ways to Make Planned Gifts" presentation or a seminar on congregational planned giving (number 12 below) by calling 800-827-5482 (local: 414-256-3209).

Face-to-face Donor Nurture by Our Christian Giving Counselors (through 3/31/18)

<u>FYTD team goal</u>	<u>FYTD actual visits</u>	<u>FYT over/(under)</u>
2,808	2,521	(287)

WELS Deferred Expectancies Arranged and Revised



If your congregation would like to learn more about **Christian estate planning** and the resultant gifts that will benefit your ministry, please call your area's deferred CGC or phone our office (800-827-5482).

6. WELS Connection

May	Home Missions – Sparks, NV
June	Telling the Next Generation
July	Ministerial Education Endowment
August	Vicar in Missions – Denver, CO

Deferred Charitable Gift Annuity Appeal

This May, we will send a deferred charitable gift annuity appeal, sponsored by WELS Foundation, to all WELS members in our database who are 45-68. We commend the Foundation for offering this unique giving tool that enables WELS members to arrange deferred ministry distributions and current personal income payments.

IRA Charitable Distribution Opportunity

This May we will also mail a postcard to those in our database who are 69 and older promoting the opportunity for anyone 70.5 or older to direct qualified charitable distributions to WELS ministries from their IRA accounts. Distributions, including required minimum distributions, given directly to charity are tax-free for federal tax purposes and may be treated similarly by their state. In 2017, 38 donors gave \$987,711 to WELS ministry through their IRAs. We encourage our people to contact their financial/tax planner or a WELS Christian giving counselor (800-827-5482) to learn more.

Donor Advised Funds/Supporting Organizations Gifts and Distributions

	<u>Gifts to Supporting Orgs</u>		<u>Gifts to Donor Advised Funds</u>		
	17-18	\$ -0-	\$ 1,229,606	Apr 30, 2018	
	16-17	\$ -0-	\$ 481,640		
	15-16	\$ -0-	\$ 505,268		
	14-15	\$ -0-	\$ 1,294,305		
	13-14	\$ -0-	\$ 414,917		
	<u>Total DAF</u>	<u>to WELS</u>	<u>to WELS</u>	<u>to WELS</u>	<u>to Cong &</u>
	<u>Distributions</u>	<u>Funds</u>	<u>Schools</u>	<u>Endowments</u>	<u>Agencies</u>
17-18	\$ 773,971	\$ 98,585	\$ 199,154	\$ -0-	\$ 476,232 Apr 30, 2018
16-17	\$ 413,555	\$ 74,017	\$ 47,572	\$ -0-	\$ 291,640
15-16	\$ 775,672	\$ 233,529	\$ 52,711	\$ -0-	\$ 489,432
14-15	\$ 704,336	\$ 247,800	\$ 65,907	\$ 2,250	\$ 388,379
13-14	\$ 507,574	\$ 147,129	\$ 46,619	\$ -0-	\$ 313,826

Faith Focused Finances

Faith Focused Finances is a Christ-centered, practical spiritual growth program that helps God’s people aim their treasures toward their Christ-centered mission. Details can be found by clicking [Faith Focused Finances](#) at the MCG resource center of wels.net. The resources include the *Heart in Focus* financial course for all members and a revised School of Stewardship for congregational leaders. For more information or to request a presentation please call 414-256-3214.

Stewardship Programs

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving has published a stewardship program, *Joyful Generosity*, for congregations to use through 2018 (due to the heavy focus on the Reformation’s 500th anniversary in 2017). The program includes six weeks of worship and Bible study materials as well as 21 personal devotions. You can find the program online at wels.net/stewardship.

Churches can also make use of *364 Days of Thanksgiving*, which features three weeks of worship and Bible study resources, as well as a daily devotional journal for individuals to note the abundant blessings they receive from our Lord Jesus.

Subscribe to *An Encouraging Word* (below) for tips and resources for year-round stewardship encouragement, including stewardship thoughts on the weekly lectionary readings.

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving, WELS Discipleship, and Northwestern Publishing House worked together to prepare and send a survey to parish pastors to learn the needs of congregations related to teaching stewardship. The results of the survey will guide the planning of the next stewardship program in 2019.

Congregational Planned Giving Program

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving has developed a congregational planned giving manual to help congregations promote planned giving opportunities to members. It also provides guidance on starting an endowment for long-term ministry support as well as setting up a planned giving committee. The manual and related resources are available at wels.net/plannedgivingprogram.

***An Encouraging Word* E-newsletter**

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) publishes an e-newsletter every other month intended to help congregations encourage joyful giving. Each newsletter contains several helpful resources including words of wisdom, ideas, news, and the latest synod resources. Subscribe by going to wels.net/subscribe.

WELS Christian Giving Training

This training at WELS Center for Mission and Ministry is open to advancement personnel at any WELS/ELS school or institution. It provides participants with in-depth material to help them serve God's people, encourages a common approach to serving WELS donors, and fosters networking and coordination with other WELS people working in this field. To register or receive more information for the January 9-11, 2019 training, please contact Karen Martinez at 414-256-3209 or karen.martinez@wels.net.

How we can help you?

Are you planning for fall? When is the last time your congregation hosted a Christian estate planning seminar? Your MCG counselor can assist you with information on the impact of your church's prayers and mission offerings, guest preaching and/or leading a stewardship or WELS ministry Bible study/presentation.

Here's the contact information for your planned giving counselors.

Mr. Rick Kneser
Deferred Giving Counselor
rick.kneser@wels.net
262-305-7688

Rev. Kevin Hundley
Current Giving Counselor
kevin.hundley@wels.net
262-237-2660

Remember to thank God for all the blessings he's given us.

Pastor Tim Henning
SEW Ministry of Christian Giving Chairman

Report of the District Lutheran Schools Committee

1. Call Data and Recruitment:

Following Assignment Day 2018, the current active teacher vacancies WELS-wide stand at 81. Interim plans are being made at the principal level where 24 principal vacancies remained after assignments. The CLS is aware of 7 ECM Director vacancies that remain.

Call guidelines continue to be shared at conferences, as well as in the E-News and Lutheran School Leader.

- Call window (for active teachers): November 1 through the first Sunday in June
- Active teachers can receive two calls per call season.
- Teachers are eligible to receive a second call no sooner than 6 weeks of the date of their last returned call.
- Active teachers are eligible for calls in their third year of service at a congregation (if they have taken a call to a new ministry).

Assigned teachers are eligible in their fourth year after assignment.

Call Request Format Change - All call requests should be submitted electronically. The principal and early childhood ministry director pre-call forms are part of the electronic request form. Congregations should first alert their district presidents of their desire to call and then request the link, or begin work on submitting the link.

2. Telling the Next Generation: The response to this new seminar has been very positive! There have been over 1000 attendees to date. Inquiries continue to come in. Those interested should contact evangelism@wels.net for more information.

3. EdTechLead19: Plans continue for the next School Leadership Conference, which will be held in conjunction with the WELS Technology Conference. The joint conference will be held June 24-27, 2019 at the Kalahari Resort in the Wisconsin Dells.

4. ECM Task Force: Among the current projects is the adaptation of the Leadership Candidate Training program as the WELS Early Childhood Emerging Leader Cohort. Additional tools for *Building Blocks* are being developed.

5. WELS Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process: The goal is to proceed with an introduction of the new forms/process at the annual June district conventions, late summer training of trainers, presentations in the districts at conference to teachers in fall and spring of 2018-19, principal, director, and school leader training sessions throughout 2018-19. The plan is to have training opportunities at the EdTechLead19 Conference. CLS will begin collecting the new summative forms in June of 2020.

6. Accreditation: Site visits are being scheduled for the 2018-19 school year. We are anticipating 40 full site visits for next school year, with eight of them as first time schools. CLS will be looking to train new captains and will be seeking many more individuals to serve on teams.

7. **WELSSA EC Standards Task Force:** At the end of January, this group completed its initial walk-through and revision of the standards. The next step is to do a crosswalk to see how the standards align with those from other credible accrediting agencies. Cindi Holman and Tom Plitzuweit continue their roles as advisors/facilitators for this task force. The next WELSSA Task Force to be established will be for the LHS standards.
8. **Student Testing:** Currently 57 schools are registered with ACT-Aspire and 166 with NWEA MAP.
9. **Synod Certification:** A Conference of Presidents subcommittee has studied the courses offered, timetables, and communicating progress effectively. The group delivered their report at the April COP meeting.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at: daweber@bethlehem-wels.org.

In His Service and Yours,
Teacher Daryl A Weber
SEW District Lutheran Schools Coordinator

Report of the District Special Ministries Committee

Caring for strangers Caring for strangers is how early Christians drew pagan hearts to the gospel. Yes, they proclaimed the resurrected Savior from sin. Yes, they were devoted to apostolic doctrine and fellowship. But records from the early church and comments from nonchristian writers indicate that Christian compassion for strangers attracted interest in the gospel. WELS churches provide spiritual care and assistance for members who have disabilities. We call this “compassion ministry.” Jesus called it love. But what we do for our own members is often something needed by others in the community. We already visit our members in care facilities. Why not expand that – with the cooperation of the activities director – to provide worship services? Where we have worship services, why not expand that – with the cooperation of the activities director – to offer special events for the families of the residents (Mother’s Day Saturday, summer picnic, etc.)? Your Christian love and concern can create opportunities for the gospel for people you might never meet at your church.

“Excellent resource – best I’ve seen.” That praise came from a WELS foster parent who has taken abuse prevention training twice before seeing **“Standing Up for Children: A Christian Response to Child Abuse and Neglect.”** All WELS churches and schools need to be safe places where leaders actively work to prevent abuse. WELS Freedom for the Captives (FFTC) offers online training videos taught by experts Mr. Victor Vieth, the national director emeritus of Gundersen National Child Protection Training Center and Prof. John Schuetze, WELS seminary professor and counselor. The training consists of four videos with quizzes for each of the videos. Those who watch the videos and pass the quizzes will receive a certificate to show they have completed training. For a few larger conferences, Mr. Vieth is willing to do the training. For information or to get access, email freedom@wels.net.

Financial aid for continuing education via Chaplain Certification In fall 2018, the WELS Chaplain Certification Program (CCP) offers these three online courses: A Scriptural Approach to Addictions Counseling, Frontline Chaplaincy (for military, police, fire), and Geriatric and Care Facility Ministry. The cost for the Geriatric course is completely covered by a grant from the Citizens of Heaven Grant Program of Martin Luther Elder Care Ministries. Military Contact Pastors can receive a financial grant for the Frontline Chaplaincy Course through the generosity of the Lutheran Military Support Group. Financial aid may be available for any CCP course for people enrolled in the program. For more in-formation, email chaplaincert@wels.net.

About one third of your older members have hearing loss. When you greet people after service, count the number you see with hearing aids (and realize that not everyone who needs a hearing aid has one). The Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has resources to help your church keep hard of hearing members engaged in worship and participating in Bible class – you’ll find useful information on the Special Ministries Resource Center at csm.welsrc.net/mission-for-the-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing/. If your church is “hard of hearing” friendly (for example, has a loop or other assistive devices), that’s a good thing to share on your website and other publicity.

Looking for information to share about the struggle with pornography? Go to the Conquerors through Christ website conquerorsthroughchrist.net and scroll down. You'll find something for everyone, parents, women, teens, videos and book reviews! Put the CtC business cards in a discreet location and mention resources in your newsletter and sermons. Pastors have discovered that when they mention this struggle in sermons and Bible classes, members feel that they can seek help for their struggle.

Confirming and Communing Someone with Special Needs Years ago Special Ministries produced a book on the subject of preparing someone with developmental or intellectual disabilities for communion. The books became very out of date. Pastor Joel Gaertner, chairman of the Commission on Special Ministries and National Director of Jesus Cares Ministries, has rewritten this resource. If you would like a copy, email Joel at jpgaertner@tlha.org.

An extension of YOUR ministry The Special Ministries work done by Military Services and by Prison Ministry is designed to maintain and augment the gospel ministry of the local congregation and its called workers. We have awareness of the unique lives and challenges of military life or incarceration. Our resources are meant to assist you as you strive to keep your flock connected to Jesus. Please take a moment to consider which of your sheep are active duty military (that includes the National Guard and Reserves) or who might be in jail or prison. Go to wels.net/refer and put us in contact with them.

Retirement Planning Resources The Care Committee for Called Workers (CCCW) has produced resources to help congregations (especially those with a CCCW) walk with their called workers through the resources available for retirement planning. Find them at welsrc.net/cccw.

Custom made solutions The Mission for the Visually Impaired (MVI) can produce special confirmation resources for the blind or visually impaired, including Braille and large print. If you have an older member who needs large print, or who qualifies for materials for the blind, WELS spiritual materials can be sent to them for free. MVI is also available to help people whose ability to read is impaired in some way. The catalog is available at wels.net/visually-impaired. Contact Special Ministries for more information, specialministries@wels.net.

Do you have a Seniors Organization at your church? For various reasons, WELS members who are in their senior years have been starting fellowship and service groups that are not connected to OWLS (the Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors). Recognizing this, but hoping to share the fun and fellowship of a national gathering of WELS seniors, the OWLS have announced that their fall convention will not be an OWLS only event, but the OWLS "Convention for Seniors." This year's event will be held October 10-12 at the beautiful Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. The theme of the convention will be "Finish Your Race" (a nod of the head to Elkhart Lake's famous "Road America"). Tours of the race course, Kohler Design Center or the Wade House (a stage coach hotel that is an historic site) will supplement the interesting workshops and the fellowship events of the convention. Interested in more information? Would you like Convention for Seniors materials to share with your senior members? Contact Convention Coordinator Werner Lemke (507)354-3929 or wandjlemke@msn.com.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. Richard Waldschmidt
SEW Special Ministries Coordinator

Report of the District Worship Committee

*Summary of Worship Report to the Twelve Districts,
available in detail through wels.net.*

- **Importance.** Worship is the heart of all parish life, the time when the greatest number of members gathers to proclaim the gospel and receive God's life-giving power in Word and sacrament. A major component of "member satisfaction" and "visitor impact" is excellence in worship. **Excellence is not elitist.** The beautiful tone of children singing on pitch and with beautiful blend is impactful to anyone with ears to hear. **Excellence is not difficult.** Some musical selections are difficult, but others are actually quite simple. Excellence is doing the best you can with the resources you have!
- **Hymnal Project.** Nearly all of the Commission on Worship's efforts are focused on our new hymnal, scheduled for release in Advent 2021. Additional information can be found at: www.welshymnal.com.
- **National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts.** With over 1000 attendees, the national worship conference is the largest worship conference among North American Lutheran church bodies (including events sponsored by the pan-Lutheran Association of Lutheran Church Musicians), even though WELS is one of the smaller Lutheran synods. The 2017 triennial conference, with strong emphasis on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, was June 13-16, at Carthage College, Kenosha, Wis.
- **Double CD of 2017 worship conference highlights.** Selections from the 35 tracks range from soft solo piano to full orchestra, choir, and a "congregation" of 1,400. Included are tracks featuring Canticum Novum, Children's Choir, High School Honor Choir, Festival Choir, recitals, and newly commissioned selections. A limited edition release is available through NPH.
- **Worship conference resources.** Those who didn't attend the conference can still benefit from many of its resources. Free downloads (<https://worship.welsrc.net/worship-conference-2017>): workshop handouts, service folders, repertoire lists, presentation files (both PowerPoint and PDF versions), and photos. The plenary address by hymnal project director Michael Schultz was "A Reformation Perspective on Worship."
- **Worship the Lord.** Quarterly worship newsletters from 2003 are available online. Many of the topics discussed are timeless – valuable reading for church musicians and pastors, some useful for study by worship committees or boards of elders (those usually charged with responsibility for worship). Two recent series of articles dealt with renovations and church architecture.

Lutheranism 101 Worship: A Review

Maybe you are familiar with the Lutheranism 101 series from Concordia Publishing House. There is even a web site: www.lutheranism101.com.

There are separate books for: The Course (a review of the Catechism), The Lord's Supper, For Kids, Holy Baptism, Worship. The books are paperback and written in a winsome style. Many sidebars and graphics help to explain and expand on points in the text. In general, the books are a good introduction to Lutheranism and can be especially useful for those who are new to the Lutheran faith. What follows is a review of "Lutheranism 101: Worship," (Written by Thomas Winger. General Editor Scot Kinnaman. Copyright © 2017, Concordia Publishing House).

The task of writing a comprehensive book on worship that is only 175 pages long is nearly impossible. Winger does a very good job of summarizing the history of Christian worship, focusing on the principle of interaction with God from the Old Testament times through the New Testament era. The copious quotes from the Lutheran Confessions are wonderful! The many explanations of the historic terms we use in worship are great! He gives an excellent list of reasons why it is wise to follow the lectionary. He gives an excellent summary of the role of the choir in Lutheran worship. He explains and illustrates the important concept of the sacramental vs. sacrificial aspects of worship. He covers vestments, paraments, architecture, the organ & other instruments, and more. He is totally focused on grace through Word and Sacrament. Study and Discussion Questions at the end of each chapter are also very helpful.

Yet, there are some caveats.

Winger seems to find some sort of biblical precedent for every part of the service (General Prayer, the historic canticles, etc.) as if they were mandated for each service. Without directly saying so, I got the impression that if one doesn't have each of his listed items in a service, then you aren't doing what God wants you to do. For as much as we defend and use and see the benefit of the parts of the historic service, we always need to guard against making them a New Testament law.

He often talks about the Liturgy or the Lectionary as if they were people who decided what was best for the Church of all time, instead of tools that the Church has developed and refined. It might seem like splitting hairs, but there is an important difference. Maybe I can illustrate the two mindsets with these summaries of the *Sanctus*:

The *Sanctus* (*Holy, Holy, Holy*) is found in the Bible in Isaiah 6:1-3. Obviously, it is God's Word and he wants us to use it. The consistent use of the *Sanctus* by the Church over the centuries is proof that God wants us to use it. Therefore, to have a service with the *Sanctus* just wouldn't be right.

vs.

The *Sanctus* is a wonderful reminder that we are approaching our high and holy God, just like the prophet did in Isaiah 6:1-8. Throughout the centuries, the *Sanctus* has helped believers focus their attention appropriately. Although we are free to use it or not use it, it certainly seems wise and beneficial to make it a regular part of our worship.

Winger also gives the impression, again without saying it specifically, that the Lord's Supper is a divinely commanded part of every Divine Service. He seems to suggest that it's not an authentic service if the Sacrament is not offered. To reinforce his emphasis, he finds some reference to the Lord's Supper in many Bible accounts which simply describe believers eating.

At one point (p. 30), Winger also says that Jesus works, "...through the pastoral ministry He instituted..." which seems to reflect the LCMS understanding of ministry. He could have easily said "gospel ministry," or just, "ministry."

Teaching why we do what we do in worship, the preeminent activity of the Christian congregation, is not just informational for our people, but also edifying since the very content of worship is the gospel. Don't hesitate to offer a Bible Class on some aspect of our worship practices or to bring out those points in sermons. Instead of *Lutheranism 101 Worship*, however, I would encourage you to use *Christian Worship: Manual* or some other publication by NPH as a basis for your study. While *Lutheranism 101 Worship* can be a helpful reference book on the worship leader's shelf, I would hesitate to endorse it fully.

Recent Article from www.welshymnal.com

WELS Congregations Sample Service Materials for the New Hymnal

Apr 23, 2018 by Jonathan Bauer

Last year, one-third of WELS congregations were invited to sample and review service materials for our synod's next hymnal (the other two-thirds had been previously invited to participate in sampling either hymn or psalms resources).

135 congregations participated in this field testing effort, sampling materials from September through November of 2017. Congregations were first asked to introduce a new service text and progression, using canticles that were already familiar to their congregation. After familiarizing themselves with the text and progression of the service, congregations were asked to introduce a new set of canticles by composer Ricky Manalo. At the conclusion of the testing period, feedback was sought from pastors, musicians, and congregation members.

Feedback on the Service Text

In developing the service materials for the new hymnal, it has been the goal of the Rites Committee to provide both clarity and consistency among the services used for the congregation's main weekly services. We want people to know the function of each element of the service and for each service element to serve the same function in each service.

In response to sampling this revised service text and progression, congregations expressed appreciation for the consistency and clarity it provided. For example, the canticle "Lord, Have Mercy" (Kyrie) will not be connected with the confession of sins but will be a series of petitions on the basis of God's mercy following the absolution. The Verse of the Day will now be called the Gospel Acclamation and people will stand prior to it, making it clearer that this service element is not a sung response to the Second Reading but rather serves to prepare us for the hearing of the Gospel. Worship leaders and worshipers responded favorably to these elements of the service.

Perhaps the part of the service where the response was most negative was related to the post-Communion conclusion of the service. The "Song of Simeon" (Nunc Dimittis) was not included as a standard element of the service but was replaced by a note indicating the optional inclusion of a hymn or canticle following distribution. The Rites Committee will revisit this issue as they finalize the services for the new hymnal. While it remains to be seen how many and which specific ones, we can say with certainty that musical settings of the Song of Simeon will be included somewhere in the new hymnal - even if it is in a separate "Canticles" section and not within the services themselves.

Feedback on the Service Music

It has also been the goal of the Rites Committee to provide both familiar and new musical settings for the orders of service. As mentioned above, one of each was provided as part of this testing ef-

fort. There were a variety of reactions to the new canticles that were provided. For example, one respondent said, “Excellent tunes. Best available that I’ve heard,” while another offered, “the canticles remained a struggle to the end of the field test.”

To some extent, this mixed reaction is to be expected any time someone is asked to learn something new. The specific canticles that were provided, while certainly accessible, have elements that take some time to fully master. It should be noted that the same characteristics that cause a canticle to take longer to learn also keep a canticle from becoming stale over the lifetime of a hymnal.

Our current plan is to include three main orders of service in the printed hymnal (besides other services like Morning Praise and Evening Prayer). One of those orders of service will include canticles already familiar to WELS worshipers and two will include new canticles. Additional canticles, including ones already familiar to us, will be made available digitally.

We sincerely thank all the congregations that participated in this field testing effort for their time, effort, and feedback. The feedback we receive from testing efforts like this is very valuable as we finalize the patterns of worship that will assist the next generation as they gather around life-giving Word and Sacrament.

Zahn Scholarship at MLC

At Martin Luther College, there is a Professor Meilahn P. Zahn Memorial Scholarship for the Advancement of Lutheran Worship in Christian Education. Scholarship winners are undergraduate students who demonstrate God-given abilities in music through the creation of a work that promotes Lutheran worship and/or Lutheran music education. There were two winners this year. The first was an original hymn by Raquel Freese called, “We Marvel.” It celebrates the 500th anniversary of the Reformation reflecting the four “solas” of the Lutheran faith. The second, by Zachary Scharlemann, is a set of timpani parts to accompany the organ and congregation for various Hymns of the Day found in our hymnal. These parts are a simple and practical way of using timpani through the year, instead of only on festival services. Please contact me (pastorwildauer@gmail.com) if you would like a copy of these works.

Building on the National Conference on Worship, Music & the Arts

Many have returned from the National Worship Conference excited about ideas and things they experienced. Why not fan that excitement into a flame throughout your whole congregation by attending a School of Worship Enrichment? Have you considered hosting or co-hosting a School of Worship Enrichment? Who couldn’t benefit from a good worship tune-up?

- One day or one weekend option
- Review Lutheran principles of worship
- Excellent ideas for expanding worship variety
- Blend styles of worship
- Blend worship and outreach
- <http://worship.welsrc.net/school-of-worship-enrichment/>

District Worship Committee

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