

President's Report

64th Biennial WELS Convention

July 2017

My father-in-law, now in his eighties, is a man who always says exactly what he is thinking. And, because he is more than a little hard of hearing, he often speaks his thoughts and opinions in a voice that can be on the loud side. That can create some awkward situations for his daughters when they are with him in public places. At a restaurant, he has been known to say, with the waitress standing nearby, "You know, if that waitress thinks that her nose ring makes her more attractive, she is sadly mistaken!" In church, after singing an unfamiliar hymn, he will say loudly enough to be heard from four pews away, "The pastor should forget about choosing *that* hymn again."

My father-in-law says what he thinks. And it really doesn't matter to him how direct and blunt he might sound. It wasn't long ago that he said to my wife and her sisters, "You know, if you girls expect an inheritance someday, don't. I'm going to spend it all before I go."

I don't know whether he was serious or not, but what he said is true, isn't it? An heir can't receive an inheritance if there is no inheritance to receive. And an inheritance can't be passed on to the next generation if it is spent or lost or squandered.

The year 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. We look back at the blessings that God gave to his church through the faithful work of Martin Luther, his contemporary fellow-reformers, and generations of faithful witnesses after him. As we do that, we can't help but thank God for the many blessings that God has passed down through the generations to us. It's a rich and priceless

inheritance—not of money or property but of the truth of his Word and the life-giving power of the gospel. It's a heritage that has been treasured, protected, and preserved, and which has now been entrusted to us. It's a heritage for us to defend and hold on to, so that we can share it with others now and with generations to come. In view of this precious inheritance that we have received through the Reformation, it seems very fitting that the theme of our 2017 convention is "Our Great Heritage."

We celebrate and thank God for that momentous event for a number of reasons. First, the Reformation was used by God to ensure that there would be an inheritance to pass down. After centuries in which the light of the gospel and the truth of God's Word were obscured and hidden, God saw to it that his truth did not die and his Word did not go silent. Through Luther, God restored that treasure to his church and provided a heritage to pass down to future generations.

Then, in the centuries that followed, God enabled the blessings of the Reformation to be passed down from one generation to the next, bringing hope and life to people around the world. Treasured by faithful Lutherans who came before us, the inheritance would survive new attacks from new and different directions and would remain intact even when there would be temptations to squander and lose it, until that heritage, by God's grace, has come to us.

So now we are heirs of the Reformation and its blessings today. Because of that great heritage, we have Christ, and he has us. And our God-given task and privilege is to hold on to that

heritage tightly with boldness and courage, to share it joyfully with the world, and to pass it on to the next generation faithfully.

“Grace Alone, Faith Alone, Scripture Alone.” Our Reformation heritage is often summarized in that three-part phrase. Of course, the other “alone” on which all three are based and on which the Church is built is “Christ Alone.” But along with those central treasures, faithful Lutherans today recognize other valuable truths and principles preserved for us by the Lutheran Reformation. This report will focus on some of the treasures that we possess by God’s grace and that serve as the foundation, guide, and motivation for the work we do together as a synod and for the decisions we will make at this convention.

Unwavering commitment to the Word

Martin Luther: “I must place the Word of God above everything. I must hazard life and limb, the world’s favor, my property, honor, and all my welfare that I may keep it and cling to Christ as to my most precious possession in heaven and on earth.”

We know and believe that it is the Word of God alone that enables us to know the grace of God and to know what God has done for us in Christ. We know that it is the Word of God alone that reveals God’s unchanging truth to us. It is that Word alone that serves as the only source of our synod’s doctrine and the Word alone that guides us in our practice. But we not only *have* the Word in the Scriptures; we are committed to the conviction that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God himself and that all our teachings and beliefs are to be drawn from that Word.

Sadly, such a commitment to the truth of Scripture has all but disappeared in large segments of the Christian church today. Already by the middle of the last century, the truth of the Scriptures was called into question by “theologians” who rejected inerrancy and reduced the Bible to little more than a culturally influenced collection of human wisdom. In the

decades since, many Christians have heard the question posed by Satan in the garden, “Did God really say?” and have concluded, “No, he didn’t.” The belief that there even exists such a thing as absolute truth has been jettisoned. Individuals and even entire Christian churches have become comfortable with the idea that religious truth is whatever I decide it to be. Sadly, for many who wear the name Christian, a commitment to the Scriptures is a heritage that has been lost and even willingly abandoned.

It isn’t just that the Bible has been set aside. In recent decades the basic truths of the Scriptures, including moral truths unquestioned for thousands of years, have been under increasing assault from a godless and hostile culture. The value of human life, the sanctity of marriage, the God-given norms for human sexuality, the importance of work and self-sufficiency, the beauty of showing mercy and love to those in need—have all been the targets of forces that have been very successful in calling what is up down, what is wrong right, and what is ugly beautiful.

The truth of God’s Word is under attack, and so are those who hold to the truths of God’s Word. The faithful Christian individual and the faithful Christian church today find themselves being wrongfully accused of hatred, bigotry, being closed minded and out of step with the times. Sometimes even the government takes up the cause and allies itself with the forces that are attempting to silence the faithful proclamation of God’s truth.

Our synod has been blessed with a commitment to preach and teach the truth of God’s Word regardless of the consequences. With Luther, by God’s grace, we stand firmly before anyone who opposes God’s truth. We do that not trusting in our own power or ability, but standing firmly on the Scriptures. We proclaim God’s truth not to change laws or to cure the ills of society, but to change hearts through the power of the gospel.

The attacks on God's church will not decrease. Just the opposite; they will only increase and intensify. In these last days, we thank God that he has preserved among us a commitment to stand on his Word. We pray that in our classrooms, our pulpits, our synodical areas of ministry, our homes, and our communities, God will continue to give us the boldness and courage to cling to his Word and to boldly proclaim what he has said—regardless of the cost, regardless of the consequences.

Trust in the power and efficacy of the Word

"I simply taught, preached, and wrote God's Word; otherwise I did nothing. And then, while I slept, or drank Wittenberg beer with my Philip and my Amsdorf, the Word so greatly weakened the papacy that never a prince or emperor did such damage to it. I did nothing. The Word did it all."

During this convention you will hear an important report from Pastor Jon Hein, the director of the Commission for Congregational Counseling. For the past several years, Pastor Hein has been conducting a detailed study of the membership trends in our synod. It is no secret that our membership has been declining over the past decade. We do well to acknowledge current trends honestly and to ask some very important questions about how to address them.

There will always be a temptation to think that the problem of declining membership can be addressed by something that we do. Or, to look at it another way, there will be the temptation to conclude that the church will grow in numbers if only we adopt effective strategies and programs and methods to bring about such growth. Many in the evangelical churches have determined that the "unchurched" are unchurched because the church's message is not relevant to them and to their lives. They have decided that the message needs to change. Instead of proclaiming clear law and gospel, instead of focusing on what Christ has done *for* us, they attempt to attract people to the church by offering a message that emphasizes what Christ can do *in* us, promising lives that are happier, marriages that are

stronger, and Christian service that is more energized. Luther's conviction that "the Word did it all" is replaced by "Our approach and tailoring the message does it all."

Pastor Hein's report clearly reminds us that the challenges of declining membership and reaching the lost are real challenges that we should not ignore. But he is also careful to point out that these are challenges that cannot be addressed by changing the message, nor should they be addressed simply in the interest of improving statistics. Rather, we should examine whether we are being faithful in our stewardship of that message. With Luther, we need to reassert our conviction that the power of changing hearts and bringing people to saving faith rests not in us or in our efforts, but in the power of the gospel itself, through the working of the Holy Spirit. And then we need to pray to God that he will enable us, in all we do as congregations and as individuals, to be faithful in our stewardship of the means of grace.

During this convention you will have the opportunity not only to review the results of Pastor Hein's study but to consider and commit to practical steps we can take to be faithful in our roles as shepherds and witnesses.

The centrality of the gospel

"The chief article and foundation of the gospel is that before you take Christ as an example, you accept and recognize him as a gift, as a present that God has given you and that is your own. This means that when you see or hear of Christ doing or suffering something, you do not doubt that Christ himself, with his deeds and suffering, belongs to you. On this you may depend as surely as if you had done it yourself; indeed, as if you were Christ himself."

It should be the focus and center of every sermon preached in our congregations. It should be evident in every class taught in our school classrooms and central to our early childhood ministries. It should be what motivates and guides Christian parents and what strengthens Christian marriages. It should be what leads and enables us to live our lives as God's children and

what comforts us as our time on this earth approaches its end.

The “it,” of course, is the gospel, the good news of what God has done for every sinner in Christ. When the gospel remains central, sermons bring people closer to Jesus, children learn to know and serve their Savior, marriages are strengthened, and Christians are equipped for lives that serve God and others. When the gospel loses that central place, faith withers and is replaced by self-righteousness and ultimately despair.

During this convention, we will review many things that we have been doing together as a synod and look ahead to wide-ranging plans that have been prayerfully made. As we do that, we will want to emphasize that in all things, our precious heritage of keeping the gospel central to all we do should guide us in all decisions and should be the foundation on which all plans are made.

The importance of ministerial education

“Pray that God may give us—as Christ himself commands us to pray—faithful laborers and preachers who are in earnest and who hold on to the Word.”

When he began his visitation of congregations in Saxony, Luther was shocked to learn not only that the laypeople were ignorant of some of the basic truths of the Scriptures but that the same thing was true of the pastors. From that time on, Luther emphasized the importance of having pastors who are well trained in biblical languages, fully knowledgeable of the doctrines and Scripture, and committed to their task of serving as spiritual shepherds to their people.

WELS has been blessed with a ministerial education system that is well equipped to provide the thorough training to church workers that Luther championed. This system has blessed us with a dependable supply of pastors, teachers, and staff ministers who know the Word and who have been trained to preach and teach that Word.

As our schools have carried out their mission, they have looked for ways to improve the training of our called workers and to meet new needs in the church as those needs develop. In recent years, our schools have provided numerous undergraduate opportunities to serve in mission settings. They have responded to the need for pastors and teachers to serve in cross-cultural and urban settings. They have developed ways to provide additional mentoring and guidance to new graduates as they begin serving.

At this convention you will have an opportunity to hear about what our schools are doing and will do to provide the kind of workers that will serve God’s people faithfully.

The blessing of corporate worship

“No more splendid work exists than receiving and hearing the Word of God.”

The worship in the congregations of our synod has been and by God’s grace will continue to be Christ-centered in its focus and dedicated to a faithful and clear proclamation of law and gospel. Worship among us also offers believers the opportunity to respond to God’s gracious blessings in Word and Sacrament with confession of sins, confession of faith, prayers, and hymns of praise.

In Christian freedom, there can and will be some variety in worship forms and styles, but there is also wisdom and benefit in a common (not necessarily identical) worship experience and emphasis that is widely shared among congregations that walk together in a common faith and mission. For that reason, our synod has undertaken the large task of creating a new hymnal. The new hymnal, scheduled for completion early in the next decade, will preserve the best from our current hymnal and incorporate newer hymns and liturgies that are Christ-centered and scripturally sound. At this convention you will receive a progress report from the WELS Hymnal Committee.

The need for Christian education

“Indeed, for what purpose do we older folks exist, other than to care for, instruct, and bring up the young? . . . This is why God has entrusted them to us who are older and know from experience what is best for them. And God will hold us strictly accountable for them.”

From its very beginning, our Wisconsin Synod has recognized the importance of Christian education. The primary responsibility for teaching children about their Savior rests with Christian parents. But we have also recognized that the church can assist and supplement the instruction in the home through Christian schools on all levels. We dedicate much time and resources to training teachers and operating Lutheran elementary schools, high schools, and colleges. In recent years, many of our congregations have recognized the opportunities for Christian instruction and for outreach to the unchurched in early childhood ministry programs.

The importance of Christian education is one Reformation heritage that we have treasured. Northwestern Publishing House has completed a revision of Luther’s Catechism that is now available for use in congregations and schools. At this convention we will have opportunities to recommit ourselves to a joint effort to provide Christ-centered and Bible-based instruction of our children and to explore ways in which our system of Christian education can be utilized to reach the unchurched through their children.

A renewed emphasis on Christian vocation

“How could the devil have more effectively led us astray than by the narrow conception that service to God takes place only in a church and by the works done therein? The whole world could abound to the service of God not only in churches but in the home, kitchen, workshop, and field.”

Permit a brief personal story. I come from a family of eight children. I am the youngest. By the time I was a senior in high school, all seven of my siblings were either serving in the pastoral or teaching ministry, or at the seminary. It was time

for me to decide what I would do with my life, and you can imagine the pressure I was under to make it eight for eight. The pressure didn’t come from my parents; it came from me. And I struggled with the decision. My mother recognized I was struggling. One day she said to me, “You know, the Lord needs good laypeople just as much as he needs good pastors and teachers. No matter what you decide to do, you can be sure that the Lord will use you to serve him.” In those few words, my mother showed that she understood one of the great, almost radical, teachings re-discovered by the Lutheran Reformation: Christian vocation. In other words, God’s people serve him and serve him well no matter what the calling or vocation into which he places them.

Our synod recognizes the importance of Christian vocation. While we certainly refer to the public ministry as a high calling from God, we in no way denigrate the other callings that God gives to people. No matter what the calling—as a spouse, a parent, a child, a student, a factory worker or farmer, a professional or entrepreneur—God places people exactly where he wants them to be, and in that calling God gives opportunities to serve him, to witness for him, and to show love for others.

Showing mercy and Christian love

“Therefore, a man should be guided in all his works by this thought and contemplate this one thing alone, that he may serve and benefit others in all that he does, considering nothing except the need and advantage of his neighbor.”

One recurring emphasis—often overlooked—in Luther’s teaching was the importance of showing Christian love and concern for one’s neighbor. In fact, Luther often made the point that showing Christian love and concern for others was the single most important way for a Christian to express his thanks and praise to God.

At this convention, you will see the many ways in which we have opportunities to respond to God’s blessings with the love and mercy we

show to others. The WELS Commission on Special Ministries will describe the ongoing efforts to serve those with special needs, to minister to those in prison, and to bring the gospel to people in our society who are often ignored and forgotten. WELS Christian Aid and Relief will share stories with you about how your gifts of love have made possible humanitarian aid projects in our mission fields, carried out relief efforts in time of disaster, and provided help for families facing serious medical problems.

Showing love and mercy to others was an emphasis of Luther and his Reformation. It's a heritage that remains ours today.

The privilege of missions

"Dear Father, we pray, give us first your Word, that the gospel be preached faithfully throughout the world."

It's a phrase that occurs many times in the Book of Acts. In fact, it occurs so often that it could perhaps be the theme of the entire book. "So the Word of God spread" (Acts 6:7).

Beginning in Jerusalem after Pentecost, the religious leaders of the Jews did everything they could—including threats and arrests—to keep the apostles and other Christians from preaching and teaching about the crucified and risen Savior. But early Christians didn't stop. "Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ" (Acts 5:42). As the church grew, the apostles appointed seven men to assist them in providing for the physical and spiritual needs of Christians. "So the word of God spread."

King Herod arrested believers and carried out executions. He had Peter arrested and thrown into prison. But an angel opened the doors of the prison and Peter went free. "And the word of God continued to increase and spread" (Acts 12:24).

Later, on his second mission journey, Paul proclaimed the gospel in Ephesus. Paul first preached to the Jewish people in the synagogue, but when they rejected his message, he shifted his efforts to a Greek audience. The Holy Spirit blessed his preaching. "In this way, the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power" (Acts 19:20).

The same Word of God that grew despite opposition and persecution in the time of the apostles is continuing to grow today. Even though we live in a country that seems to be turning away from Christianity, and even though the influence of Christian faith and values seems to be diminishing in our own culture, the very opposite is true in many places around the world. The word of the Lord is growing. The saving gospel is on the march. God's church is being built by the same powerful preaching of the good news of Jesus.

We have continued to open new missions here in the United States. And while our synod may not be increasing in numbers here in America, our fellowship around the world continues to grow. It's happening in some completely unexpected places and in ways that we could not have foreseen. Thousands of people are hearing the gospel and being brought to faith in places like Nepal and Pakistan, where modern-day Herods continue to threaten and oppose Christians. Christian groups in places like Vietnam and Laos and Thailand, like modern-day Macedonians, are asking us to come and help them with theological training. Literally millions of people are hearing the gospel online in Latin America through the efforts of our synod's Multi-Language Publications. And hardly a month goes by when our synod is not contacted by a Lutheran group somewhere in the world seeking to establish a relationship with our synod.

At this convention, we will see tangible evidence that the word of the Lord continues to grow. A high point will be the joy of declaring fellowship with three confessional Lutheran church bodies.

The Lutheran Church of Ethiopia broke away from a large liberal Lutheran church body because it wanted to be faithful to the Lutheran Confessions. The South Asia Lutheran Evangelical Mission (SALEM) has confessed that it shares our commitment to the Scriptures and to the Lutheran Confessions. Finally, the East Asia Lutheran Synod is a brand new Lutheran church body established on the mainland north of Hong Kong by six pastors trained at our Asia Lutheran Seminary.

Because we share the same commitment to the truth of God's Word, WELS will have the opportunity to declare fellowship with these Lutheran church bodies. It will be a joyful day for them and for us. And, with God's power and blessing, the word of the Lord will continue to grow and spread.

A life of repentance

"When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent', he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance."

It goes without saying that our synod is not perfect, because it's a family of weak and imperfect sinners. When Martin Luther said, "We are all beggars," we would join him in that statement in describing ourselves. So we are reminded, as Luther noted, that God desires that our entire life be a life of repenting of the evil that we have done and the good that we have left undone—both in our lives as individuals and in our lives as members of God's visible church.

The flaws in us and in our synod will continue until Christ returns to transform the Church Militant into the Church Triumphant. In the meantime, we pray for his strength, guidance, and correction. We beg for his mercy for our failures. But we also have the joy and comfort of knowing that God has taken miserable sinners like us, declared us to be perfect in his eyes for the sake of Christ, and placed us in this world to be used as his workers and witnesses in the service of his gospel. And he has promised to give us all we need to carry out the mission he

has entrusted to us with boldness, confidence, and joy.

That gracious act of God—accomplished on Calvary's cross and proclaimed in the Scriptures—places our synod in an incredibly wonderful position. We have the truth of his Word. We have heard and believed the unconditional gospel of full forgiveness in Christ. He has placed us in this world and gives us the opportunity to give the world exactly what it so desperately needs—the gospel of Christ crucified and risen, proclaimed in the Scriptures, summarized in the Lutheran Confessions, preserved to us through the generations.

Other convention business

Inter-church relations

Representatives from WELS, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), and the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) have been meeting over the past few years in formal doctrinal discussions to determine whether the three synods are still separated by doctrinal differences.

The first task of the committee was to draft a statement that addressed the question of when two church bodies in fellowship with each other must separate if false doctrine appears. (Please see the "Joint Statement Regarding the Termination of Fellowship" on p. 29 of the *Book of Reports and Memorials*.) The statement has been adopted by the ELS, is still under discussion in the CLC, and is being submitted for approval by this convention. A full report of the committee's work is included in the report of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations on p. 28 of BORAM.

Plans have been made for WELS and the ELS to continue informal discussions with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), with another meeting scheduled in late November. Over the past five years, these meetings have proven to be very helpful in clarifying where our synods agree and where disagreements remain. Topics

discussed have included Scripture, fellowship, the role of man and woman, and hermeneutics (the principles that guide the interpretation of Scripture). We have been especially that the leadership of the LCMS is firmly committed to the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures and to see their efforts in promoting and preserving confessional Lutheranism around the world. These discussions remain informal, since all participants recognize that a restoration of fellowship between our synods is not likely in the near future. It remains our prayer, however, that at some point in the future fellowship can be restored on the basis of full agreement in doctrine and practice.

Retirement of the synod capital debt

At this convention, we will pause to give formal recognition to the retirement of the synod's capital debt earlier this year. The synod's various capital debts were combined into a single debt of \$22.4 million in 2008. After an initial special offering, plans were made to retire the debt in 2019 through regular payments of \$1.6 million from the synod's operating budget. In 2016, the Conference of Presidents authorized a second special offering with the goal of retiring the debt ahead of schedule. By God's grace, the debt was retired late last year nearly two years ahead of schedule. At this convention, we will thank God for his blessing on this effort for enabling the synod to be debt free for the first time in decades.

It should be noted that even as the debt was being repaid, the Lord made possible a number of other capital projects that have all been fully paid for. Projects completed since 2009 include the Chapel of the Christ at Martin Luther College (MLC), the acquisition of a new synod headquarters, the Early Childhood Learning Center at MLC, the relocation of the synodical archives from the seminary to the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry, and renovation projects on the other three ministerial education campuses.

Ministry financial plan

The ministry financial plan (budget) to be considered by this convention is unanimously recommended by the Synodical Council with the unanimous support of the Conference of Presidents. It was developed by all areas of ministry with commendable cooperation in keeping with the support forecast and with a strong commitment to reducing costs wherever possible.

Because areas of ministry were, for the most part, able to sustain existing ministry without increased funding, the ministry financial plan does make possible some modest expansion to ministries and programs. Included among these expansions, most of which have been encouraged by previous conventions, is funding for the synod archivist, new home missions starts, expansion of the Pastoral Studies Institute (to coordinate and deliver theological training around the world), and a director of discipleship.

Special items

In addition to reports and recommendations from all areas of ministry, special items to be considered by this convention are the:

- report of the Continuing Education of Called Workers Task Force;
- report of the Reformation 500 Committee;
- proposed "Our Great Heritage" long-range plan;
- report of the WELS Hymnal Project Committee;
- report and recommendations of the Compensation Review Committee;
- report and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Ministry of Christian Giving Review Committee;
- bylaw changes recommended by the Synodical Council and Conference of Presidents; and
- report of the Early Childhood Ministries Task Force.

Conclusion

It is often said that we are living in a post-Christian world. There are those who say that, for the church to survive in a post-Christian world, it needs to take a defensive position, to hunker down in the face of opposition, and to build walls of protection against advancing enemy forces. Others suggest that, in a rapidly changing post-Christian world, the church needs to make some fundamental changes and adapt to a new reality, perhaps by morphing its message into something more appealing, more relevant, and less offensive.

We dare not take either approach. Our synod has been blessed with the perfect remedy for a sick and dying world. We have the message that God has entrusted to us—the message of Christ crucified and risen.

Far from hiding in a protective bunker, we can have boldness and courage because we have a powerful message to proclaim. We have the Sword of the Spirit—the Word of God—that will not return to him empty. And we have his promise that the gates of hell itself cannot and will not overcome his church.

Because we know that, we will not run from our Lutheran heritage; we will embrace it. Because of the truth that has been revealed to us, we will not hide from nor apologize for our identity as confessional Lutherans. We will cherish it, declare it, explain it, and defend it.

Second, we dare not tamper with the message. Itching ears will demand that we say what they want to hear. A consumer-minded, self-centered audience will want a message that offers shallow relevance and feel-good results. A hostile culture will demand that we avoid calling sin what it is, confronting it, and calling for repentance. But a changed and modified Word of God ceases to be the Word of God. Such a message will fall flat, the hearers will be left searching, and the visible church will fail in the main mission that God has given it.

King Solomon said that there is nothing new under the sun. The same sinful human nature that has plagued mankind since the fall is alive and well in people today. The same *opinio legis*—the idea that I must somehow save myself by what I do—exists in all people today just as it did in the Pharisees of Jesus' day. The same hard hearts beating in the hearts of the stubborn children of Israel beat in chests of people today. Unbelief and wickedness may take on different shapes and forms at different times, but nothing has really changed.

But it is also true that the only remedy for sin has also not changed. "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" has always been and remains the only remedy for sin, the only avenue to the presence of God, and the only way for sinners to be saved.

As we mark 500 years of the Lutheran Reformation, we pray that God will move us to rededicate ourselves to the biblical truths that God so graciously restored to his church and which he has passed down to us as the heirs of that Reformation. In every sermon preached, in every Bible class taught, in every opportunity to share what we believe, may he enable us to know and confess that we are saved by God's grace alone, that we receive that blessing through faith alone, and that we are sure of that truth because of Scripture alone. Holding on to that heritage, we will by God's grace be permitted to share in the glorious privilege of serving as his witnesses, and we will have the joy of passing that heritage down to the next generations of God's people.

Soli Deo Gloria!

To God alone be the glory!

Respectfully submitted,

WELS President Mark Schroeder