



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

Report of the District President

My Lutheran Witness to the Word

I used to think a WELS Christian had to live outside the Midwest to be in a place where people didn't really know what the Lutheran Church was all about. But now that I have served for many years in our district, in the heartland of our country and our church body, I have come to realize that locale has nothing to do with it. Whether ministering in Salem, Oregon, where I was first assigned or Milwaukee, where I presently serve, I wonder how winsomely and relationally I have communicated those biblical doctrines emphasized by Lutheran Christians as I have tried to be the Spirit's tool in connecting people to Christ.

How may we uncover the scriptural gems uncovered by the Lutheran Reformation – truths like Justification by Faith, Law and Gospel, the Means of Grace, the Two Kingdoms, the Universal Priesthood, Christian Vocation – to an unchurched and dechurched community that is suspicious of organized religion and yet longs for certainty? And meaning. And comfort in a broken world. What is my Lutheran witness to the world? I look forward to brotherly instruction and encouragement in just that area through our conference's keynote delivered by Prof. Luke Thompson. And I'm thankful for the fellowship we share, brothers. May we look at the hours we're together as a time of recharging in the gospel.

Here is something else for which I thank God: the loving support and admonition with which you have graced me in my first year as your district president. It is an unparalleled privilege to walk alongside you as we carry Christ's banner in our little corner of the world, and to work with you in supporting that gospel proclamation in the most distant corners of God's world. I'm especially grateful for the partnership I have with our two vice presidents, Pastors Aaron Steinbrenner and John Bortulin. Their shepherding instincts are so very valuable to our district as a whole and to me personally. District Secretary Pastor Billy Carter takes so many behind the scenes administrative tasks off my plate so I may tend to the more pastoral matters of being district president.

Another incredible blessing to me has been Pastor David Kolander's willingness to serve as Assistant to the District President as well as de facto Superintendent of Schools. Dave and I like each other so much we're doing it again this next year (due to Superintendent of Schools-elect Mr. Philip Leyrer needing to remain in his role as WLHS principal for 2023-24). No rookie DP has ever been as blessed as I to have such an evangelical practitioner of sanctified good sense serve as my assistant and mentor. The blessing is not lost on me.

Two other ministry groups come to heart and mind as I contemplate all the public ministry of the gospel carried out in our large district. First, there is the brotherhood of 19 circuit pastors who truly serve as the praesidium's right arm in the support of our called workers. To say that I could not carry out my duties without them is an understatement. In a year's time, we on the praesidium have been

able to meet with each one of the circuit pastors, and these meetings have only elevated our gratitude for the work they do.

Second, I am indebted to the Commission on Lutheran Schools team of Jim Rademan, Paul Patterson, Cindi Holman, and Eileen Rosenow for their herculean efforts. They faithfully and tirelessly serve the needs of our approximately 125 early childhood ministries and Lutheran Elementary Schools, our five high schools, and our one college. Not just during the teacher calling season, but throughout the year, they are working on behalf of all our educational ministries.

The Lord of the Harvest has answered our prayer for workers in the form of 26 assignments from Martin Luther College and three assignments from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary into our district about a month ago. Newly assigned male teachers who have become members of our district through their assignment are:

Hoonsik "Harry" Jo	Jerusalem, Morton Grove
Keegan Young	Christ/St. Peter, Milwaukee
Ryan Kluba	Good Shepherd, West Bend
Conor Kopp	Illinois Lutheran High School, Crete
Nicholas Mitchell	Shoreland Lutheran High School, Kenosha
Evan Willick	Mt. Calvary, Waukesha
Tony Sahatjian	Zion, South Milwaukee
Noah Arnold	Illinois Lutheran School, Crete
Caleb Paul	Illinois Lutheran High School, Crete

The three pastors assigned to our district are:

Zachary Kluball	Victory, Lexington
Nathan Klusmeyer	Water of Life, Racine & Caledonia
Christian Willick	Resurrection, Aurora

You may find all the assignments on the MLC and WLS websites. May the Lord Jesus hold closely and guide powerfully those he has called into his teaching and preaching ministry.

As we walk together in gospel ministry, there can and should be spirited discussion and debate about how best to do it. For instance, is it wise to consider starting 100 new missions in 10 years, as our synod has voted in convention to do, in a time which many are calling a "pastor shortage"? Or would it be more accurate to say that our church body does not have a pastor shortage as much as it has a surplus of vacancies? These are good, godly questions to ask and discuss.

May our churches and schools make changes in their polity to allow women to serve in positions they haven't served before in our churches and schools, without violating the scriptural headship/submission principle? Or do such changes cross over into eroding the principle unnecessarily in our midst? Where is the line between recklessly giving offense and recklessly taking offense as a brother? These, too, are good and godly questions to ask and discuss.

Speaking of lines, where is the line between seeking to be culturally sensitive and intelligent so as not to hinder gospel proclamation to all the people we serve and hope to reach and being adversely in-

fluenced by the godless philosophies of our age? Another good and godly question to ask and discuss. God bless these discussions in our midst. Let us not shrink from the momentary discomfort of iron sharpening iron. And as we discuss, may we “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3). The peace Jesus the Christ has worked between us and the holy God also exists between brothers who confess his name. That peace with God and between brothers is surely a gift to be cherished and finds form when we have these discussions with attitudes of trust and charity.

I love our synod’s 2023 convention theme “Embrace the Cross – Anticipate the Crown,” for it well encapsulates our lives as Christ’s disciples. I’ll be attending the synod convention in an advisory capacity, and I look forward to seeing many of you serving as delegates. The Book of Reports and Memorials (BoRaM) you have received is an excellent written summary of the gospel ministry our Lord Jesus has allowed us to accomplish in the last two years, as well as our plans to march forward with that gospel under his grace. Especially if you are a delegate, I commend you to a study of BoRaM. You’ll be glad you did. And if you’d like an idea of the ministry plans my COP brothers and I are working on, please see the Conference of Presidents report on pp. 4-10.

With you in our Lutheran witness to the world, and submitted with love and respect,
Rev. Daniel P. Leyrer



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

District Mission Board

“Lord, enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.” Acts 4:29

The District Mission Board (DMB) chairmen had their meeting with the Board for Home Missions (BHM) March 23-24, 2023. There were several action items that came out of that meeting that benefited our SEW District.

1. Fairview in Milwaukee received three years of funding for an enhancement.
2. Light of Life in Greenwood, IN requested a three-year Mission Program Support Agreement (MPSA). They were granted one year of subsidy.
3. Pastor Paul Horn at Lamb of God in Lafayette, Indiana, and Pastor Tom Kock at Atonement in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were each approved for a Vicar in Mission Setting (VIM).

Our SEW DMB is working to bring a number of requests to the BHM in spring of 2024:

- A new start in East Boone County, Indiana.
- A new start in Cedar Lake, Indiana.
- An enhancement for a school pastor/school chaplain at Christ/St. Peter Lutheran School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- A restart for St. Paul's in Round Lake Park, Illinois.
- A possible restart or unsubsidized mission for Crossroads in Chicago, Illinois.

We encourage all our pastors, teachers, and laypeople to contact any of our SEW DMB members if they see areas of growth where we can start a new congregation. Or let us know if you know of any healthy congregations that can use three years of funding for an enhancement to their congregation's new outreach program.

We can also help congregations who are barely hanging on to see the potential mission opportunities in their area with multicultural ministry or a church merger or something else.

Let us know where our SEW DMB can be of service in your area of Kingdom work.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael D. Zarling, SEW DMB Chairman



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

Ministry of Christian Giving

Synod Report – BoRaM pages 23-26

Pastors, do you ever preach about money? If you are preaching on the Second Reading on July 2 (Proper 8), 1 Timothy 6:11-16, you will need to explain what is the “all this” from which Timothy is to flee. The context includes “the love of money” (1 Timothy 6:10). You will not be able to avoid preaching about money if you use the Second Reading on July 30 (Proper 12) either. 1 Timothy 6:17-21 opens with these words, “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment (NIV).” Clearly these texts address the topic of money.

Sometimes when listeners think you are preaching about money, you are not. You are preaching about Christian giving. Christian giving is not about funding the congregation, federation, or synod budget. Christian giving is service to the Lord. Christian giving is not merely *supporting* the Lord’s work. Christian giving is *doing* the Lord’s work. It is rightly called the ministry of Christian giving.

The Ministry of Christian Giving is not simply a division of the WELS. The ministry of Christian giving is a service carried out by every member of our church body. Paul used the word “ministry” to describe Christian giving when he wrote to the Corinthians about the Macedonians. “For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord’s people” (2 Corinthians 8:3,4 NIV). The word for “service” is the same as the one used for “ministry” in Acts 6:4, “(We) will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word” (NIV).

The Lord bless you as you continue to encourage your fellow Christians to find joy in the privilege of participating in the ministry of Christian giving.

Thank you, pastors and congregations, for submitting your Congregation Mission Offering (CMO) subscriptions and statistics this past February. In the nine years I have been doing this, this year was the most successful with the highest percentage of congregations participating. I look forward to the same experience next year. The deadline is February 2, 2024, at noon Central time. If your congregation operates on a fiscal year, such as July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, keep your eye on the MCG website (<https://mcg.welsrc.net/cmo>) so you can see when it opens and you are able to enter your subscription early.

You have great resources to help you and your congregation excel in the grace of giving in our district's giving counselors. They are able to guide you and your members through the many ways to participate in the ministry of Christian giving.

Mr. Scott Wagner, deferred giving counselor, 605-231-7402, scott.wagner@wels.net;
Rev. Paul Lindhorst, current giving counselor, 605-880-1583, paul.lindhorst@wels.net.

God's blessings to Rick Kneser, our former deferred giving counselor, as he enjoys his retirement. Thank you for your faithful service to the Lord and his church.

WELS CMO update (as of April 30)

In joyful response to our Savior's redeeming love for them, the members of our WELS churches remitted \$1.88 million of CMO during April 2023. We are grateful to Christ for these generous gifts that support his work through our church body!

April 2023 CMO were 10.3 percent (\$215,000) lower than April 2022 CMO and 6.1 percent (\$121,000) lower than our projection for the month. On a calendar year-to-date basis through April 2023 (four months), total CMO is \$6.93 million, 2.2 percent (\$154,000) lower than the previous calendar year through April 2022 and 2.8 percent (\$190,000) higher than projected receipts. Southeastern Wisconsin District congregations have given \$1,170,096 or 100.5% of subscriptions. We are grateful to our Lord for continuing to bless us through his people's generous gifts!

In August our WELS churches received information regarding WELS Home Missions' "100 Missions in 10 Years" campaign that was approved at the 2021 WELS convention. The goal of the initiative is to plant 100 new home mission churches and enhance 75 existing ministries from 2023-2033. This synod-wide campaign runs through June 2024. Since July 2021, we have received 1,577 gifts/ commitments from 1,264 individuals and groups totaling \$1.47 million. To God be the glory!

Pastor Tim Henning
Chairman, SEW District Ministry of Christian Giving



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

District Nominating Committee

The work done by the Southeastern Wisconsin District Nominating Committee over the last year has largely been in support of the 67th biennial WELS convention (July 31 - August 3). Names of potential candidates were gathered by the members of the District Nominating Committee and passed along for consideration by the Synod Nominating Committee. Below you will find the names of those who accepted nomination to their respective positions.

The delegates in convention will elect one man for each position, unless otherwise noted. Incumbents are noted by an asterisk (*).

Board for World Missions, layman (2)

Richard Bakken, Medford, Mass.
Arlyn Bornschlegel*, Rochester, Minn.
Mark Greiner, Columbus, Ohio
Jeff Hanel, Northglenn, Colo.
Mark Schulz*, Milton, Wis.
Kevin Traub, Middleville, Mich.

Board for Ministerial Education, chairman (parish pastor)

Philip Kieselhorst, Westminster, Colo.
Steven Lange, Louisville, Ky.
Duane Rodewald*, Simpsonville, S.C.

Board for Ministerial Education, layman (3)

Leon Brands, Crete, Ill.
Paul Hahm*, Hilton, N.Y.
Gary Jeffers, Litchfield Park, Ariz.
Benjamin Leyrer, Milwaukee, Wis.
Kenneth Prost, Watertown, Wis.
Peter Sahlstrom, Decatur, Ga.
Brian Scheele*, Plymouth, Neb.
Peter Trapp, Hartford, Wis.
Dean Waldschmidt*, Fond du Lac, Wis.

Board for Ministerial Education, teacher or staff minister from a Lutheran high school

David Gartner, Maple Grove, Minn.
Mark Heckendorf, Kewaskum, Wis.
Gerald Zeamer*, Jackson, Wis.

Board for Ministerial Education, teacher or staff minister from the Michigan, Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin, Southeastern Wisconsin or Western Wisconsin districts

Justin Danell, Appleton, Wis.
Nathan Kieselhorst, Watertown, Wis.
Daniel Markgraf*, Germantown, Wis.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Governing Board, chairman (parish pastor)

Jonathan Scharf*, Covington, Ga.
Kenneth Brokmeier, Brookings, S.D.
Michael Quandt, St. George, Utah.

Michigan Lutheran Seminary Governing Board, chairman (parish pastor)

Jason Baldwin, St. Charles, Mich.
Matthew Holtz, Appleton, Wis.
Andrew Retberg, Saginaw, Mich.

Luther Preparatory School Governing Board, chairman (parish pastor)

Karl Schultz, Rhinelander, Wis.
Timothy Spaude*, Greenfield, Wis.
Kevin Westra, Hortonville, Wis.

**Commission on Congregational Counseling,
chairman (pastor, teacher, staff minister, or
layman)**

Adam Mueller, Tucson, Ariz.
David Scharf*, New Ulm, Minn.
Paul Seager, Southlake, Texas

**Commission on Discipleship, chairman
(pastor, teacher, staff minister, or layman)**

John Boggs*, Watertown, Wis.
John Koelpin, Dallas, Texas
Daniel Schroeder, Palm Coast, Fla.

**Commission on Special Ministries,
chairman (pastor, teacher, staff minister, or
layman)**

Gary Juergens, Tappen, N.D.
Steven Wagenknecht, Weslaco, Texas
Timothy Wagner, Appleton, Wis.

**Commission on Worship, chairman (pastor,
teacher, staff minister, or layman)**

Michael Schultz, Tallahassee, Fla.
Johnold Strey, Hubertus, Wis.
Dale Witte, Fond du Lac, Wis.

Board of Appeals, pastor

William Brassow, Osceola, Wis.
David Rosenau, Yalaha, Fla.
Paul Zell, Hendersonville, N.C.

Board of Appeals, layman

Jonathan Hood, Yakima, Wash.
William Schaefer, Lannon, Wis.
Wesley Schroeder, Pueblo, Colo.

All who were nominated by the SEW District Nominating Committee were individually contacted and thanked for their willingness to serve and informed of their nomination status.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the SEW District Nominating Committee,
Pastor Jason Free, Chairman

SEW District Nominating Committee

Mr. Todd Biesterfeld
Mr. Mark Blauert
Rev. Nathanael Brenner
Mr. Mark Buske
Rev. Jason Free, chairman
Rev. Timothy Gerbing

Mr. Todd Gorsline
Rev. Jeremy Husby
Mr. Joseph Keller
Rev. Daniel R Marshall
Mr. Joel Smith
Rev. David Wierschke



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

District Discipleship Committee

MISSION

The Commission on Discipleship exists to serve congregations in their efforts to help their members grow in both their knowledge of God's Word and their sanctified service of Christ and neighbor.

NEWS

New Coordinator – After Pastor Aaron Steinbrenner was elected as First Vice President of the District, I was appointed to the role of District Discipleship Coordinator. We thank Pastor Steinbrenner for his past work as coordinator! As I grow into the role, I would like to compile a list of upcoming discipleship events within our District (e.g., marriage enrichment seminars, youth events, etc.). Then, if the host congregation/circuit/conference is open to having others join, I can help promote that opportunity. Additionally, I hope to survey the District to get a better feel for perceived discipleship needs within our District. Please feel free to contact me if you have any upcoming discipleship events or perceived needs that you have observed.

Discipleship Task Forces – Four discipleship task forces are currently active and working on ministry challenges or resource development in the following areas: Small Group Ministry, Gender/Human Sexuality, Sunday School, and Every Member Retention.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

WELS Youth Night (YN) – A series of youth-focused events, three times a year: fall [Oct.-Nov.], winter [Jan.-Feb], post-Easter [April]. Seventy percent of WELS churches worship 100 or less. It has led to smaller gatherings of youth. WELS Youth Night intends to bring youth together from area congregations and share faith in a larger setting. Online “YN starter” kits provide event resources to plan, train, promote, and host. Find the resource [here](#).

“Who Am I?” – A three-part video series for youth ministry settings, home settings, or personal teen viewing. The lessons take an in-depth look at real-life problems that overwhelm teens with feelings of being unloved, worthless, guilty, anxious, lonely, and more. It guides them to understand their identity in Christ through facts and not feelings. Find the resource [here](#).

Marriage Keys – A three lesson series which is meant to be a non-threatening introduction to marriage enrichment. Consider using it for pre-marriage counseling or maybe even as a possible outreach offering. A husband/wife duo could also be facilitators. Find the resource [here](#).

ANTICIPATED RESOURCES

Identity, Gender, and Human Sexuality – The task force on these topics has been working to better understand and respond to this ideology with its cultural implications. The group is developing three things: 1) A website that provides devotionals, Bible studies, and educational resources from a confessional Lutheran perspective that will help struggling families and individuals; 2) A speaker's bureau who can present on the issues; 3) Guidance for church/school handbooks, policies, statements, etc. The resources are anticipated in the late summer or in the fall of 2023.

Sunday School – This module will help congregations assess a struggling or declining Sunday school ministry and provide healthy approaches that build on a needed commitment of parents as partners in Sunday School ministry. The anticipated release is September 2023.

Sharing the Faith – Multiple video-based topic series like “Defending the Faith,” “Never Too Young to Talk about Jesus,” and “Everything LGBTQIA+,” equip youth leaders to engage teens in timely discussion on the issues of apologetics, sharing their faith, and a Christian approach to gender and sexual orientation. All these are scheduled to be released by fall of 2023.

The BoRAM (found [here](#)) includes some other news from the Commission on Discipleship and highlights some other resources related to its work.

Aaron Voss
SEW District Discipleship Coordinator

Commission on Discipleship:

Rev. Donn Dobberstein, director
Rev. John Boggs, chairman
Rev. Gary Pufahl, vice chair
Rev. Jonthan Bergemann
Rev. Aaron Bublitz
Rev. Thomas Kock
Rev. Paul Schupmann
Rev. Andrew Schwartz
Mr. Mark Stein

Advisory:

Mr. Jeremy Bakken,
Northwestern Publishing House
Prof. Luke Thompson,
Martin Luther College
Rev. Raymond Schumacher,
Northwestern Publishing House
Prof. Paul Waldschmidt,
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

District discipleship coordinators:

Arizona-California – Rev. Gary Pufahl
Dakota Montana – Rev. Joshua Schultz
Michigan – Rev. Daniel Westendorf
Minnesota – Rev. Matthew Ewart
Nebraska – Rev. Daniel Frey
North Atlantic – Rev. Mark J. Voss
Northern Wisconsin – Rev. William Monday
Pacific Northwest – Rev. Andrew Schwartz
South Atlantic – Rev. Caleb Kurbis
South Central – Rev. John Koelpin
Southeastern Wisconsin – Rev. Aaron Voss
Western Wisconsin – Rev. Scott Schwertfeger



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

Special Ministries

See the report from the WELS Commission on Special Ministries in the “Other Reports” section for a report about the work in the various ministries under the umbrella of Special Ministries.

Pastor Richard Waldschmidt
SEW District Special Ministries Coordinator



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

Worship

Who we are

Jonathan Pasbrig, Pastor Thomas Schultz, and Jason Snodie serve as members of Southeast Wisconsin District Worship Committee. Along with Sacristan Thomas Schultz, our musicians and worship leaders deserve our thanks. **David Porth** serves as the coordinator for the committee. He welcomes any input or questions you might have.

Summer 2023 Update

- A District Worship Conference is being planned for **Saturday, July 15, 2023**. It will be held at **Crown of Life, Hubertus, Wisconsin**. The conference details and registration link can be found here: www.sew-wels.net/DistrictWorshipConference2023
- A **National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts** is scheduled for **July 30-August 2, 2024**. It will be held at **Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin**.
- As of the end of March 2023, NPH estimates that about 850 WELS congregations have adopted the new hymnal, and that about 550 congregations have subscribed to the Service Builder software. For a variety of reasons, adoption of the new hymnal was not expected to be as rapid as adoption of the 1993 hymnal. But thus far adoption of both the hymnal and Service Builder are well above projections.
- As of late May 2023, more than 980 resources are available in the Musician's Resources, with more added regularly. Many of these can serve congregations using CW93 as well as those using the new hymnal. The largest categories are almost 500 instrumental doubling packs, over 100 modulations, more than 90 choral alternates, 70+ lead sheets, over 40 arrangements for liturgical ensemble, and 100+ instrumental descants. All these are available online at <https://online.nph.net/musicians-resource>
- You are encouraged to give attention to Rev. Bryan Gerlach's [Supplemental BoRaM Report](#) which will be shared at the 2023 Synod Convention.

New Resources

- **Commentary on the Propers, Year B** - June 12, 2023
- *Service Builder: Playlist* - mid-June 2023
- *Foundations* - Summer 2023

Respectfully Submitted,
Mr. David Porth, SEW District Worship Coordinator
262.305.9411 / dporth@pilgrimcares.org



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

Constitution Committee

Members of the Committee (term ends):

Rev. Jason Hacker (2026) Grace, Waukesha

Mr. John Stark (2028) Grace, Waukesha

Rev. Kirk Lahmann (2024) St. John, Burlington

Constitution Committee's Work

In the time between the 2022 District Convention and the 2023 District Conference, the District Constitution Committee has received and reviewed, or advised on eight Constitution and Bylaw documents.

The District Constitution and Bylaws *require* congregations to submit new documents or revised documents to the District Constitution Committee:

The committee shall examine the constitution and bylaws of congregations applying for membership in the district and make its recommendation to the convention. In the years the district does not meet, it shall make its recommendations to the president, upon whose recommendation members are accepted at the convention of the synod. The committee shall also approve revisions of constitutions and bylaws of congregations of the district.

News and Encouragements

Ref. BoRaM Conference of Presidents p. 8

Please note the following in the Conference of President's report in the BoRaM:

Need for additional options for congregational bylaws

The current model constitution and bylaws for the synod, dating from the 1970s, offers only one type of structure for congregations. In recent years, a number of congregations have desired different models that provide various ways to organize while faithfully maintaining biblical principles. The Conference of Presidents has been discussing whether it would be wise and orderly for the synod to offer several options for congregational structures. Examples of alternative structures will be made available by WELS Congregational Services.

Be careful and proceed in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace and love

Please always remember two things when you consider changes to your organization or how your congregation or school decides to carry out its mission and ministry.

#1 There are other brothers and sisters in Jesus around you

If a congregation or school becomes too innovative or "pushes the line" in some way, it may very well become a stumbling block of offense to others who may or may not know the context, circumstances, or what a congregation or school has done to determine how to carry out their mission and ministry.

Obviously, matters of doctrine and practice and our unity in these matters rises to the top (e.g. roles of man and woman within the structure of a staff or within the congregation).

#2 Matters of doctrine and practice

The District Constitution Committee is bound by the most current doctrinal positions of the synod as it reviews documents submitted to it. It is not the responsibility of the District Constitution Committee to consider new or alternative positions of doctrine that may be presented by a congregation or school. For example, if a case is made for a certain structure or practice within a church or school and something is said to the affect, "We do not agree with the synodical position on "x" or we offer this interpretation of a passage of doctrinal implication," the District Constitution Committee will not make a "ruling" on such matters. The District Constitution Committee will always adhere to current statements of doctrine of the synod.

Repository provided by WELS CMM

WELS CMM offered an online drive as a repository for each district CC to keep record of all constitution and bylaws of congregations, schools, and synod affiliated organizations. The CC will begin to make plans to collect these documents over the course of the next 18-24 months. Please understand the magnitude of this undertaking. Consider helping us by making sure you have a digital format of your current constitution and bylaws available.

Clean Copy

We ask that the congregations submit the "cleanest" proposed document as possible. The CC is not a "proofreading" committee. Formatting, spelling, margin errors, article and section numeration should be checked and re-checked before submitting the document to the CC.

Right of Appeal

Constitutions MUST include a "right to appeal" section. This is required by the constitutions of our districts. The Synod model suggests:

A lay person who has been subject to disciplinary action by this congregations shall have the right to appeal the action. The lay person shall be notified in writing by the congregation of the right to appeal within 30 days of the completion of the disciplinary action. Such an appeal must be filed with the president of the district to which the congregation belongs within 60 days of receipt of notification from the congregation.

Timeline

It takes three to four weeks for the District Constitution Committee to review and respond to a document. The document is to be submitted to the Committee PRIOR to being presented to a voters' meeting for approval. The timeline for turnaround maybe be longer depending on how many documents the Committee has submitted to it at a given time.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jason Hacker -- Chairman



SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT 2023 District Conference

2022 District Financial Report

Balance, 12/31/2021, Checking Account	\$2,217.27	
Balance, 12/31/2021, Savings Account	\$5,118.20	
Funds Available, 1/1/2022		\$ 7,335.47
Income, 2022		
Dues	\$52,722.75	
Convention Offering	\$2,354.00	
Uncashed Checks (previous years)	\$350.00	
Interest	\$20.53	
Total Income, 2022		\$55,447.28
Expenses, 2022		
Office Supplies	\$520.88	
Internet/Email Hosting	\$428.40	
Convention Arrangements	\$34,664.39	
Convention Worship	\$2,237.72	
Convention Printing	\$3,768.63	
Convention Offering	\$2,354.00	
Circuit Pastor Training	\$4,818.76	
Counseling	\$400.00	
Gifts	\$300.00	
Total 2022 Expenditures		\$49,492.78
Balance, 12/31/2022		\$ 13,289.97
Balance, Checking Account	\$7,154.24	
Balance, Savings Account	\$6,138.73	
Circuit Pastor Training Balance		\$ -6,829.04
General Fund Balance		\$20,119.01

Almost Back to Normal – After two years with no income because we didn’t collect dues in 2020 and 2021, and after two years with minimal expenses for the online elections in 2020 and the virtual mini-conference in 2021, our finances for 2022, with a bit of an increase in dues and fairly typical costs for the 2022 convention, are mostly back to where they would be after the convention year of our two-year conference/convention cycle. With one notable exception . . .

Circuit Pastor Training: You’ll notice a significant deficit in the balance of the circuit pastor training fund. There are three reasons for this: 1) we still scheduled the annual circuit pastor training in 2020 and 2021, even though we hadn’t collected the additional assessment we had been using to cover the costs associated with that training; 2) the nationally-recognized expert on child abuse that we scheduled cost for our training in 2022 cost quite a bit more than what we have usually gotten as income from the additional assessment; and 3) we had invited another district to join us for the training last year, but your secretary hasn’t yet billed them for their share of the expense. When we receive that money, the deficit will go down to less than \$6,000, still significant, but not as bad as the number that appears in this report. I plan to bring several options for dealing with this deficit to the district council when we set the 2024 dues at our next meeting in October.

2023 Dues – Notices went out later than usual this year. Please help see to it that your calling body sends a check as soon as possible. Costs for this conference will be coming due very soon.

Other Budget Categories:

Uncashed Checks – The decision we needed to make to transfer the district funds to new bank accounts (see below) gave us the opportunity to adjust the balance in our check register to reflect \$350 of checks that hadn't been cashed over a period of several years.

Office Supplies - This category is higher than usual because of the expenses involved in switching bank accounts (again, see below), including ordering new checks and a new deposit stamp.

Internet/Email Hosting – This category includes the hosting costs for the district website. It also includes the costs of a bulk mailing service we used for the electronic elections in 2020. We are still hoping to find ways to use it for our regular email communications.

Counseling – this category now includes the cost of transition counseling for workers leaving the ministry as well as some of the costs for counseling that the praesidium may recommend for current called workers. We are now making use of Christian Family Solutions' Member Assistance Program (MAP) to receive a slight discount in the cost of this counseling.

New IRS Regulations for Non-Profits – Early in 2022, WELS CFO Kyle Egan contacted the twelve districts to explain the impacts of several new IRS regulations that require non-profit organizations to provide better documentation to prove their non-profit status. These regulations also require non-profits to provide documentation that any entities under their umbrella (like districts and conferences) which do not exist as corporations (like congregations and schools) are also properly maintaining their non-profit status.

In order to comply with the new regulations, the district could no longer use our previous bank accounts because they were set up with the synod's tax identification number. This is no longer allowed because the synod's financial reports wouldn't match the numbers that the banks would show as connected to their tax number. Districts and other entities are now supposed to establish accounts using the tax number of the calling body of its secretary or treasurer. Our new accounts are now connected to the tax identification number of St. Paul, Brownsville.

The regulations also require that the synod require documentation from districts and other entities that indicates at what banks and under what tax identification numbers their accounts are held, as well as regular (annual) financial reports that show that their expenses are indeed appropriate for non-profit entities.

I am in the process of providing that documentation for CFO Egan. I have also, at his request, made initial contact with the six conferences of the district to start the process of determining if any of them need to provide the same kind of documentation or do anything different with their accounts.

It's also important that anyone who is responsible for bank accounts maintained by any other sub-entities of the synod that do not exist as their own corporations contact me so that I can help CFO Egan determine whether your organization needs to provide the same kind of documentation as the district. Please contact me if you are aware of any such organizations or if you have any questions about the impact of these regulations. If I can't provide an answer, I will get one from CFO Egan.

Pastor William Carter
SEW District Secretary-Treasurer