



Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, WELS Director of Christian Giving

Here we
STAND

66TH BIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

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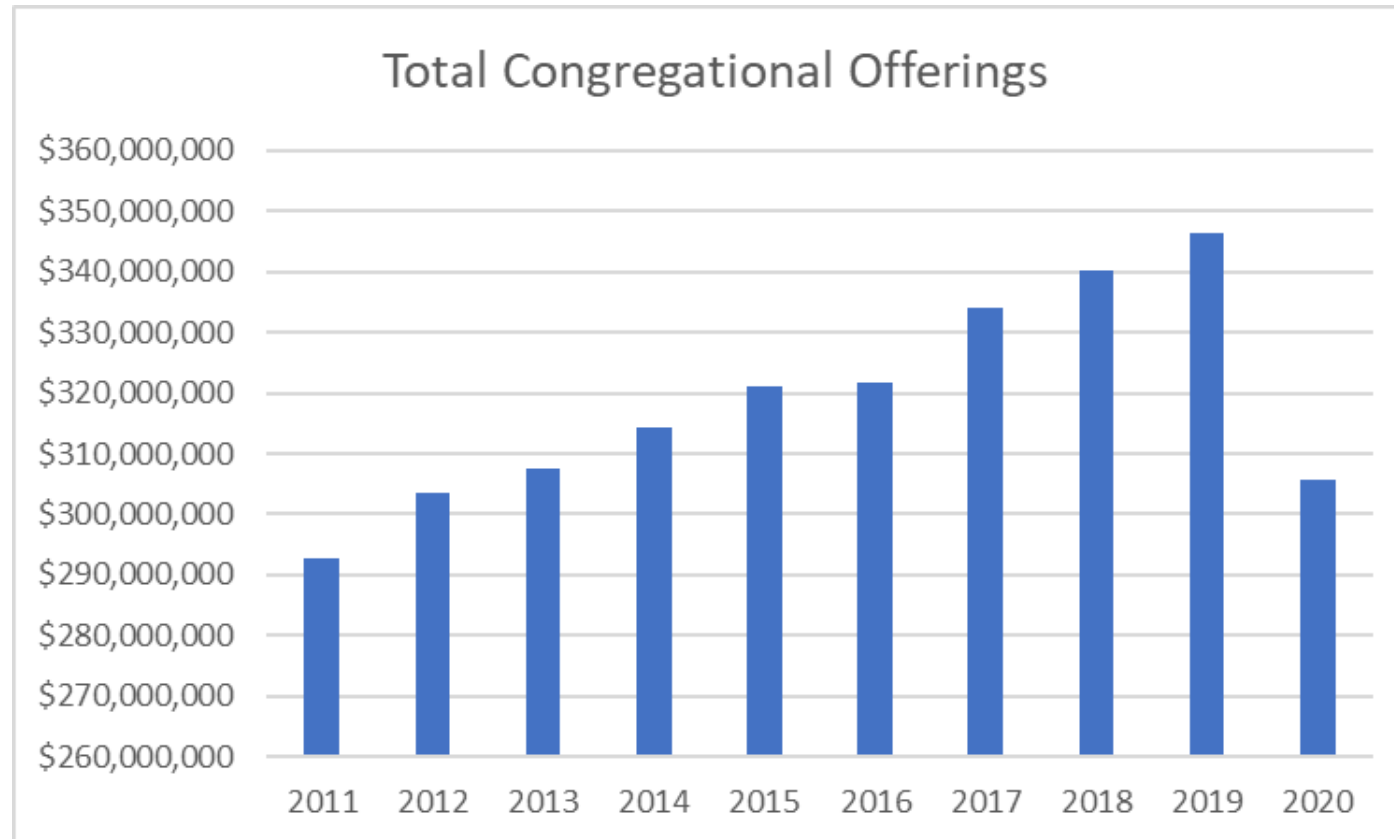
Devotional thought

- “The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Psalm 24:1).
- “But who [are we] that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand” (1 Chronicles 29:14).
- “Christ died for all that those who live should . . . [live] for him who died for them and was raised again” (2 Corinthians 5:15).



Blessings and opportunities

2020 total congregational offerings \$306 million
(lower than recent years)



Blessings and opportunities

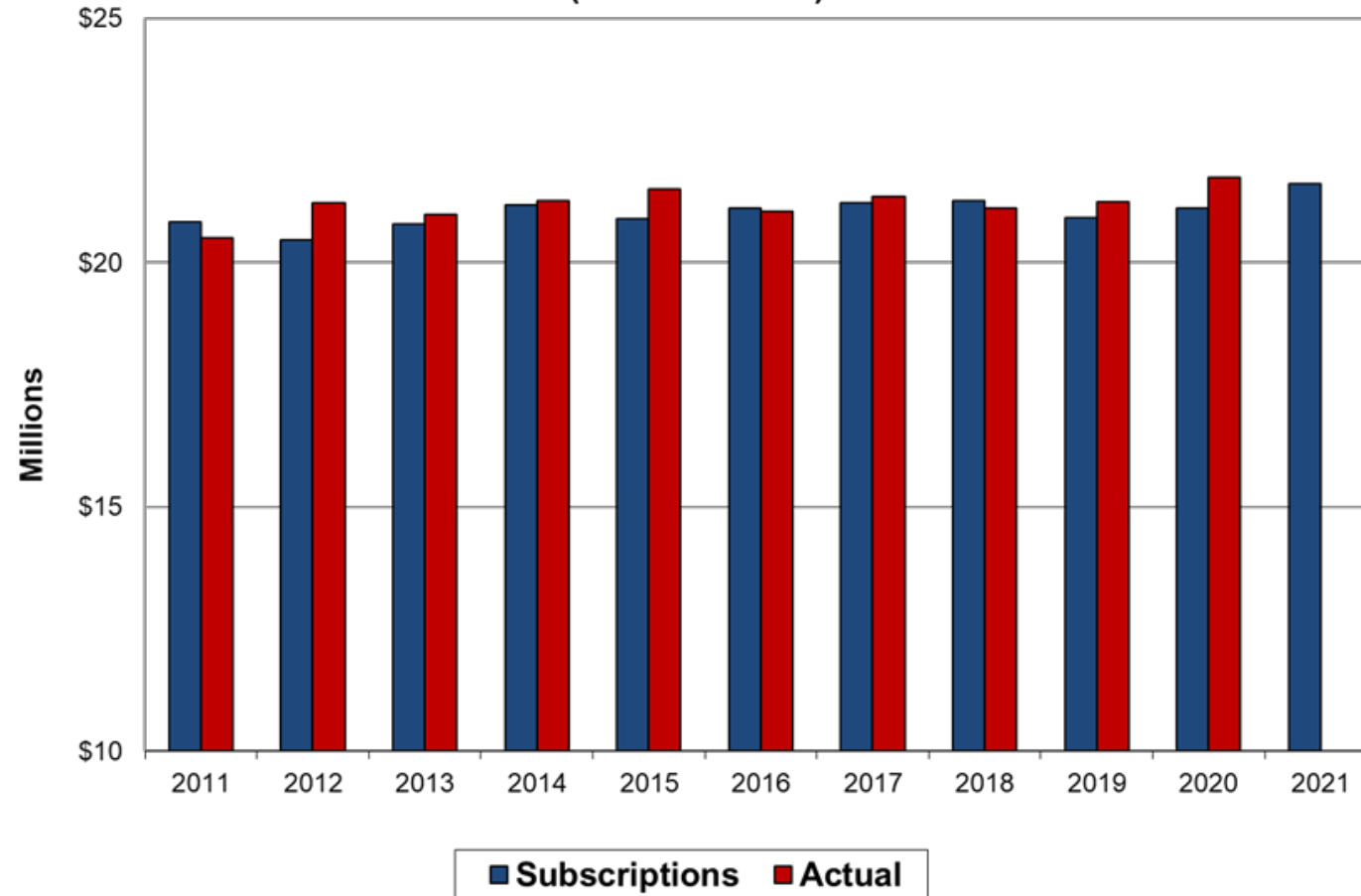
- 2020 Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) totaled \$21.74 million, which is the highest total on record and 2.3 percent (\$498,000) more than CMO 2019 for the same period and 3.0 percent higher (\$633,000) than projected 2020 receipts.
- We praise the Lord and thank his people for these gifts!

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Blessings and opportunities

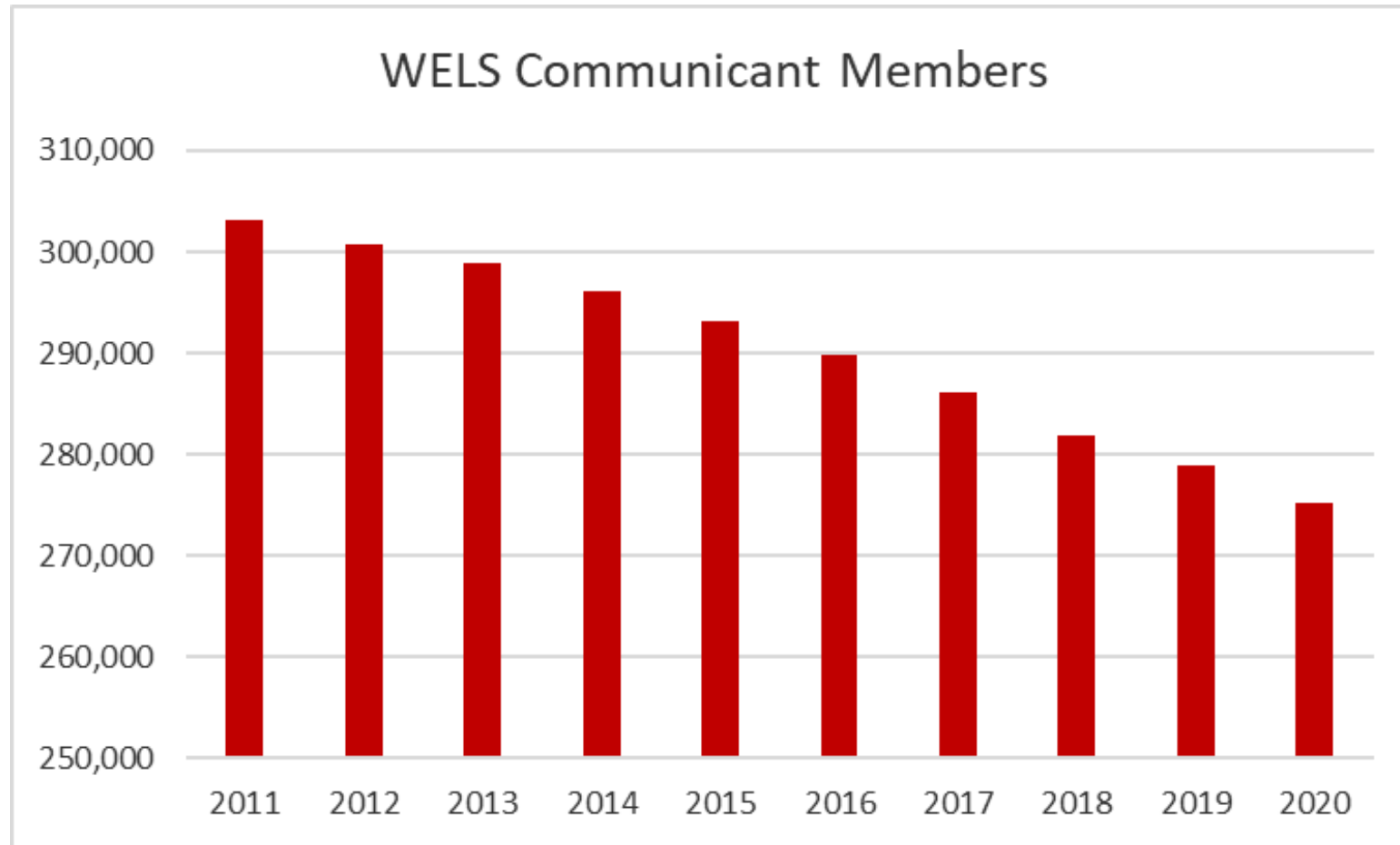
Congregation Mission Offerings
(Calendar Year)



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Blessings and opportunities

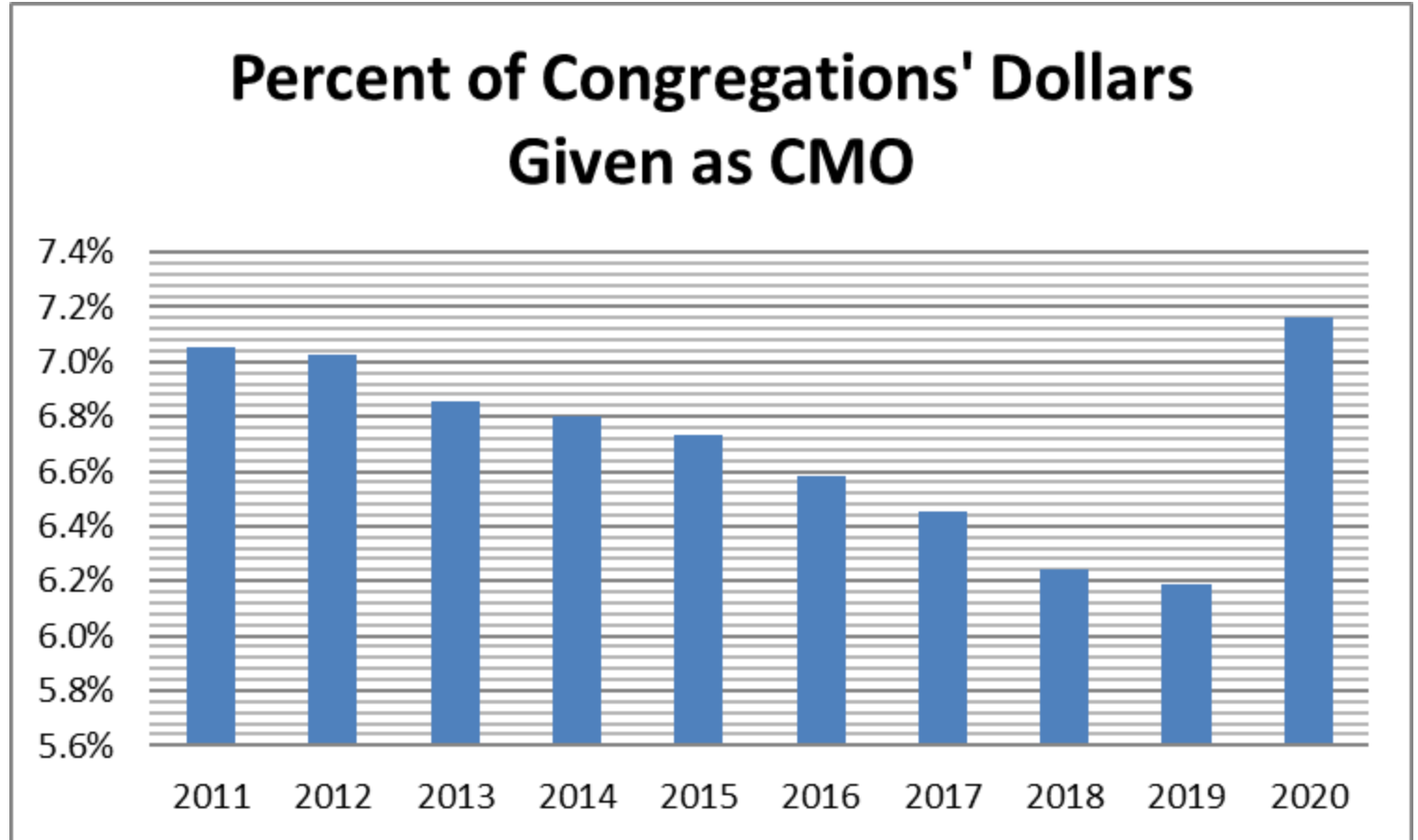


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- 2.1% of personal income to offerings
- 7.2% of church offerings given as CMO

Blessings and opportunities



Blessings and opportunities

Equipping Christian Witnesses

- July 2019–June 2022
- 50 prospective students identified
- \$7.8 million in gifts, pledges, and commitments from 2,700 individuals and groups
- Fully funded Betty Kohn fieldhouse
- ECW Sunday: mlc-wels.edu/mlc-campaign



Blessings and opportunities

WELS Endowment Funds

By God's grace, we have received \$100 million in gifts and expectancies since 2005 and will distribute \$1 million in July from the WELS Missions and Ministerial Education Endowment Funds!



Congregation Mission Offerings

- **2021 subscriptions** point to a decrease of 0.9 percent from 2020 actual offerings.
- **Through June**, offerings total \$10.3 million, which is 8.9 percent more than 2020 CMO for the same period and 7.2 percent higher than 2021 projected receipts.
- We praise the Lord and thank his people for these gifts and commitments!

Congregation Mission Offerings

- When setting CMO, aim for ten percent of offerings. If at or above this goal, encourage your congregation to maintain its generous support or consider increasing it as you're able with God's blessing.
- "For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have" (2 Corinthians 8:12).
- "Excel in this grace of giving. . . . For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 8:7,9).

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Congregation Mission Offerings

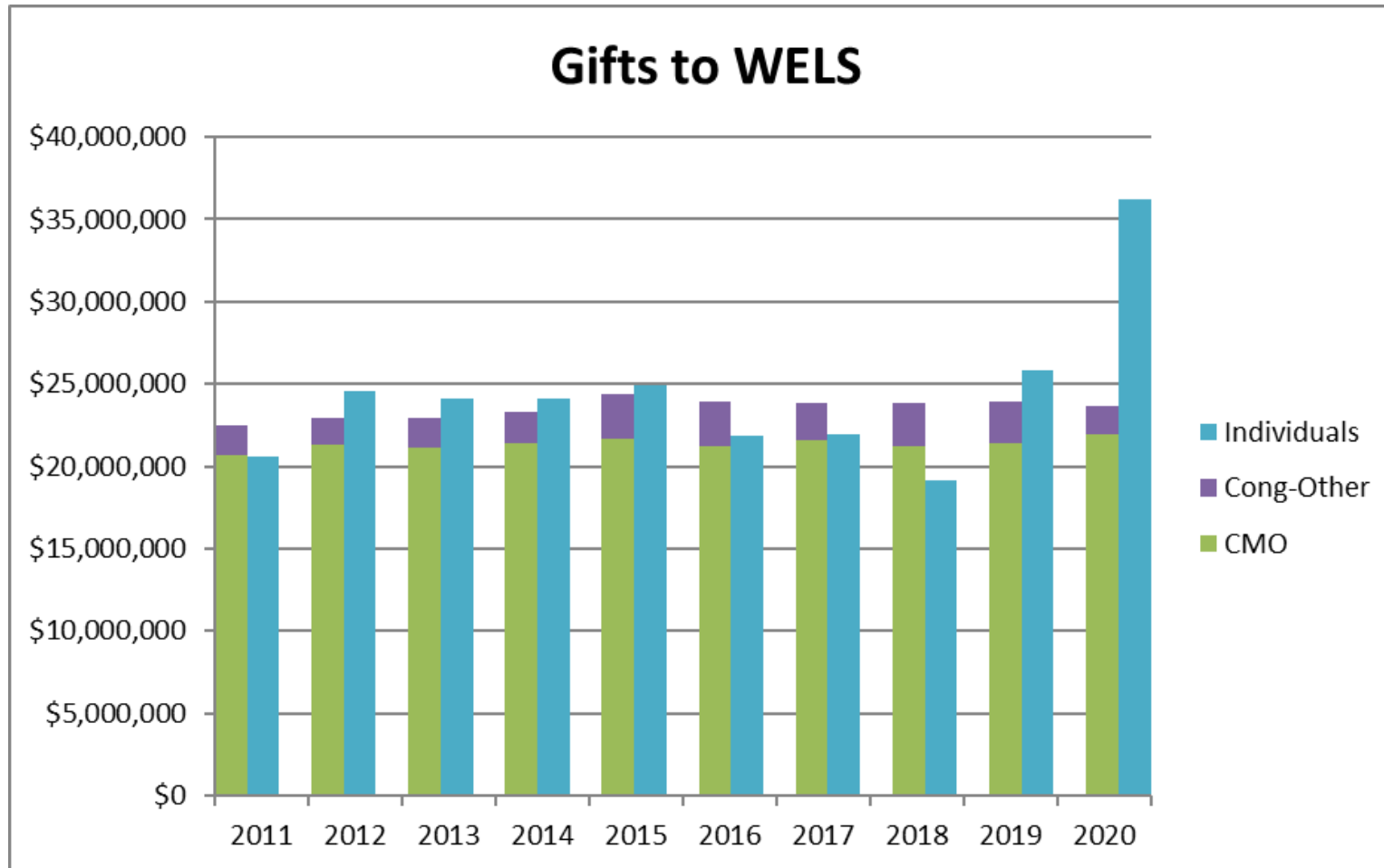
- *WELS Connection*
- *Together e-newsletter*
- *Forward in Christ*
- Annual Report (includes PowerPoint)
- Annual CMO-setting materials



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Individual offerings



Individual offerings

In fiscal year 2020-21 (through May), WELS Christian giving counselors (13.23 full-time equivalents) conducted 598 free, confidential in-person visits and 622 substantive phone/virtual meetings with God's people that helped facilitate \$9.4 million in gifts received and \$17.4 million in new and revised deferred expectancies for congregations, synod, and other WELS organizations.

Individual offerings

Enhancing our service to individuals

- Continue Christ-centered, relationship-based, free, confidential help
- Increased focus on connecting donors' interests with our areas of ministry
- Additional assistance with gifts of assets according to donors' interests and abilities
- Intentionally nurturing donors to consider supporting Christ's work now and through their wills as the Lord has blessed them



Individual offerings

IRA charitable distributions

Those 70.5 or older can make tax-free gifts to ministry from their IRAs.

Consider directing required minimum distributions to ministry to save on taxes, then using the cash you would have given to charity for other needs.

wels.net/qcd



Individual offerings

3 in 10
have a will



Individual offerings

1 in 3
remember a
charity in their
estate plan




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Individual offerings

Grace of Giving

Newsletter from WELS Ministry of
Christian Giving and WELS
Foundation with ministry updates
and planned giving options



Spring 2021

Supporting MLC Students through an Endowment

WELS members David and Lynette Buss have been longtime supporters of Jesus' work through WELS ministries, including their local congregation and area Lutheran high school.

Recently, the Busses decided to do more to support gospel ministry out of gratitude to God for his blessings. "We read an article about Martin Luther College (MLC) in a flyer from WELS," David recalls, "and we knew we needed to distribute our blessings to people in the ministry field."

David contacted Rev. Thomas Mielke, his local WELS Christian giving counselor, to assist in setting up an endowment through WELS Foundation. An endowment is a permanent fund designed to make steady annual distributions that increase as the fund grows and gifts are added. The Busses' endowment would provide ongoing tuition assistance for MLC students.

"David and Lynette have always been supportive of students studying for the ministry," says Rev. Mielke. "They think it's wonderful that students dedicate their lives to teaching and preaching to share the gospel. They consider it an honor to help offset rising tuition costs for these students."

David agrees: "This is one way of helping spread the gospel as we reduce tuition costs so pastors, teachers, and staff ministers can continue their work. This will help a lot of different ministry fields—both local ministry and outreach into mission fields."

The Busses understand an endowment fund is an ideal way to support MLC students for years to come. "This fund will grow as long as we are on this earth, and it will continue to grow and help hundreds of students in future years," says David.

Through WELS Foundation, an individual, family, congregation, or any WELS-affiliated ministry can set up a designated endowment that creates a lasting legacy of Christian faith while carrying out the Lord's work. An endowment can be established with cash or appreciated assets, or through a will, trust, beneficiary designation on a retirement account, or insurance proceeds.

The Busses appreciate the one-on-one assistance they received from Rev. Mielke and urge others to take advantage of the benefits of working with a WELS Christian giving counselor.

To learn more about establishing a WELS Foundation donor designated endowment to support ministries that are important to you, please contact your local Christian giving counselor. Visit wels.net/givingcounselors or call 800-827-5482.



David and Lynette Buss

Inside

- A Stable Source of Funding
- Giving Securities Makes Sense
- Estate Planning Quiz

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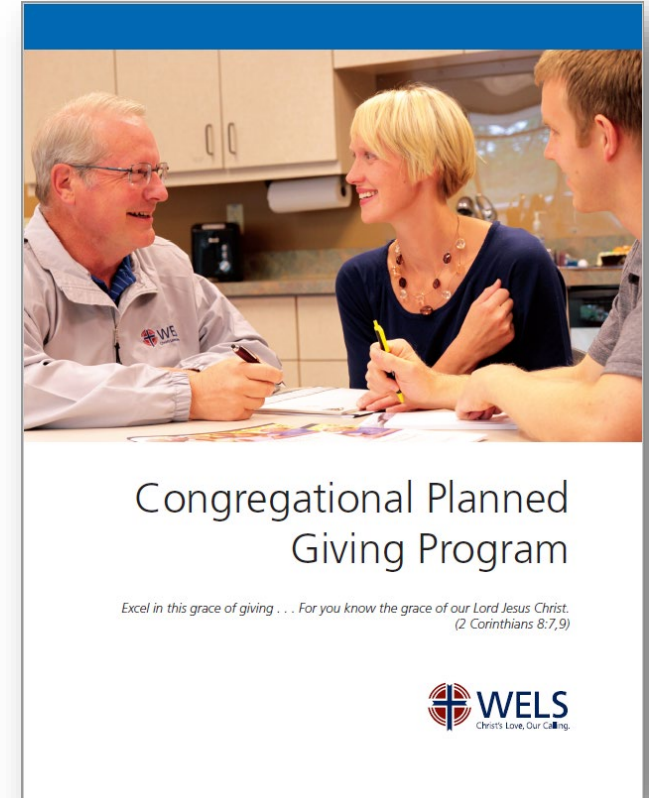
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Resources

Congregational Planned Giving

Encourage planned giving in your church using synod resources and your local giving counselor

wels.net/plannedgivingprogram



Stewardship Toolbox

- Prayers for synod ministry
- “Stewardship by the Lectionary” devotionals based on weekly readings share God’s stewardship truths according to the pericope

mcg.welsrc.net



Scriptural encouragement

“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth . . . but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything . . . Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life . . . Grace be with you.”
(1 Timothy 6:17-19, 21)

Thank you!

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