

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

REPORT TO THE TWELVE DISTRICTS



IN CHRIST ALONE

Report to the Twelve Districts

May 2014

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
Waukesha, Wisconsin

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
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President's message

In the name of Jesus, our Redeemer and Savior,
There is no doubt: We are living in the last days.

Libya, Egypt, Syria, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Yemen are no longer exotic places known only to geography buffs. Tensions are growing between China and Japan. The Cold War seems to be reigniting when many thought it was a thing of the past. "You will hear of wars and rumors of war," Jesus said. "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (Matthew 24:7). In these last days, that is exactly what we are seeing.

Mainline Christian denominations are abandoning long-held biblical truths with mind-numbing speed. The inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture have become minority theological positions even among Christians. Doctrine—the teaching of the truths of God's Word—is seen as divisive and destructive. Members of the younger generation seem to have less time for and interest in religion and the church. American culture encourages individuals to pick and choose their own beliefs from a wide array of religious ideas and philosophies. Those who look for salvation look only to themselves, while many more adopt the satanic lie and imagine, as the song goes, that there is no heaven, no hell, no religion, no God. "For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many . . . Many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people" (Matthew 24:5,10,11). In these last days, that is exactly what we are seeing.

A tsunami devastates Japan. An earthquake levels entire villages in Iran. A volcano shakes Indonesia. Floods ravage India. Famine kills thousands in Africa. Long dormant diseases are making a comeback. "There will be great earthquakes, famines, and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven" (Luke 21:11). In these last days, that is exactly what we are seeing.

Greed and materialism infest every corner of our society. Children are raised without respect for parents, authority, or peers. Self-interest has replaced love of country and community. The work ethic has given way to a demand for others to provide for the basic needs of life. Human life itself has lost its sanctity, easily disposable at the very beginning, at the end, or when things become just too difficult to endure. "Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold" (Matthew 24:12). "People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal . . . lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" (2 Timothy 3:2-4). In these last days, that is exactly what we are seeing.

These words of Scripture describing the last days sound frightening. But this is not all that Jesus said about the times in which we live. He said to his disciples, "See to it that you are not alarmed" (Matthew 24:6). Far from being frightened and filled with a sense of pessimism and doom, we are invited by our Savior to place our trust completely in him. We can do that because of his promises: "He who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations" (Matthew 24:13,14). "[My Word] will not return to me empty, but it will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

Armed both with his promise and with his message, in these last days, we have been perfectly positioned by God to continue to carry out the mission he has given to his church of all ages. We have the promise that he will continue to do all things for the good of those who love him. We have the precious saving gospel and the unchanging truth of his Word—to treasure for ourselves and to proclaim to the world. As the time for Jesus' return draws near, what better for us to do than to recommit our efforts, our resources, *ourselves* to clinging to his Word and to being the witnesses to the world that God intends us to be.

That means, in these last days, continuing to seize opportunities to proclaim the gospel to people who have not yet heard it. God continues to bless our proclamation of his gospel in more than 20 countries around the world. Some of that work takes the form of the traditional way in which we have planted missions with expatriate missionaries. Some of that work involves providing theological education and guidance to mission churches that are moving toward complete independence. And some of that work involves new strategies, making use of Bible-based materials printed in dozens of

languages and distributed to thousands of people in places where we cannot send missionaries. God has blessed the seed of the gospel. Our task is to continue to sow the seed.

That gospel seed needs to be planted in places closer to home where the truth is only an occasional visitor and where immigrants from around the world are hungering to hear the gospel. Home mission congregations can be those islands of truth in a sea of Satan's lies and deceptions. God is blessing our gifts and efforts, enabling us to establish more home mission congregations than in recent years. Our task is to continue to sow that seed in these last days wherever and whenever God gives us the opportunity. The harvest field is ripe. We need to pray that God will renew our commitment to work while it is still day.

In these last days, many churches have long ago abandoned a thorough biblical training of those who serve in the public ministry. By contrast, our synod has been blessed with a ministerial education system that continues to supply workers who will feed those who are already members of God's flock and who will share law and gospel with those who are still outside the fold.

It is no surprise that all of our congregations face challenges in a sinful and dying world. Those challenges can be cultural, demographic, financial, and spiritual. But every congregation in our synod has the perfect remedy for any problem, the perfect defense for any of Satan's attacks, and the perfect offensive weapon to carry out the mission God has given us. In your congregation God's Word is preached and proclaimed faithfully. There the comfort of the gospel, preached by pastors and shared by God's people, brings hope and comfort to the sin-burdened, to the guilt-stricken, to the struggling, to the sick and dying. There in our congregations we commit ourselves to train the next generation of faithful believers who will continue to serve their Savior and proclaim his Word from one generation to the next.

And, not least, in these last days when many Christian churches are looking to new and creative ways to "grow the church," we reaffirm our heritage as *Lutherans* every time we emphasize that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, with the message that comes from Scripture alone. That emphasis cannot just be one of words. Lip service to the principles of the Reformation is not sufficient. Our faithful use of the means of grace, our confidence that only the means of grace can convert sinners, our recognition that our doctrine and teaching will be carried out faithfully and consistently in our practice, is the foundation and center of all we do.

In this *Report to the Twelve Districts*, you will learn of both blessings and challenges. You will hear from those you have called to represent you in this work. You will review the entire scope of the work that has been done and the blessings God has given to that work. You will get a picture of the financial blessings that God has showered on us and see examples of the careful stewardship of those blessings. You will also see how the plans that we prayerfully made in the summer of 2013 may need to be adjusted and modified to reflect the realities of available financial resources. When you hear of all of these things, you will rejoice, you will pray, and you will be encouraged to refocus with confidence and commitment on the mission that God has given us to do.

As we consider how God has blessed us and where he is now leading us, we dare never assume that the success of our labors depends on us, on our strength, on our talents, on our gifts, or on our efforts. Speaking by inspiration, the apostle Paul reminds us that we may plant and water, but in the end, only God makes it grow. God makes his kingdom grow one soul at a time as his Word does its powerful work in sinners who need a Savior. Trusting in the power of his Word, standing firmly on the truth of his Word, and rejoicing in the blessings of his Word, we move forward as a synod "in Christ alone." There is no better place to be in these last days.

Serving you in Christ,

Rev. Mark Schroeder

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Congregation and District Ministry

The Congregation and District Ministry portion of the synod's ministry financial plan (budget) includes the Conference of Presidents (COP) and all of the work overseen by the COP. These include:

Conference of Presidents

- Regular and special meetings of the Conference of Presidents and the Assignment Committee
- Travel and other expenses related to the district presidents' work
- Pastoral assistants provided to the congregations served by the district presidents

Support Committee

- Grants and assistance provided to needy retired called workers and their spouses

Commission on Inter-Church Relations

- Regular meetings of the commission
- Travel and expenses related to maintaining contact with and limited support for churches around the world in fellowship with WELS
- Exploration of contacts made by church bodies inquiring about fellowship with WELS
- Carrying out doctrinal studies as requested by the COP

Ministry of Christian Giving

- Administration and staff salaries, travel, and office expenses
- Salaries and travel expenses for Christian giving counselors
- Training and consultation provided to field staff giving counselors

Communication Services

- *WELS Connection*, *WELS Connection Close-up*, "Together," partial funding for *Forward in Christ* editorial staff
- *WELS Annual Report*
- *Book of Reports and Memorials*, *Report to the Twelve Districts*, *Proceedings*
- Content production and management of WELS' Web presence, including www.wels.net and WELS' Facebook, Google+, and Twitter accounts
- Coordination of all synodical publications

Synod Nominating Committee

Congregation and Ministry Support Group

- Commission on Worship
- Commission on Evangelism
- Commission on Special Ministries
- Commission on Lutheran Schools
- Commission on Youth and Family Ministry
- Commission on Adult Discipleship
- Commission on Congregational Counseling

Synod convention

Conference of Presidents

The Conference of Presidents (COP) is composed of the 12 district presidents, elected by their respective districts; the synod president; and the two synod vice presidents. The synod secretary, elected by the synod in convention, serves as a non-voting advisory member of the COP. The COP meets in person three times annually for regular meetings, as well as monthly via teleconference. The COP also meets twice in May in its role as the Assignment Committee of the synod.

The Conference of Presidents is responsible for the following areas:

- Supervising, maintaining, and strengthening biblical doctrine and practice.
- Overseeing the calling process by providing calling bodies with call lists for pastors, teachers, and staff ministers, as well as counsel and advice in the calling process.
- Serving as the committee that assigns ministerial candidates to their first calls.
- Working with congregations (often through the circuit pastors) to care and provide for the physical and spiritual needs of called workers and their families.
- Encouraging congregations and individuals in their financial support of the synod, primarily through Congregation Mission Offerings.
- Overseeing the work of the Ministry of Christian Giving, Communication Services, and the Congregation and Ministry Support Group.
- Promoting the synod's mission and ministry in the districts.
- Promoting the general welfare of the synod.

The Conference of Presidents spends significant time at each meeting discussing specific questions of doctrine and practice, as well as addressing practical issues that affect congregations and called workers. The group functions primarily as a "conference," with district presidents conferring with each other, both seeking and offering advice to one another for the good of the synod and its people.

Ad Hoc Commission II

The 2013 synod convention directed that a new commission be appointed to continue the work done by the first Ad Hoc Commission several years ago. The assignment to the commission was to look at any and all aspects of the synod's work and to bring recommendations for improvements. The COP accepted the commission's invitation to suggest areas for the commission to discuss. The commission, chaired by Second Vice President Joel R. Voss, will be providing a progress report to the districts this summer.

Continuing Education of Called Workers Task Force

The 2013 synod convention directed the synod president to appoint a special task force to develop a continuing education process for pastors and staff ministers "so that progress toward professional growth for pastors and staff ministers can be more formally encouraged and reported." The following committee was appointed by the president:

Pastor Rob Guenther, chairman
Staff Minister Brandon Steenbock
Pastor John Seifert (COP representative)
Pastor Brad Wordell (World Missions)
Layman Lowell Holtz
Prof. Richard Gurgel (pastor continuing education)
Prof. Lawrence Olson (staff minister continuing education)

The committee will bring a preliminary report to the district conventions in 2014.

Free conferences

By definition a "free conference" is a conference that individuals attend not as official representatives of their church body but on their own to discuss doctrinal and practical issues of the day. They are usually conducted outside the

realm of fellowship (no opening or closing devotions, etc). Free conferences have been used historically to begin to clarify doctrinal positions and foster a better understanding of theological differences.

A number of free conferences sponsored by various confessional Lutherans have been held in recent years. The Conference of Presidents has endorsed the concept of free conferences because there is recognition that they can be beneficial in a number of ways.

Opportunities for pastors willing to serve with a reduced salary

The 2013 synod convention encouraged the COP to develop a means to identify pastors (mostly older and experienced) who may be willing to serve in situations in which they would receive less than the salary normally provided for pastors with many years of service in the ministry. This could be helpful to smaller congregations that may not be able to afford a higher pastoral salary. District presidents have begun to communicate with pastors over the age of 55 and are assembling the names of willing pastors to be used on call lists in appropriate situations.

Meetings with LCMS leaders

Representatives from the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), and WELS met for three days in December in Tucson, Ariz., in keeping with the encouragement given by the conventions of both WELS and the LCMS. The meeting, a follow-up on a similar meeting in December 2012, was not intended to be a formal doctrinal discussion but rather was an opportunity for informal discussions intended to clarify doctrinal positions and to gain a better understanding of current situations in each church body. While those who were at the meeting held various leadership positions in the synods, these talks did not take place among the constitutionally established bodies responsible for formal doctrinal discussions. No decisions were made and no formal declarations were adopted.

The major topic for discussion was church and ministry. The group had an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the doctrinal positions of the respective church bodies when it comes to the definition of “the church,” as well as to discuss in some detail the perceptions and understanding of the public ministry. The talks helped to clarify some issues, to remove some misunderstandings, and to shed light on the various terminology used in the three synods.

The talks were cordial and beneficial. All involved are committed to striving for a better understanding of where there is agreement and where genuine differences remain. The group agreed to hold another meeting in 2014.

Congregation Mission Offerings and statistical report

According to the synod’s bylaws, the COP is responsible for efforts to provide funding for the synod’s mission and ministry, primarily through Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO). District presidents are assisted in this work by district committees and/or by circuit pastors. Since the ministry financial plan adopted by the synod calls for a 4 percent increase in CMO in 2014 and 2015, the district presidents continue to encourage congregations, both in the setting of congregational commitments and in meeting or exceeding those commitments in actual offerings. The district presidents also provide encouragement to the relatively small number of congregations that do not submit a CMO commitment.

The synod publishes an annual report of congregational statistics. For the report to be as accurate as possible, it’s important that all congregations submit their statistics each year in a timely way. The district presidents will be encouraging those congregations that did not submit statistics last year to do so in 2014.

Translation Liaison Committee

In keeping with a resolution passed by the synod convention, the COP appointed a Translation Liaison Committee (see report on p. 37). The committee’s role is to open and maintain communication with the publishers of existing Bible translations, with the goal of providing input as those translations are revised.

Committee members include Prof. Joel Fredrich, Prof. Thomas Nass, Pastor Brett Brauer, Pastor Geoffrey Kieta, Prof. Ken Cherney, and Prof. Paul Zell. The committee has chosen Prof. Nass to serve as its chairman.

Marriage and human sexuality

A number of states have legalized same-sex marriage. Some have wondered if WELS congregations should have specific references to our biblical teaching about marriage included in congregational bylaws. While it’s recognized that having such a statement in congregational bylaws will not necessarily prevent possible lawsuits, some congregations, in their Christian freedom, may want to include one. The COP asked the synod president to provide the following as a suggested template for those congregations desiring such a bylaw statement:

Marriage and Human Sexuality

A. God instituted marriage at creation (Genesis 1:28; 2:22-24). God defines marriage as the lifelong union of one man and one woman (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:22-24; Matthew 19:4-6). God's institution of marriage is valid for all time (Matthew 19:6).

B. Sexual relations are to be exercised solely within marriage between one man and one woman. All other sexual relationships are contrary to God's will (Leviticus 18:22-23; 20:10-17; Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:10).

Synod's relationship with parasynodical organizations

Our synod is blessed with many organizations of WELS members that carry out specific types of ministry to address a variety of needs and opportunities. These organizations are not directed, funded, or controlled by the synod, but their work often interfaces with synodical priorities and programs. Recognizing the importance of cooperation, communication, and partnership, the Conference of Presidents will continue to explore ways to maintain and enhance the good relationship between the synod and our various WELS parasynodical organizations.

Special debt retirement offering

In keeping with a resolution adopted by the synod in convention in 2013, the COP, with the assistance of the Ministry of Christian Giving, has begun to develop plans for a special synodwide offering to eliminate the synod's capital debt. The debt of \$22.4 million has already been reduced to under \$8 million, and by 2015 it is expected to be reduced to about \$5 million. The offering will take place in 2015, with all congregations being given an opportunity to participate. An early retirement of the debt will free up \$1.6 million annually for mission and ministry.

Closed communion announcements

WELS congregations practice close(d) communion, but there is a wide variety in how our practice is communicated to worshipers. The COP produced and developed a sampling of "best practices" announcements that can be used by congregations to communicate clearly and lovingly what Communion is and why we practice close(d) communion. These announcements can be found at <https://connect.wels.net/aom/cop>.

External review for the termination of a divine call

To honor and uphold the divinity of the call, the COP adopted a statement outlining the principles and procedures to be followed in congregations considering the elimination of a called position for financial reasons. Recognizing that there is always the possibility that actions can be taken by a congregation that do not honor the public ministry or the called worker, the 2013 convention asked the COP to develop a process for an external review in such cases. The following has been added to the COP document entitled, "When a Calling Body is Considering the Elimination of a Called Position for Financial Reasons":

"While this document means to provide an orderly process to follow, the process may not always be carried out in as orderly a manner as it ought to be. The challenging nature of these situations, however, ought not to be used as an excuse for a selective following of the outlined process. Shortcuts aimed at moving things along more quickly could result in a process that does not honor the public ministry or the called worker. In such a situation, the called worker may request an external review of the process followed. The request should be made in writing to the district president within twenty-one days of the decision. The district president will appoint a review committee, consisting of a member of the district presidium, the circuit pastor, a layman from the district appeals committee, and, in the case of a teacher, the district's Lutheran Schools Coordinator, or his designee. The members of the district presidium will interview the appropriate parties and will be allowed to examine any pertinent material. The committee will provide an evaluative report to the worker and the district presidium. On the basis of that report, the district presidium will work with all involved as it takes the action it deems appropriate."

A look ahead

As it looks to the future, the COP will be addressing a number of issues. Those issues include, but are not limited to:

- Continuing to work with the Commission on Lutheran Schools and Martin Luther College to address the growing need for more elementary school principals and to provide additional ways to equip current and future principals to carry out their important work.

- Exploring ways for our congregations to retain and improve their ability to reach and retain the generation of young adult members now in their 20s and 30s.
- Finding ways to help congregations that are struggling with issues relating to changing demographics and current challenges, especially those in rural and urban settings.
- Continuing to work with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary to enhance and improve the vicar program.
- Continuing efforts to strengthen the circuit pastor system.
- Maintaining and strengthening our synod's identity as a confessional Lutheran church body in both doctrine and practice.
- Providing guidance to congregations considering alternate congregational structure and governance.
- Addressing the challenges to carrying out the approved ministry financial plan in light of 2014 CMO subscriptions declining by 1 percent rather than the 4 percent increase used for planning purposes.

Rev. Mark Schroeder, reporter

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president and chairman

Rev. James Huebner, first vice president

Rev. Joel Voss, second vice president

Rev. Robert Pasbrig, secretary (advisory member)

Rev. Jon Buchholz, Arizona-California District

Rev. Charles Degner, Minnesota District

Rev. Douglas Engelbrecht, Northern Wisconsin District

Rev. John Guse, South Atlantic District

Rev. Theodore Lambert, Pacific Northwest District

Rev. Peter Naumann, Dakota-Montana District

Rev. Don Patterson, South Central District

Rev. Herbert Prahl, Western Wisconsin District

Rev. David Rutschow, Southeastern Wisconsin District

Rev. John Seifert, Michigan District

Rev. Donald Tollefson, North Atlantic District

Rev. Earle Treptow, Nebraska District

WELS Support Committee

Our calling

“Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you” (Hebrews 13:7). The Support Committee has been Reestablished by the synod to carry out Christ's love for the faithful servants of the church who are now retired but do not have the financial resources to meet normal living expenses. The committee works to identify those individuals and/or their surviving spouses who have needs and provide them with the level of financial support that allows them to live with dignity and in reasonable comfort. Requests for support need to be made and approved in order for assistance to be provided. Application forms are used to determine the level of need when requests are made.

The following considerations affect the financial assistance the Support Committee provides:

- The fund is not an entitlement program.
- The fund is not an extension of the synod's pension plan. The financial assistance received is a charitable gift from the synod to those in need.
- The fund is not established to provide temporary assistance for those who resigned from the ministry.
- The fund does not grant financial assistance to those who need assisted living and nursing home care.
- The fund is not intended to be the main source of income. Assets and other means of income are expected to be used first, with Support Committee income supplementing those resources.

Our current situation

The committee is composed of five district first vice presidents of WELS. The first vice president in every district is the contact person for the Support Committee. The Support Committee looks to local pastors, circuit pastors, and district officers to be alert to possible circumstances of need on the part of retired called workers and their surviving spouses living in their district. These pastors inform the retired called worker/spouse needing help of the possibility of receiving financial assistance from the Support Committee and, if needed, communicate this situation also to the chairman of the Support Committee. In 2013 there were 28 family units throughout the synod receiving support. The amount budgeted to provide support for these family units was an expenditure of \$250,000 for the year. Sometimes during the course of a year new requests are made to the Support Committee. We thank our Lord for enabling our synod to take care of all those who needed assistance in 2013.

A look ahead

The Support Committee continues to provide assistance to retired called workers and/or their surviving spouses as long as synod finances make it possible. At the beginning of 2014 there were 27 family units receiving support, calling for a monthly expenditure of \$19,630 and an annual budget for approving requests of \$235,560. In some cases the requests needed to be reduced or declined because of budget constraints. The Support Committee budget is no longer able to cover the cost for subscriptions to *Forward in Christ*, *Meditations*, and *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*. The Support Committee thanks Northwestern Publishing House for covering the costs of these subscriptions in 2014 to provide support recipients with the periodicals requested.

Rev. Mark Johnston, reporter

Rev. Mark Johnston, chairman

Rev. Douglas Free

Rev. Paul Naumann

Rev. John Steinbrenner

Rev. Joel Zank

Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Our calling

The WELS Bylaws charge the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) to “serve under the Conference of Presidents by representing the synod in doctrinal discussions with other church bodies who are, or are not, in fellowship with the synod” and to “keep itself informed on the doctrinal trends in other church bodies.” This function is in keeping with the object and purpose of the synod: to “extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church” (WELS Constitution, Article IV).

To carry out its calling, the CICR meets twice each year as a commission, including regular meetings with the Doctrine Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), for theological discussion, information sharing, and mutual encouragement. The CICR has also assisted individuals and churches that are seeking to take confessional Lutheran stances around the world. Finally, commission members stay abreast of happenings in other Lutheran church bodies around the world through periodical reading and with visits to church conventions, conferences, and symposia.

Finishing their terms on the CICR in 2013 were Pastor Thomas Jeske, Pastor John Vieths, and Prof. Paul Wendland. They are thanked for their faithful service. Appointed to replace them were Pastor Bart Brauer, Prof. Bill Tackmier, and Pastor Benjamin Tomczak.

Our current situation

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) is our American sister synod with which WELS has been in fellowship since the ELS's organization in 1918. Presently the ELS has about 20,000 souls in roughly 130 congregations. The CICR maintains contact with the ELS in a variety of ways in order to express and foster our unity in faith.

Pastor Steven Lange attended the ELS convention in June 2013 as an official WELS observer. Convention business progressed rather quickly and concluded a day early. The convention passed a resolution calling for a thank offering to mark the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation and the 100th anniversary of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Delegates also charged the ELS Doctrine Committee with developing resources for apologetics, evaluating Bible translations, and comparing the ELS to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). They also called for the production of a special Bible study for the upcoming celebration of the Reformation and ELS anniversaries.

The ELS Doctrine Committee and the CICR met in September 2013 at the new WELS Center for Mission and Ministry. Participants discussed the principles of biblical hermeneutics and the relationship that the Lutheran Confessions have to the Holy Scriptures. These discussions revolved around presentations made by ELS President John Moldstad and Pastor Steven Lange. A vigorous and friendly discussion allowed the participants to come to a deeper appreciation of our synods' mutual desire to cling to every syllable of God's inspired, inerrant, and life-giving Word through a proper, ministerial approach to the Scriptures and to confess boldly all the teachings of the Lutheran Confessions without qualification or apology.

Baltic and Eastern Europe

In January 2014, WELS became the primary ministry partner of the Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC), as a result of an agreement with the ELS. The Gift of Life program in the Ukraine, however, will continue to be overseen by the ELS.

The ULC is a church body that faces challenges posed by an increasingly hostile government and a decrease in the financial resources that are used to provide support for congregations and workers. In spite of those challenges, the ULC continues to work faithfully to proclaim the saving gospel and to be a voice for confessional Lutheranism in Ukraine. The goal of this new relationship with WELS is to support the current work being done in Ukraine and to move the ULC to self-supporting ministry as soon as possible. The leadership of the ULC recognizes that the long-term plans of the ULC must incorporate the goal of self-support and self-sufficiency, prompting the church body to devise clear ministry plans that include an emphasis upon biblical stewardship. Both the CICR and the WELS Board for World Missions (BWM) believe that the current situation in the ULC strongly indicates that our synod's relationship with our sister church body in Ukraine would benefit greatly from having the support, guidance, and resources of the BWM. Simply put, the BWM will be able to help our brothers and sisters in Ukraine in a way that the CICR is unchartered and unable to do. As a result, both the CICR and the BWM are recommending that for the time being the ULC coordinate its gospel ministry efforts with the Europe Administrative Committee of the WELS BWM.

The CICR has maintained direct contact with the ULC, as well as with our sister church body in Latvia, through its contact man, Pastor Jonathan Balge, who was able to attend the CELC-Europe gathering in Sofia, Bulgaria, in summer 2013. The conference included participants from Albania, Bulgaria, Finland, Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine, and the United States.

Scandinavia

The CICR continues to promote contact and communication with sister churches in Sweden, Norway, and Finland. In recent years that work has especially been carried out through the CICR contact man to Scandinavia, Pastor John Vieths, whose faithful service in this role came to an end in 2013. Prof. Keith Wessel was elected to replace Pastor Vieths as the Scandinavian contact man.

In Sweden the Lutheran Confessional Church (LBK) had been wrestling with the doctrine of church fellowship in recent years. Thankfully, it seems that these matters have been resolved to a large degree, and we pray for continued peace through the unity of the Spirit granted through the Word of truth.

Our sister church in Finland, the Lutheran Confessional Church in Finland (SLT), continues to seek out other confessional groups in Finland for doctrinal discussion and exploration of fellowship. It seems that promising discussions have taken place especially with the Finnish Free Evangelical Lutheran Alliance of Congregations.

The Lutheran Confessional Church in Norway (LBK-Norway) was officially recognized as a newly-established, independent, sister church body at the 2013 WELS synod convention. The LBK-Norway has been reviewing a new translation of the Bible and seems mostly satisfied with what it has seen so far. The church's financial condition is stable, and it has been actively supporting some world mission projects.

Germany

The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany (ELFK) is a church body of nearly 1,300 members with about 24

congregations and preaching stations. Pastor Martin Wilde serves as president. The seminary in Leipzig celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2013, and there has been some shuffling on the seminary faculty, including the release of Pastors Günther Meinhold and Andreas Dreschler from their teaching duties. Pastor Jörg Kubitschek was called to teach liturgics. There is going to be a Summer Quarter in Europe at Leipzig in summer 2014. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Prof. Bill Tackmier will be teaching. The seminary is also establishing a program for the training of laypeople so that they can better assist in the work of their home congregations.

The CICR, through its Germany contact man, seeks to maintain and strengthen the ties of fellowship between WELS and the ELFK. Prof. John Brenner is currently serving in this role.

Portugal

Prof. Ken Cherney serves as the contact man to our sister church body, the Lutheran Church of Portugal (ILP). Pastor Artur Villares continues to serve as the anchor of this small church body and as an asset to the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) in Europe. It seems likely that the second pastor in the ILP, Pastor António Canoa, will be rejoining his family in Brazil, where he has expressed interest in helping WELS mission efforts.

Puerto Rico

It is the responsibility of the CICR to maintain contact with our sister church in Puerto Rico, the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Church. The CICR does this through Pastor Timothy Satorius, a liaison who makes periodic visits. The church body suffered the loss of a pastor in the past year but continues to be served by two other national pastors. Worship attendance is rising slightly, and there is a small, involved core of young people.

Japan

Since the Board for World Missions is bringing its work in Japan to a close, the CICR has been asked to begin contacting our sister church in Japan, the Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church. The CICR has asked retired missionary Kermit Habben to serve as our Japan liaison, and he has agreed to serve.

The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference

The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) consists of 24 confessional Lutheran church bodies throughout the world that are in fellowship with WELS. CICR members who are presently involved with the CELC include Prof. John Brenner (CELC Theological Commission), Prof. Ken Cherney (CELC THETA Commission chairman), and Prof. Thomas Nass (CELC secretary). Other WELS individuals on the CELC Planning Committee are Pastor Daniel Koelpin (CELC president), Mr. Mark Schulz (CELC treasurer), and Pastor Michael Duncan.

At the time of this writing, plans are going forward for the Eighth Triennial Convention, which will be hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Peru on May 30–June 2, 2014. This will be the first time that the convention has been held in South America. The topic will be “Sanctification,” and essayists have been selected, including Prof. John Brenner. We are looking forward to a rich time of spiritual fellowship and growth with like-minded believers from around the world. We are excited to know that six churches or more from around the world will be applying for membership in the CELC at the convention. Information about the convention and the CELC in general can be found on the CELC Web site at www.celc.info.

In 2017 the CELC is planning to meet in Germany, hosted by the ELFK. Since 2017 will be the Reformation anniversary year, the ELFK has already booked a facility in Grimma for June 28–July 2, 2017.

Free conferences

A free conference is a gathering that individuals attend, not as representatives of their church bodies, to discuss doctrinal and practical issues of the day. They are historically conducted outside the framework of fellowship (no joint devotions or prayers). In keeping with their historical use by American Lutherans, they have the goal of bringing about doctrinal clarity, clearing up misunderstandings between Lutheran church bodies, and giving a forum for the presentation of the truth of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Several free conferences of note took place in the last year, with presenters and participants from several different Lutheran church bodies in America, including WELS. More are planned for 2014. Members of the CICR continue to attend these conferences as they are able and to encourage others in our synod to do so.

Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod

At free conferences in the past few years, there has been increased interaction between Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) and WELS leaders. There have also been other informal contacts, some of which have involved members of the CICR.

Pastor Peter Prange attended the 2013 LCMS convention in St. Louis, where President Matthew Harrison was re-elected to a second term as synod president. The convention delegates wrestled with the matter of doctrinal oversight within the LCMS and passed a series of resolutions that emphasized and empowered the important work of circuit visitors (i.e., circuit pastors), district presidents, and the synod president to oversee all matters of doctrine and practice in a patient but determined way in order to build up doctrinal unity within the LCMS. Delegates also passed a resolution by an overwhelming majority to encourage LCMS synodical leaders to continue dialogue with leaders of WELS and the ELS.

For the first time in recent memory, LCMS representatives attended the WELS convention as observers. In a manner similar to the LCMS convention, delegates at the 2013 WELS convention in New Ulm resolved that the leadership of WELS “continue discussions with the LCMS to strive for true unity based on full agreement in doctrine and practice.”

A second informal meeting between leaders of the ELS, the LCMS, and WELS was held in December 2013 in Arizona, as a follow-up to the meeting held in December 2012. This meeting was not intended to be a formal doctrinal discussion but rather was an opportunity for informal discussion intended to clarify doctrinal positions and to gain a better understanding of current situations in each church body. Representing WELS were Pres. Mark Schroeder, First Vice Pres. James Huebner, Second Vice Pres. Joel Voss, Prof. John Brenner, Prof. Thomas Nass, Pastor Earle Treptow, and Prof. Paul Wendland. Eight leaders of the LCMS were present and three leaders of the ELS. The talks did not take place among the constitutionally established bodies responsible for formal doctrinal discussion. No decisions were made, and no formal declarations were adopted.

The major topic for discussion was church and ministry. The group had an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the doctrinal positions of the respective church bodies when it comes to the definition of the church, as well as to discuss in some detail the perceptions and understanding of the public ministry. The talks helped to clarify some issues, to remove some misunderstanding, and to shed light on the various terminology used in the three synods.

The talks were cordial and beneficial. All involved are committed to striving for a better understanding of where there is agreement and where genuine differences remain. The group agreed to hold another meeting in the coming year.

Inquiries from Africa

In recent years, inquiries have been received from individuals or small Lutheran church bodies in various African countries—Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda. For the most part the CICR has referred these inquiries to our sister churches in Africa and to our WELS mission personnel for follow up.

CICR special funds

The CICR now oversees six special funds that are used to cover contact expenses and to help sister churches in specific areas. The funds are the Baltic Eastern Europe Fund, the Germany Support Fund, the Portugal Fund, the Puerto Rico Fund, the Scandinavia Fund, and the Ukraine Fund. Gifts may be sent to the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry and will be received with thanks from the CICR.

A look ahead

This year CICR personnel will serve as convention observers in various places. Pastor Steven Lange is slated to attend the 2014 ELS convention. Pastor Benjamin Tomczak is planning to attend the 2014 convention of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. The commission sees attendance at these gatherings as opportunities to express interest in what is happening in other churches and to keep ourselves informed about events and activities in their midst.

CICR contact men will make field visits to their specific areas of responsibilities as they can.

Finally, CICR personnel will continue monitoring various Lutheran publications to stay informed on the Lutheran scene in North America and around the world.

Rev. Peter M. Prange, reporter

Prof. Thomas Nass, chairman

Prof. John M. Brenner, vice chairman

Rev. Peter M. Prange, secretary

Rev. Jonathan Balge

Rev. Bart Brauer

Prof. Kenneth Cherney Jr.

Rev. Steven Lange
Prof. Bill Tackmier
Rev. Benjamin Tomczak
Prof. Keith Wessel

Advisory:

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Rev. James Huebner, WELS first vice president
Prof. Paul O. Wendland, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary president

Ministry of Christian Giving

Our calling

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) serves on behalf of the Conference of Presidents to encourage every WELS member to “excel in the grace of giving” in Christ alone. It considers it a privilege to help God’s people make gifts to Jesus for his work in their congregations, synod, and WELS agencies.

The MCG assists the Conference of Presidents with its responsibility to fund the synod. The funding of the synod is provided through Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) as well as direct gifts to WELS from individuals and foundations. In the area of CMO, the MCG shares ministry opportunities and stewardship training resources with congregations and informs them of how, with God’s guidance, they can help proclaim Christ’s love through their offerings. In the area of direct gifts from individuals, the MCG sends regular letters and e-mails with ministry updates and opportunities for donations. Gifts from foundations are often the result of their consultation with the MCG director and other synod leaders regarding ministry opportunities.

The MCG also provides information about planned gifts that allows donors to give in a way that is beneficial for them, their families, and the ministries close to their hearts. The MCG provides 17 Christian giving counselors (12.8 full-time equivalents due to 7 of the counselors being semi retired) across all 12 districts of WELS to assist prospective donors with gifts of any kind. These services are free and confidential.

Our current situation

The major development for the MCG at the 2013 synod convention was the resolution to carry out a special synodwide offering from 2015–16 to eliminate the remainder of the synod’s debt, projected to be about \$5 million by the 2015 convention. The MCG will communicate the initial plans for this offering at the 2014 district conventions.

Other developments in 2013:

- The MCG continues assisting WELS’ ministerial education schools with their capital campaigns. Martin Luther College’s “Let the Children Come” campaign to support early childhood ministry gathered \$3.7 million as of January 2014, allowing construction of an early childhood learning center and support for the early childhood program and scholarships at the college. Meanwhile Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is celebrating its 150th anniversary with the “Heritage and Hope: Remembering . . . Rejoicing” campaign. Thank offerings totaled nearly \$878,525 as of March 2014. Luther Preparatory School’s campaign to celebrate 150 years of ministerial education at its Watertown campus will run from mid-2014 to mid-2015.
- The 2005 synod convention asked the Ministry of Christian Giving to work toward building up \$300 million for WELS endowment funds. By early 2014 WELS received \$18.4 million in gifts with another \$53.8 million expected from deferred gifts arranged by donors working with Christian giving counselors. In 2013 a distribution of \$590,668 was made from these WELS endowments, including \$336,359 to Missions and \$254,309 to Ministerial Education.
- The American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 provided the opportunity for donors 70.5 or older to make charitable gifts from retirement accounts. The MCG worked with WELS Foundation to communicate this, and WELS members took advantage of this opportunity to give more than \$500,000 to benefit WELS and its ministerial education schools.
- In partnership with WELS Foundation, the Ministry of Christian Giving mailed a charitable gift annuity appeal last fall to WELS donors age 60+. This has resulted in about \$222,669 in gifts toward the Lord’s work.

- The Ministry of Christian Giving worked with the Congregation and Ministry Support Group to develop a Walking Together emphasis based on the *Come Follow Me* movie.
- The Ministry of Christian Giving added a discussion board to our *An Encouraging Word* e-newsletter to hopefully gather feedback from churches regarding what they would like to see from us to help them encourage members toward joyful giving.
- The Ministry of Christian Giving hosted its annual WELS development training the first full week of January. Thirteen participants took advantage of the intensive, three-day training.
- At the turn of the year the following adjustments were made to our Christian giving counselor staff:
 1. Pastor Paul Soukup, who served the Western Wisconsin District as a semi-retired current gifts specialist, fully retired at the end of the year.
 2. Pastor Steve Staude, current gifts specialist, retired from full-time service to the Dakota-Montana, Minnesota, and Pacific Northwest Districts and began serving the Western Wisconsin District in a semi-retired capacity. Pastor Phil Spaude was called as a current gifts counselor to cover Staude's former territory.
 3. Mr. Vern Caulk retired as current gifts specialist for the Arizona-California District. Pastor Jonathan Stern accepted the call to fill this position.

A look ahead

In addition to continuing the core efforts and special projects described above, a main emphasis of the coming year will be technical improvements to our ministry. The MCG will enhance its online donations system by adding tribute gift and e-card options and by making the overall site mobile-friendly. The Ministry of Christian Giving is also working with WELS Communication Services to streamline online navigation to financial assistance at the WELS Web site. The new approach will guide users by topic to the services they seek whether provided by the Ministry of Christian Giving, WELS Foundation, WELS Investment Funds, or WELS Church Extension Fund.

The Ministry of Christian Giving is privileged to serve God and you by helping to fund the ministries that touch the hearts of WELS members. We are happy that these gifts in response to Christ's love are helping us as a synod to fulfill our calling of proclaiming Jesus' name to more and more people.

Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, reporter

Mr. Mark Handeland

Rev. Kevin Schultz

Mr. Robert Trojan

Mr. Robert Tupper

Advisory:

Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, director of WELS Ministry of Christian Giving

Communication Services

Our calling

Communication Services exists to assist the Conference of Presidents in communicating WELS' mission to the members of the synod. It is responsible for a clear and consistent communication of the synod's mission from the synod's national offices—and for exploring, supporting, and expediting innovative media usage, shared communication, and similar improvements on a continuing basis for WELS ministries and congregations. It is also responsible for reviewing and authorizing all new communications originating in the synod's national office. The current staff consists of five full-time equivalents and one part-time equivalent.

Our current situation

The Communication Services staff is focused on working on the synod's major communication initiatives. The most important initiative is to coordinate the various WELS communications platforms so that they have a single, recognizable look and feel. The department's goal is also to layer key communications, in other words, to address key

topics simultaneously across main communication channels. Communication Services also works with each area of ministry to identify their priorities—and then to communicate these priorities to laypeople and called workers alike through this cross-promotion strategy.

- *WELS Connection*, the monthly video production, is viewed in more than 800 congregations. Retired Pastor William Bernhardt stepped down as host of *WELS Connection* effective January 2014. He served as the host for more than 25 years—since *WELS Connection* started in 1987. As the host of *WELS Connection*, Bernhardt provided a consistency that helped the program become one of the most widely used communication tools in our synod. Beginning in 2014, each segment is hosted by the synodical representative whose area is featured that month. The *WELS Connection* video was enhanced with new music, a new open that includes photos of WELS people and our mission work around the world, and a new closing graphic that showcases our social media initiative. Northwestern Publishing House is now handling the subscription process so our churches will no longer have to actively subscribe each year. Congregations will automatically receive an invoice each December for the upcoming year. In an effort to encourage our churches to use the downloadable video file, we are offering two annual subscription rates: \$95 for downloadable version and \$105 for a DVD that will be mailed three times per year.
- *WELS Connection Close-up* is a bulletin insert that showcases the area of ministry featured during the *WELS Connection* video. It is another opportunity to share with our members the important work that is happening on their behalf as a synod. We currently print 137,000 inserts per month and ship them to congregations with the DVD.
- “Together” e-newsletter is e-mailed to more than 10,000 subscribers on the first and third Tuesday of each month. All stories are posted on the wels.net homepage, and more than 300 churches also use the print version we provide as a pdf file. This newsletter reports on news and events happening within the synod that every congregation should share with their members.
- The *WELS 2013 Annual Report* showcases the significant work that God in his grace is accomplishing through the people of WELS, including information from all synod entities and subsidiaries. Besides the print version, we are again offering a digital version that is optimized for mobile devices, www.wels.net/annual-report, so our members can now access this informative annual report on their tablets and smartphones. Our hope is that every member in the pew will know the blessings that God has provided WELS through their support.
- Social media is another important communications platform and tool to reach our members. Our Facebook page, facebook.com/welslutherans, has more than 15,000 followers. We are active daily on the Facebook page and invite more interaction from our followers. We also have a Twitter page, @welstweets, with more than 1,000 followers. We will again use social media as a communications and marketing tool for the upcoming WELS International Youth Rally in Knoxville, Tenn., this summer. With nearly 2,000 young participants attending the rally, the wels.net home page and our Facebook and Twitter pages will be the source of information and stories happening at the rally. It is a great way for parents, family, and friends of the participants to keep up-to-date on events at the rally and have these young people share their experiences and photos from the rally.
- Interactive Faith online Bible studies are held twice per year thanks to the Commission on Adult Discipleship. Led by a pastor or professor, these one-hour studies are broadcast live via the Internet. Many congregations gather as a group for the Wednesday night study; other WELS members connect as couples or individuals. “I’d like to study my Bible but . . .”, led by WELS President Mark Schroeder during February 2014, provided practical helps for people to study God’s Word on their own with confidence and understanding. This study was streamed to more than 2,743 unique viewers from 20 different countries with total streams of 10,223. A promotional postcard was mailed to all of our congregations in December. We also provided a bulletin insert and poster for pastors to use to promote the Bible class at their church. The next Interactive Faith online Bible study will be held during the fall of 2014. Pastor Michael Quandt will lead the study, titled “God’s grace to runaways—the book of Jonah.”

Communication Services remains committed and able to continue developing content for all other essential internal communication tools, including *Book of Reports and Memorials*, *Report to the Twelve Districts*, *Proceedings*—the official record of each synod convention, and live streaming and reporting of synod convention proceedings.

A look ahead

The synod’s long-range plan states:

Worldwide identity as Confessional Lutherans

- 1.1 - WELS will be more widely known as a confessional Lutheran church body, firmly founded on the Holy Scriptures and joyfully proclaiming the saving love of Jesus Christ in Word and sacrament to as many people as possible around the globe.

Forward in Christ, WELS' official monthly publication with a print run of more than 40,000, is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2014. The magazine is filled with inspirational and educational articles as well as devotions, Bible studies, and synod news items. Every church in the synod currently not receiving a bulk subscription to *Forward in Christ* will receive ten free copies of the magazine as each district is featured in 2014. Each shipment includes a letter from the district president encouraging them to become bulk or individual subscribers. We also include 25 subscription postcards that congregations can distribute to new members of their church. As part of its 100th anniversary, *Forward in Christ* is offering a digital subscription for smartphones and tablets. There are currently more than 100 paid digital subscribers.

The synod's official Web site, www.wels.net, had more than one million unique visitors during 2013. The Communication Services team is working with the WELS Technology team to redesign the [wels.net](http://www.wels.net) area of ministry content, and the redesign includes the consolidation of the Church Extension Fund, WELS Foundation, and WELS Investment Funds Web sites into a combined gift giving site. The new [wels.net](http://www.wels.net) Web site will be more topical than departmentalized—designed for the average layperson or non-WELS visitor. It will be easier to search and will be optimized for mobile devices. It will provide timely content for both synod members and non-members who want to learn more about WELS and what we believe. We ask every WELS church and school to proudly display the WELS logo and link on their congregations' Web sites.

Production is underway for the materials needed to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Luther Preparatory School (LPS) campus in Watertown, Wis. The names of the schools on the campus have changed—Northwestern University, Northwestern College, Northwestern Preparatory School, Luther Preparatory School. But the purpose remains the same: LPS150—LIVES PREPARED FOR SERVICE. The theme and new logo will be used in all digital and print materials produced by the LPS staff, Communication Services, and the Ministry of Christian Giving. The September *WELS Connection* video will feature the anniversary.

Many of our churches and schools are using projectors and digital display monitors in their facilities to keep members informed. Communication Services provides a gallery of PowerPoint and jpeg images for congregations to use as promotion of upcoming synod events and ministry opportunities. The images are updated monthly and available for use on church Web sites, display monitors, or newsletters. Visit the gallery at www.wels.net/streams/images and start sharing the many ways in which we work together as a synod to carry out our God-given mission.

Communication Services supports the outreach and ministry efforts of the entire synod, including all areas of ministry and subsidiaries. We live in an age where video is the primary method of communication. We need to have the capability of doing it well as viewers expect high quality video production. An Antioch II grant was awarded for a video production studio to be located within the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry. The studio will have an anchor desk, graphic backdrop display, studio lighting, HD cameras, video editing software, and a teleprompter. We are planning a target completion date of July 2014.

Mr. Lee Hitter, reporter

Advisory:

Rev. John A. Braun, Northwestern Publishing House

Mr. Lee Hitter, director of communications

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Prof. Daniel Leyrer, *Forward in Christ* consultant

Congregation and Ministry Support Group

Our calling

The Congregation and Ministry Support Group (CMSG) is part of Congregation and District Ministry and serves under the Conference of Presidents (COP).

The role of the CMSG is to serve congregations, schools, and their leaders by providing resources, training, and personal assistance so that they might carry out gospel ministry in the most faithful way on the local level.

The various CMSG units give focused attention to specific areas of congregational life. Resources that are offered include print/electronic material, “schools” for specialized leadership training, conferences, consultation, and Web connections. Each CMSG unit works with district coordinators to assess the needs of district parishes and schools and to provide resources, training, and personal assistance to meet those needs.

Strong and healthy congregations are best able with gospel ministry to expand the kingdom and to enable the synod to carry out its ministries. Thus the many CMSG programs and services benefit not only congregations but also the worldwide mission of WELS.

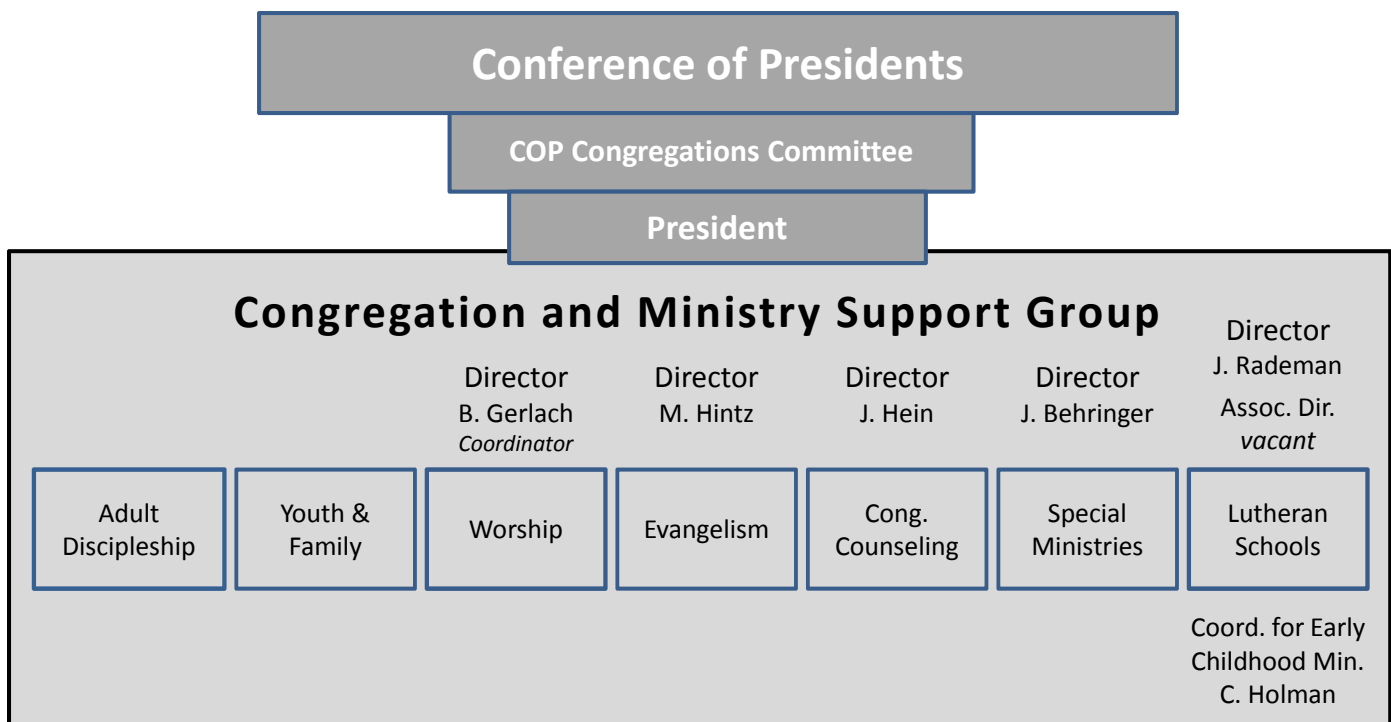
Our current situation

Along with the guidance provided to the directors by their commissions, the COP envisioned that guidance and coordination of CMSG program and priorities would come in part from the Congregation and Ministry Support Council (CMSC). After working with this model, it became apparent that adequate guidance and coordination could come from commissions and the COP, so the COP dissolved the CMSC at the end of 2013. The CMSC was chaired by First Vice President James Huebner and included CMSG directors, members of the COP Congregations Committee, BME representatives, and President Mark Schroeder.

Budgetary realities since 2009 have required a downsized CMSG with continued vacancies in some positions. In early 2014 there are seven people serving in called CMSG positions, down from 11 in 2009. This includes two positions prioritized by the COP and funded since 2009: the national coordinator for early childhood ministry (July 2011) and the director for congregational counseling (July 2013).

The Commissions on Adult Discipleship and on Youth and Family Ministry continue their work without directors and without synod subsidy support for their programs (except for partial funding for *Kids Connection*). The commissions rely on dwindling special funds to carry on limited programs.

The current structure of the CMSG is shown in this chart:



Although the CMSG is significantly downsized and unable to deliver the same level of services as in the past, each unit still strives faithfully and creatively to serve congregations, schools, and their leaders. The unit reports that follow give some of the details of this service in the cause of our Lord Christ and his kingdom.

For additional information, contact Pastor Bryan Gerlach, 414-256-3265 or bryan.gerlach@wels.net.

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, reporter

Appendix: Institute for Worship and Outreach

The Institute for Worship and Outreach (IWO) works under the auspices of the Conference of Presidents to assist and encourage pastors as they strive for excellence in public worship and mission outreach. The IWO is a group of WELS pastors who have become convinced, on the basis of study and ministry experiences, that worship forms and outreach methods can and must intersect confessionally and evangelically in efforts to proclaim the gospel of Jesus. With this perspective, they have come together to foster a unified philosophy of worship and outreach in WELS and to be a resource for pastors as they reach out to the lost with the gospel of Jesus in public worship.

The IWO carries out the following functions.

- **Publishing:** The institute publishes papers, articles, and blogs at www.worshipandoutreach.org.
- **Studying:** The institute is committed to an ongoing study of methods, practices, and customs that concern especially the interaction of worship and outreach. The institute assembles periodically and invites other WELS pastors to participate in the studying process.
- **Training:** Through resource development, program content, and publishing, the institute assists pastors interested in developing an overall strategy of outreach that includes an emphasis on public worship.
- **Consulting:** When invited, members of the institute will work with individual pastors and/or groups of pastors to offer advice and counsel concerning specific challenges in the field.

Since its inception in 2010 the IWO has presented to seven districts; the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Symposium; Martin Luther College Evangelism Day; Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Mission and Ministry; and the National Conference on Worship, Music and the Arts. Several members of the IWO are regular presenters at Schools of Worship Enrichment.

Rev. Jonathan E. Schroeder, reporter

Rev. Jonathan E. Schroeder, moderator

Rev. Jonathan Hein, co-moderator

Rev. Jonathan Bauer

Rev. Aaron Christie

Rev. Donn Dobberstein

Rev. Michael Hintz

Rev. James Huebner

Rev. Michael Geiger

Rev. Bryan Gerlach

Prof. Daniel Leyrer

Rev. Adam Mueller

Rev. David Scharf

Rev. Michael Schultz

Rev. John Steinbrenner

Rev. Nathan Strutz

Prof. James Tiefel

Rev. Earle Treptow

Rev. Chuck Westra

Rev. Jon Zabell

Commission on Worship

Our calling

The Commission on Worship exists to help parishes in their central activity of worship that glorifies God and strengthens his people. Music and liturgy consume much of the commission's time, but "worship" includes far more: an interest in the style, the forms, and the setting of worship; in preaching; in liturgical orders and rites; in church music for the congregation, choir, soloists, and instruments; in architecture and ecclesiastical arts.

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.

Our current situation

The last two years have brought significant blessings and milestones for WELS through the Commission on Worship.

The National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts

The National Worship Conference is the largest worship conference of all 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. After holding three conferences at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota (with a day at Martin Luther College in 2011), conference planners searched for a campus that would provide improved facilities, especially a larger air-conditioned chapel and a location closer to WELS' heartland. The triennial conference returns July 22–25, 2014, to Carthage College, Kenosha, Wis. The first three conferences were held there in 1996, 1999, and 2002. The Carthage chapel seats 1,700.

Worship conferences contribute to WELS' efforts at continuing education and pursuit of excellence. Several of the typically 60 presentations relate to the intersection of worship and outreach, including some cross-cultural themes. Many presentations advance the education and expertise of those who serve us in worship, both called workers and lay leaders. Some topics focus on themes meant to strengthen our unity as expressed in worship. All enable us better to proclaim "Christ's Love, Our Calling" to both the found and the lost.

Resources from past worship conferences are available at the Worship Connect site, <https://connect.wels.net/worship>. Double CDs of conference highlights are available from Northwestern Publishing House.

Schools of Worship Enrichment

The Commission on Worship has offered Schools of Worship Enrichment since 2002. By the end of 2013, we had served 283 churches. The soul membership of these churches served is one-third of WELS. School of Worship Enrichment events have been some of the most valuable and appreciated efforts of the Commission on Worship. Participant surveys at every site representing a wide variety of parishes throughout the country have given high marks to these events. In 2013 the commission experimented with a one-day event at some sites as an alternative to the full weekend event.

Christian Worship: Supplement

Sales of *Christian Worship: Supplement* (CWS) have far exceeded projections from 2008. By the end of 2013 1,963 accompaniment editions had been sold, indicating that a strong majority of WELS parishes are using CWS to some degree. The pew and spiral editions have a combined sales of 54,907 copies.

In addition to the 255-page pew edition and the accompaniment edition, other editions (with sales) are: electronic (601) and guitar (604). Purchase of the electronic edition makes use of the pew edition optional. Total sales of all CWS editions have exceeded \$1 million.

The release of CWS in 2008 came exactly 15 years after the release of the hymnal *Christian Worship* (CW). This puts CWS at the midpoint between CW and a new hymnal in 2024.

Publishing

The commission publishes two bi-monthly newsletters: *Worship the Lord* and *Preach the Word*. These newsletters are

used also in Hong Kong, Ukraine, Sweden, Indonesia, and parts of Latin America. In addition, a growing number of non-WELS pastors are making use of *Preach the Word*.

In September 2012 Pastor Paul Prange began a series of conversations about various aspects of preaching. The most recent editor, Prof. Paul Koelpin from MLC, began his service in September 2013.

A twelve-part *Worship the Lord* series on worship and the Confessions, planned by Pastor Stephen Valleskey, ended May 2014. After the theological and historical emphases of this series, a new series beginning this summer will focus on a variety of practical worship issues.

Commission membership

2013 marked Prof. James Tiefel's 25th year of serving on the Commission on Worship. Because of his many other responsibilities, he decided to resign in 2013. During his last commission meeting in September we thanked God for his service with a special worship service. Tiefel will continue to have an impact on WELS worship not only through his teaching at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary but also as a member of the executive committee of the hymnal project, a member of the Institute for Worship and Outreach, and a presenter for Schools of Worship Enrichment.

A look ahead

Ongoing activity

Many of the activities described above will continue in the future, encouraging WELS toward good worship variety and vitality.

Future activity

Newest initiatives

- **2024 hymnal project:** Several Commission on Worship members serve on hymnal project committees. The project report is included in the report of Northwestern Publishing House (see p. 113).
- **Hymnology:** Since its first meeting in July 2012, a committee has begun work on a hymnology curriculum. The mission is simple: "This curriculum will help teachers cultivate in their students a deeper appreciation for Christian hymnody." The curriculum will include up-to-date educational trends and teaching strategies for the 21st-century-classroom. The committee hopes to be finished with the project in 2015, with sample plans distributed at the 2014 worship conference. Initial committee members include two pastors (Jon Zabell and Jason Oakland) and six teachers (Julie Neujahr, Naomi Laabs, Beth Nolte, Mary Prange, Mike Marquardt, and Kevin Bode).
- **Worship education resources:** The Commission on Worship has determined to place higher priority on resources for worship education. This will include a variety of Bible study approaches and a professional volume on the theology of worship. Since the hymnal and *Christian Worship: Manual* were published in 1993, the Commission on Worship has published 16 projects, culminating in the 2008 hymnal supplement (these projects include two ongoing newsletters and the serial *Worship Music* keyboard resource, which is no longer published). The majority of these projects have been practical rather than educational resources. The last major publication for worship education was the 1996 curriculum *Come Worship Christ*.
- **2017 Reformation anniversary planning:** In anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the Commission on Worship is exploring revision of some historic Lutheran hymns. The language in translation of some hymns may be improved, making these worship masterpieces more accessible to 21st-century worshippers. New translations would speak with as much clarity and impact as found in newer English hymns, such as "In Christ Alone." In some cases, new music might be provided. See "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands" in *Christian Worship: Supplement* for an example of new music. The 2011 worship conference featured new translations of two historic texts, both with new tunes: "Jesus, Priceless Treasure" (CW 349) and "Where Wilt Thou Go?" (*The Lutheran Hymnal* 197).

For additional information, contact Pastor Bryan Gerlach, 414-256-3265 or bryan.gerlach@wels.net.

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, reporter

Rev. Jon Zabell, chairman

Mr. Philip Becker, vice chairman

Rev. Aaron Christie, secretary

Teacher Kevin Bode

Rev. Jason Hacker

Mr. Brian Heinitz
Dr. Kermit Moldenhauer

Advisory:

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, director of WELS Commission on Worship
Mr. Carl Nolte, Northwestern Publishing House
Prof. Joel Otto, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
Rev. Michael Schultz, hymnal project director

Commission on Evangelism

Our calling

The Commission on Evangelism exists to assist congregations and members to seize every opportunity the Lord provides to evangelize lost souls. In response to Christ's love for us, the Commission on Evangelism works to develop resources and provide training for congregations and individuals to help them fulfill their calling of sharing the love of Christ with everyone.

Our current situation

School of Outreach

The School of Outreach helps congregations with specific and ongoing guidance for evangelism planning, organization, and implementation of outreach strategies. Seventy congregations annually participate in this program conducted in various locations throughout the synod.

Reaching the "nones"

There is a growing number of people (estimated now at 1 in 5 Americans; 1 in 3 of those under the age of 30) who are classified as "nones." Regarding connection with a church, they claim: "none." Helped by a grant from the Antioch Foundation, the Commission on Evangelism is developing ways to help and strengthen all of our congregations and members with gospel outreach and witness, especially to the "nones" around them who need Jesus.

Devotions

The Commission on Evangelism produces the daily devotions that appear Monday to Friday on the WhatAboutJesus.com and wels.net Web sites. Additionally, the devotions are e-mailed to more than 9,000 e-mail subscribers, and many of those forward devotions to people they know. All in all, we are reaching many thousands of people every day with God's Word.

Online evangelism courses

The Commission on Evangelism is preparing evangelism courses that will be offered beginning this fall through the online program at Martin Luther College. There are three courses of one credit each: 1) The Mission of the Church, 2) Practical Evangelism for Congregations, and 3) Friendship Witnessing.

Evangelism Day at Martin Luther College

The Commission on Evangelism partners with the faculty of Martin Luther College to enhance the evangelism training of students at the college. Annual evangelism days have been conducted on the MLC campus since 2006. The day for focusing on personal and congregational evangelism starts with a worship service and includes two workshops for each class, large-group presentations, and various "elective" presentations.

Come Follow Me movie

This movie was released in October 2013 and is a collaborative effort of the Commissions on Evangelism and Adult Discipleship, Multi-Language Publications, and Northwestern Publishing House and is produced by Boettcher/Trinklein Media. The movie depicts what it means to be a disciple, a follower of Jesus, as it recounts the experience of Peter. The movie won the 2014 Christian Worldview Film Festival award for best short film. Study materials are available. Visit www.wels.net/comefollowme for more information.

Rev. Michael Hintz, reporter

Rev. Donn Dobberstein, chairman
Rev. Joseph Fricke
Rev. Michael Geiger
Rev. John Huebner
Rev. Douglas Tomhave

Advisory:

Rev. Michael Hintz, director of WELS Commission on Evangelism
Prof. Daniel Leyrer, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Commission on Congregational Counseling

Our calling

The Commission on Congregational Counseling (CCC) assists WELS congregations to assess and evaluate ministry, review biblical teachings and principles that impact ministry, develop plans to adjust and expand ministry in appropriate ways, and carry out their plans over a period of time. The CCC serves under the direction of the Conference of Presidents, serving as a means for district presidents to provide encouragement and support to their congregations.

Our current situation

The CCC received its first director when Pastor Jonathan Hein accepted a two-year call, running the length of this current biennium. It is an in-parish directorship. Hein remains at his congregation in Summerville, S.C., but he serves WELS with approximately 75 percent of his time. The synod provides a graduate assistant to Hein's congregation. The goal for those two years was to develop and implement the CCC program. This past year, the CCC has focused on developing the three core components of that program.

The Self-Analysis and Adjustment Program

This program helps churches to self-assess their ministry and adjust it as needed over the course of eight to twelve months. This program is complete and being utilized currently. In almost every church that has completed the program, statistics in certain key areas—percent of members in worship, ministrations, adult confirmations, volunteerism, etc.—have improved, by God's grace and blessing. Thus, the program seems to help churches increase their means of grace efforts. Our prayer is that the Self-Analysis and Adjustment Program ultimately sets up a cycle of planning, planning assessment, and planning adjustment that allows churches to better address ministry challenges year after year.

The Ministry Organization and Staffing Evaluation Program

This program helps church examine how human resources are aligned and utilized. This program is in its beta stage. It will be ready for full implementation later this fall.

The Congregational Servant Training Program

This program is an online resource that provides training to lay members in key areas: elder work, planning, finances and record keeping, etc. Currently the various modules are being produced, and the online platform is being developed. This program will come online, God-willing, in spring 2015.

C13

The Commission on Congregational Counseling also coordinated C13, which was produced as a joint effort of all the areas of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group, with the goal of enabling churches to plan to use Christmas Eve as an outreach event. C13 provided planning materials, worship folder templates, music suggestions, outreach resources, devotions, and leadership discussion pieces. More than 7,000 WELS members signed up for the C13 program. Collectively, as part of C13, WELS congregations sent out more than one million Christmas Eve invitations to their communities.

A look ahead

The first year of the 2013–15 biennium was used to develop the programs of the CCC. The second year will focus on training counselors to use the CCC programs so that they may be implemented on a wider scale. The training materials for these counselors are being developed. Training will take place later this year, with 30 counselors coming online in early 2015 and another 30 trained early in the next biennium. The hope is that a counselor could work with one to two congregations a year. Thus, in a given year, the CCC could work with approximately 10 percent of our WELS congregations.

Initially the cost for these programs is being kept low to encourage their use. The Self-Analysis and Adjustment Program is a flat \$300 fee. The Ministry Organization and Staffing Evaluation Program is a flat \$250 fee. The Congregational Servant Training Program will be an annual fee that gives churches access to all the training modules. If demand for these programs would continue to rise, the price point would rise somewhat to make the programs entirely self-sufficient.

Also near the end of this biennium, some of the materials being produced for the Congregational Servant Training Program will be packaged into a conference/retreat format, similar to the School of Outreach or School of Worship. This would allow groups of congregations, such as a circuit, to bring their leaders together for a weekend and receive training in key areas. A discipleship workshop will provide training in elder work. A planning workshop will provide training in various systems of planning, both short and long term.

Rev. Jonathan Hein, reporter

Rev. David Scharf, chairman
Rev. Adam Mueller
Prof. James Tiefel
Rev. Doug Tomhave

Advisory:

Rev. Jonathan Hein, director of WELS Commission on Congregational Counseling
Rev. James Huebner, WELS first vice president

Commission on Special Ministries

Our calling

The Commission on Special Ministries offers spiritual and other services to people whose needs are not adequately met by the regular ministries of WELS parishes, schools and agencies.

WELS Special Ministries reaches out to individuals, congregations, and families to offer specialized services and resources to address the special need(s) with which they are confronted. It serves people who are physically, mentally, or emotionally in need of special consideration in regard to their ability to learn, worship, and participate in local ministries and everyday living situations. Special Ministries also serves thousands of people who are away from their church home, such as military personnel, people living overseas, and those in prison or in some other institution.

To carry out its mission effectively and efficiently, the commission has appointed committees to focus on eight areas of special need. These committees include the

- Prison Ministry Committee,
- Military Services Committee,
- Care Committee for Called Workers,
- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry,
- Committee on Mental Health Needs,
- Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing,
- Mission for the Visually Impaired, and
- Health and Wellness Committee.

While the commission is devoted to serving WELS members, our Lord continues to provide opportunities to also proclaim the gospel to people who are unchurched or have fallen away from their former church.

Our current situation

Through its leaders and committees and in partnership with several WELS parasynodical agencies, Special Ministries mobilizes thousands of volunteers in a worldwide effort to meet the spiritual needs of people who might otherwise be ignored or forgotten. Due to the financial challenges of the past decade, all units of Special Ministries are almost entirely dependent on grants and the freewill offerings of individuals, congregations, and groups. In the present budget, \$30,000 has been restored to partially support the civilian chaplain program of Military Services. Other than that funding, only the Special Ministries administrative office is funded through the synod budget.

A report on the work of the commission and its eight units' committees follows.

Prison Ministry

WELS Prison Ministry administers an extensive ministry-by-mail program and provides training opportunities for lay people and pastors who would like to begin a local jail or prison ministry.

Through the ministry-by-mail program Prison Ministry has touched the lives of thousands of inmates throughout the United States. In addition to some face-to-face ministry in jails and prisons, it uses Bibles, Bible study correspondence booklets, devotional materials, pen pal letters, cards, bookmarks, and other religious materials to plant the seed of God's holy Word in the hearts of those incarcerated.

Partnering with Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries (WLIM), WELS Prison Ministry has organized a Jail Ministry Training Team, chaired by Pastor Rick Tuttle, to identify and train laypeople to serve as jail/prison ministry teams in their congregations. The Jail Ministry Training Team has trained hundreds of lay volunteers and called workers from congregations in 10 of the 12 WELS districts. This effort has been largely funded by a generous grant from the Siebert Lutheran Foundation of Wisconsin, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, and the Antioch Foundation.

This year Prison Ministry released one new publication: a Bible correspondence course on contentment, entitled *Enough is Enough*. Prison Ministry continues to produce additional Bible study correspondence courses, currently offering 20 level 1 booklets and 11 level 2 booklets. Level 2 booklets are sent to inmates after they have completed all of the level 1 booklets. As the name suggests, level 2 booklets are written at a higher reading level and provide more in-depth content. All of the materials are shared with Multi-Language Publications. After minor revisions, Multi-Language Publications passes on the materials to others, especially home and world missionaries.

An appeal to WELS members for expanding Spanish level 1 Bible study correspondence booklets was richly blessed by our Lord. Presently 15 level 1 booklets are printed in Spanish.

The following booklets are nearing completion: *Come Follow Me*, *Psalms 23*, *The Life of Job*, *Christian Parenting*, and *How to deal with guilt—study of David*.

Prison Ministry continues to provide printed materials for mentoring released inmates. *Facing Freedom* is a book to help inmates prepare for release. *Water of Life*, a series of 30, 30-minute Bibles studies, is intended for mentors to use with ex-offenders. *Friends in Christ—a Manual for Mentoring Ex-offenders* is also available. Prison Ministry produced "Congregational Guidelines for Dealing with Sexual Offenders" to help congregations form procedures to keep children, youth, and vulnerable adults safe from sexual abuse, to respond to a person who has been convicted or accused of sexual offenses, and to educate congregation members about child sexual abuse and prevention.

The Milwaukee County Correctional Facility—South processes some 24,000 inmates each year. Two WELS chaplains, Pastor Mark Wenzel and lay evangelist Martin Rosewicz, and a few lay volunteers offer 20+ hours of Bible classes, worship services, and one-on-one counseling each week. Lead Chaplain Wenzel schedules all religious programs at the institution. These WELS chaplains, together with local WELS volunteers, touch the lives of hundreds of inmates each week with the gospel. Prison Ministry has also begun to expand the scope of its ministry by involving local WELS congregations in mentoring released inmates through the Backpack Program. For more details on this effort or the entire ministry, contact specialministries@wels.net.

Funding for WELS Prison Ministry is provided solely through grants and gifts from organizations and individuals.

Materials for jail and prison ministry are available for free. Contact welspm@newulmtel.net, 507-354-3130, or P.O. Box 452, New Ulm, MN 56073.

Health and Wellness

The WELS Health and Wellness Committee encourages and assists WELS members and their congregations as they offer programs and materials for the spiritual, physical, and mental care to people of all ages with special needs. The programs are designed to offer such help as requested within their parishes and communities. The committee promotes and supervises ministry in the following areas: ministry to the aging; nursing and parish nursing; hospitals; long-term health care facilities; and independent and assisted living ministries. It also participates in the WELS Chaplain Certification program.

Ministry to the Aging includes the Serving Senior Symposium, aimed at men and women who want to learn, share ideas, and serve others. It also offers a "Ministry to Alzheimer's Patients and their Families" presentation.

The Health & Wellness Committee offers presentations and publishes materials to encourage and assist Christians to minister to others, especially those with special needs. It also provides counsel and instruction to pastors, congregations, and individuals as they nurture, guide, and assist others with special needs. Samaritan Partners, a support group for caregivers in the Milwaukee area, was recently started with the support and encouragement of the Health and Wellness Committee. The committee has also consulted with Martin Luther Memorial Homes in Michigan as it transitions to Martin Luther Elder Care Ministries.

The WELS Nurses Association unites WELS nurses committed to serving their Lord and others through their profession. The association "aims to educate and support nurses, encouraging them to serve others with Christ-centered care." The WELS Nurses Association includes WELS parish nurses and continues to provide a practical way for congregations to demonstrate loving Christian care and a clear gospel witness to members and the community. For more information or to get involved, visit www.welsnurses.net.

Military Services

The WELS Military Services Committee provides spiritual services to WELS members and others who serve in the U.S. Armed Forces. The committee carries out its mission through a ministry-by-mail program, a full-time civilian chaplain in Europe, and a national civilian chaplain and liaison to the U.S. military. The committee also participates in the WELS Chaplain Certification program.

Chaplain Joshua Martin and his family live in Spiesheim, Germany, and minister to hundreds of military personnel and civilians scattered throughout Europe.

As WELS' national civilian chaplain and liaison to the military, Pastor Paul Ziemer maintains a database of contact information for WELS members serving in the U.S. military. He prepares and distributes weekly devotions via e-mail and the WELS Web site. Ziemer coordinates training conferences for WELS military contact pastors, orients and mentors new military contact pastors, and when possible supervises chaplain trips to the Middle East or other areas of hostility. Ziemer has personally traveled to the Middle East to minister to American troops, but in recent years the military has declined to provide the necessary clearances for a WELS chaplain to serve in areas of hostility.

One hundred twenty-five WELS pastors who live near military bases in the continental U.S. and select nations overseas stand ready to serve our military personnel and their families as part-time WELS civilian chaplains.

The Commission on Special Ministries continues to send free copies of *Meditations* and a printed monthly worship service to military personnel and civilians on its mailing list.

WELS Military Services is funded entirely through designated gifts and grants. Offerings from individuals and groups such as the Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors continue to flow into the Civilian Chaplaincy Special Fund.

Send the names and addresses of those serving in the military or living in Europe to the Commission on Special Ministries at N16W23377 Stone Ridge Dr, Waukesha, WI 53188. An online referral service is also readily available at www.wels.net/military-services.

For more information, contact Pastor Paul Horn, Military Services Committee chairman, revhorn2004@gmail.com or 270-304-1682.

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry

The Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry addresses the spiritual needs of people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The ministry focuses on these areas:

- Promoting and marketing special education resources for Sunday School, Bible class, and other Christian instruction.
- Supporting, encouraging, and networking with families of children who have intellectual or developmental disabilities. A series of helpful Webinars for special needs families can be seen on the WELS Web site, www.wels.net. Families can access help through the Special Needs Family Network, a parent/caregiver support system.
- Promoting full participation in congregational life for members who have special education needs or have developmental disabilities.
- Coordinating services between our ministry and others who serve the same area of need, such as Jesus Cares Ministries and Lutheran Schools.

The ministry coordinates these resources:

- Dear Christian Friend—a special education curriculum that helps parents and churches teach people with developmental disabilities the basic truths of the Bible. Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry partners with Jesus Cares Ministries to produce this and other helpful resources.
- He Cares, We Care—encouraging cards and greetings are sent from the Special Ministries' office to 500 people with developmental disabilities.
- *Joy in Jesus*—an adult special education Bible study based on the book of Philippians.
- Webinar series—*Give Me A Break* is designed to meet the needs of families and other caretakers of people with special needs. Topics include: *In the Beginning—It All Starts with God*, a basic foundation that directs people to God's grace and promises that serve as our anchor; *It's About Time*, a time management program designed to help families get and stay organized to help eliminate some of the chaos of their day; *Guilt Trip, Anyone?*, a presentation that exposes guilt for what it often is (hopelessness) and directs the participant to Christ, who takes all guilt away; *Man, You Can't Fix It!*, a presentation that deals with the pressure to pursue all remedies to help a child with a developmental disability to the detriment of accepting and loving the child as he is; *Are You Crazy?*, a seminar that offers sound advice to deal with anxiety and depression that may occur as a result of stress.

For more information, contact Pastor Joel Gaertner, committee chairman, at jpgaertner@tlha.org, 920-517-0381 or contact the Special Needs Family Network at specialneeds@wels.net.

Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The WELS Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing seeks to help congregations share the gospel of Jesus Christ with members of WELS and others who are deaf or hard of hearing. The mission

- offers training and resources for ministry to deaf and hard of hearing people,
- loans assistive listening systems to congregations as they seek to improve their ministry to hearing impaired people,
- provides captioning for *WELS Connection* episodes, and
- is developing an American Sign Language course for Martin Luther College.

For more information, contact Mr. Dean Weigand, committee chairman, at mdhh@wels.net, 262-547-3096.

Mission for the Visually Impaired

The Mission for the Visually Impaired seeks to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with those who are visually impaired and others who may be unable to read due to physical or learning disabilities. The mission has been working on

- producing devotional and other materials in Braille, large print, and on cassette tape; and
- distributing materials and services free of charge to visually impaired people throughout the world.

Christian Worship: Supplement is now available in Braille. The small *Christian Worship: Supplement* translates into three volumes of Braille print, front and back, with 40 pages per volume. The hymnal in Braille takes up 6 volumes.

To order materials or to learn more, contact WELS Mission for the Visually Impaired at 375 Bridgepoint Drive, South St. Paul, MN 55075-2466; mvi@wels.net; 651-291-1536. Mr. Bill Bremel is committee chairman.

Care Committee for Called Workers

The Care Committee for Called Workers exists to assist WELS calling bodies in the spiritual, physical, intellectual, and emotional care of their called workers. The committee functions by providing congregations and other organizations with called workers with resources and guidance for supporting called workers and their families, encouraging workers in their ministries, and enhancing their quality of life.

The committee provides a free resource, *Care to Care*, which includes a DVD and a CD. The DVD provides a general overview of the purpose of the local care committee and portrayals of the three types of visits (entrance, annual,

and transition) for which the local Care Committee is responsible. The 2013 synod convention urged distribution of these materials to every church by circuit pastors. *Care to Care* comes with a booklet that provides more detailed information about Care Committee work, including how to start a Care Committee, suggestions for the types of questions to ask during the visits mentioned above, and suggestions for activities that the committee can carry out.

For more information, contact Pastor Paul Schaeve, committee chairman, at revpes2@hotmail.com, 989-684-6791.

Committee on Mental Health Needs

The Committee on Mental Health Needs assists WELS congregations, institutions, called workers, and lay members as they minister to one another in love, especially to those who are experiencing mental health needs.

The committee has developed several brochures for tract racks and for distribution to members. These brochures will be helpful for members of WELS as they seek to find a therapist, interview a therapist, and understand therapist language. Digital forms of the brochures are located on the public pages of the Committee on Mental Health Needs' area of WELS' Intranet site, Connect. Paper copies of the brochures are available through the Special Ministries office.

The committee is currently divided into several subcommittees.

The WELS/ELS Christian Therapist Network has constructed a Web site, christiantherapistnetwork.com, that contains a listing of therapists in fellowship with WELS and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod throughout the United States and Canada. As names of therapists continue to be added to this site, WELS members and called workers should have a listing of WELS or ELS people doing therapy work in the U.S. and Canada for consultation and referral purposes. Therapists in fellowship with WELS or the ELS who want to be included in this listing are encouraged to apply for membership in the network through the Web site.

A second committee is the WELS Social Media Task Force, which is gathering and producing materials to educate, provide self-help, and provide resources for helping others dealing with the challenges posed to the Christian by access to social media. The committee is in the process of designing a Web site, www.christiansinthedigitalage.com, to help share the vast amount of helpful information it has gathered and reviewed. Individuals, parents, schools, and congregations will find this information of value.

A third committee is Conquerors Through Christ. Its Web site, www.conquerorsthroughchrist.net, has begun to help men and women who are struggling with issues with pornography. This group provides Christian encouragement and guidance to those who are battling the temptation to use pornography. All of the work of this committee will be done in a way that respects the individual's need for confidentiality as well as the sanctity of the divine call.

The committee continues to make presentations to called workers at district gatherings and pastoral conferences on the subject of addictions, both prevention and treatment. The presentation involves three hours of interactive work. It begins with a study of 1 Thessalonians and the concept of brother encouraging brother. It includes descriptions of various addictions, ways to counsel the addicted person as a pastor or a brother in the ministry, and encouragement from the Word. We encourage your district to ask for a presentation. Five hours is the optimum time period.

For more information, contact Prof. John Schuetze, committee chairman, at schuetzj@wls.wels.net.

WELS Chaplain Certification Program

The Commission on Special Ministries has established a program for chaplaincy certification and ecclesiastical endorsement. This program offers continuing education in specialized areas of ministry. Many healthcare facilities, jails and prisons, and military installations are tightening their requirements for ministry in their facilities, especially if the pastor or layperson wants to reach out to more than one's own members. The program is open to all who wish chaplain certification, including pastors, teachers, staff ministers, and laity.

Chaplain certification and ecclesiastical endorsement are separate elements of preparing for chaplaincy work. Chaplain certification means that the applicant has fulfilled all of the class and clinical requirements for certification. Ecclesiastical endorsement is the church's affirmation that the worker is religiously trained, a member in good standing within his/her denomination, and performing or willing to perform a valid ministry in the name of that denomination. Applications for the chaplain certification program and a form for trained WELS workers to request ecclesiastical endorsement are available through the Commission on Special Ministries' office.

The chaplain certification courses are offered through Martin Luther College (13 credits online and 1 credit onsite at

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary). Members of the Chaplain Certification Committee serve as advisors to the students enrolled in the program.

For more information, consult Martin Luther College's Web site section on "Graduate Studies and Continuing Education" under the category of "Synod Certifications," or contact Pastor Dan Krause, chairman of the Chaplain Certification Committee, at chaplaincert@wels.net.

A look ahead

During the next year of the biennium, the Commission on Special Ministries and its committees will:

- Promote and continue to expand the WELS Chaplain Certification Program.
- Provide a training conference for military contact pastors in the United States.
- Launch a training course at Martin Luther College for training laypeople for nursing home ministry in cooperation with the Michigan District's Martin Luther Elder Care Ministries.
- Provide jail/prison ministry training in at least five new locations in the United States where opportunities are available to do face-to-face ministry in sharing the gospel with the incarcerated.
- Increase the scope of jail/prison ministry in the Minnesota District through the collaboration of Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries (WLIM) and the Lutheran Institutional Ministry Association (LIMA).
- Work with Multi-Language Publications to produce five more Spanish Bible correspondence booklets and five more English prison ministry Bible study courses that Multi-Language Publications can use for other outreach work.
- Identify and track via a database families who have children with intellectual or developmental disabilities and others who could benefit from the Special Needs Family Network and family support groups.
- Promote full participation in churches for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities.
- Coordinate services to those with special needs among agencies such as Jesus Cares Ministries, Lutheran Schools, and WELS Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry.
- Promote ministry to the deaf and hard of hearing by holding two informational networking meetings in key areas of the country.
- Encourage and help congregations to install hearing loop and assistive listening systems in churches and schools. A hearing loop system enables people using hearing aids and cochlear implants to hear a speaker without using hard-wired devices.
- Publish guidelines to assist called workers as they prepare for and enter retirement.
- Promote use of the Conquerors through Christ Web site for ministry to those who battle the temptation to use Internet pornography and expand the resources on the site.
- Expand the use of the WELS Web site and the public area of WELS Connect for making valuable Special Ministries resources available for ministry to the incarcerated or for mentoring the newly released, for military personnel, for families of those with special needs, and for Christians with addictions and mental health needs.

For more information on any or all of the areas of Special Ministries, visit www.wels.net/special-ministries or contact Pastor Jim Behringer, director of the commission, at 414-256-3241 or jim.behringer@wels.net.

Rev. Jim Behringer, reporter

Teacher Charles Buege, chairman

Rev. Joel Jaeger, vice chairman

Mr. LeRoy Robbert, secretary

Mr. Leon Brands, chairman of the Prison Ministry Committee

Mr. Bill Bremel, chairman of the Mission for the Visually Impaired

Rev. Joel Gaertner, chairman of the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Committee

Rev. Paul Horn, chairman of the Military Services Committee

Rev. Paul Schaewe, chairman of the Care Committee for Called Workers

Prof. John Schuetze, chairman of the Committee on Mental Health Needs

Vacant, chairman of the Health and Wellness Committee

Mr. Dean Weigand, chairman of the Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Advisory:

Rev. Jim Behringer, director of WELS Commission on Special Ministries

Vacant, administrator of the Prison Ministry office

Commission on Adult Discipleship

Our calling

God calls his people to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The WELS Commission on Adult Discipleship provides congregational leaders continuing education and resources to proclaim the Word and help people apply it to their lives.

Our current situation

The Commission on Adult Discipleship is grateful for the faithful service of commission members and especially thanks Pastor Phil Spaude for his faithful service. Spaude resigned from the commission when he accepted a call to serve as a Christian giving counselor.

The commission looks forward to the day when the Lord grants us a director, unfunded since 2009, and staff to be about the work of assisting churches in the area of adult spiritual growth. Our current limitations hinder our ability to develop new training events and resources. The absence of an administrator will continue to make it difficult to respond to needs and opportunities. When funding is available, the commission anticipates a director for Adult Discipleship.

Interactive Faith online Bible studies

Since 2011 Adult Discipleship has offered online, live Internet studies. In the past two years online classes have been taught by Pastors Mark Zarling, Don Patterson, Tom Kock, Paul Wendland, Keith Wessel, and Mark Schroeder. A growing number of congregations and individuals log on to study the Word together.

Schools of Adult Bible Study

Adult Discipleship has taught the first of a two-part continuing education course, a five-hour, three-session course for pastors. Participants gain a better understanding of the way adults learn and practice writing studies that engage adult learners. Most WELS pastors will have received the benefit of this training at conference settings, and the feedback has been positive. If we missed your conference, please contact us and we'll be happy to schedule a class for you.

Marriage enrichment

Adult Discipleship remains committed to helping congregation leaders help married couples apply the means of grace to their marriage. Favorable responses indicate the need and appreciation for this ministry. The commission has served hundreds of couples and trained dozens of pastors in eight districts through its 2012–13 marriage enrichment event, "Mysterious Marriage," an in-depth application of Ephesians 5. Couples learn to apply the gospel to their marriage as they access the power for marriage, live the covenant of marriage, pursue the purpose of marriage, and fulfill the roles of marriage. More information is available at www.wels.net. Search "marriage retreats."

Heart in Focus, a Christian financial course

Resources for *Heart in Focus* (facilitator's kit, participant's guide, PowerPoint/video) are available through Northwestern Publishing House at www.nph.net. One-day train-the-trainer workshops are available on request (requiring a minimum of 10 participants) to help those who will lead this effort in their congregation or community. For information, contact Adult Discipleship, 414-256-3278.

Schools of Stewardship and other Faith Focused Finance workshops

The Ministry of Christian Giving continues to promote the schools of stewardship. The cadre of leaders is diminishing because of a lack of continued training and support. However, trained leaders are still available by request.

Women's ministry

The third women's leadership conference, held July 2013 at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, was the highlight of this past year. Those who attended were given practical applications of God's calling for women as they exercise God-pleasing leadership in their homes, the church, and the secular world.

The number of Bible studies, devotions, Advent by Candlelight services, and other material of interest to women's ministries continues to increase, and everything has been transitioned to www.wels.net/women. Working with the Multi-Language Publications group, the committee is now able to offer some materials in Spanish as well.

The Women's Ministry Committee is expanding and formalizing its ability to mentor women's ministry groups across the synod. In the past year the committee has worked with a number of pastors and women on a one-on-one basis to begin, expand, or revitalize the way women serve in the congregation. The committee believes there is a need for more of this type of mentoring going forward.

Outreach movies

With the release of *Come Follow Me* in October 2013, there are now two outreach movies available. The first movie, *Road to Emmaus*, highlights God's plan of salvation. *Come Follow Me* shows what it means to be a follower of Christ by focusing on the life of the apostle Peter. Pastors Dave Kehl (Adult Discipleship), John Braun (Northwestern Publishing House), Paul Hartman (WELS Multi-Language Publications), and Michael Hintz (WELS Commission on Evangelism) have developed these DVD movies together with Boettcher/Trinklein Media, Inc. Bible studies and corresponding discussion guides are available. Visit www.wels.net/comefollowme.

A look ahead

Interactive Faith online Bible studies

The synodwide, live Internet Bible studies, known as Interactive Faith, are offered twice each year—once in the winter, once in early fall. The next class will be taught in the fall by Pastor Mike Quandt. For more information, visit <https://connect.wels.net/AOM/ps/adultdiscipleship>.

Schools of Adult Bible Study

The commission is in the final development of a follow-up, seven-session, ten-hour course to offer continuing education for pastors, teachers, and lay leaders who lead Bible studies. The course will be available on two Saturdays or, for those who prefer, two consecutive days. This training event will teach and model the best practices for creating, writing, teaching, and facilitating adult Bible studies. Because of limited availability, schedule early by calling Adult Discipleship at 414-256-3278.

Marriage enrichment

Marriage is under attack. Fight back with the sword of the Spirit. Adult Discipleship wants to help you.

Our 2013–14 WELS Marriage Enrichment Weekend event is entitled "Simple Marriage." Participants use God's Word and promise to work together to meet objectives such as: Overcome frustration, Appreciate incompatibility, Break patterns that destroy oneness, Use words that work, and Grow your intimacy.

WELS marriage enrichment weekends are available for regions where more than one pastor agrees to be trained for using the resource. An event planner can help you set up the weekend and www.wels.net will handle registration and fee collection. Pastors who participate receive all the teaching tools (workbook, PowerPoint slides, leader's notes, handouts, etc.) to use in their own congregations. See the schedule of WELS marriage enrichment events at www.wels.net/adult-discipleship. For information, contact Adult Discipleship at 414-256-3278. Up to a year of advance planning is required, so call soon.

Women's ministry

A revision of the *Heirs Together* Bible study is under way, with the goal of making it easier to use in a Sunday morning Bible study setting.

Visit www.wels.net/women to learn more about this ministry and to make use of the items found there.

Small group ministry

The commission continues to receive requests for help in developing Lutheran small group Bible study programs. With input from advisors from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, the Commission on Adult Discipleship intends to continue to seek out leaders in the area of small group Bible study and make their resources and experiences available to others. More WELS churches are growing in their understanding and practice of small group Bible studies. We intend to seek them out, help them network for their own sake, and also develop a network of WELS churches who will be available to teach others about small group ministry.

Rev. Randy Hunter, reporter

Rev. Randy Hunter, chairman

Rev. Aaron Boehm

Rev. Tom Kock

Rev. Phil Spaude
Rev. Dave Wenzel

Advisory:

Prof. Stephen Geiger, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
Rev. Dave Kehl, former director of WELS Commission on Adult Discipleship

Commission on Youth and Family Ministry

Our calling

The mission of the Commission on Youth and Family Ministry is to help and encourage parents, pastors, and youth workers to carry out ministry to the children in their congregations. The commission provides materials and support to enhance the spiritual development of children from birth through college.

Our current situation

With no funding or director in the national office, the work of the Commission on Youth and Family Ministry is currently being done in different ways. Committees have been formed to carry out specific tasks such as planning for the International Youth Rally, completing projects like the Everyday Bible Study series, and overseeing the ongoing work of the *Kids Connection* DVD. The International Youth Rally has been used to host workshops for youth ministry leaders. In 2012, the commission offered four different workshops. At the 2014 rally, the commission is offering seven different workshops. Each district has a Commission on Youth and Family Ministry district coordinator. These coordinators share information coming from the commission and also make suggestions to the commission. The district coordinators oversee a Web site for their districts that can be used to share information and materials within the district as well as with other districts.

A look ahead

As it looks to the future, the commission has several challenges facing it. One challenge is to find a way to fund the ongoing work it is doing. The commission has established a Youth Rally Fund. This fund provides seed money that can be used for the early planning and preparation of a youth rally. With careful planning, each rally will work to come in under budget so that the Youth Rally Fund will be replenished and available for youth rallies far into the future.

Another important project is *Kids Connection*, a youth-focused counterpart to *WELS Connection*. Throughout its long history, funding for *Kids Connection* came from the cost of subscriptions and special grants. With grants becoming harder to secure, the challenge is to try to find a means of permanently funding the portion that is not covered by subscriptions. The commission has been able to cover the remaining expenses out of its budget, but that is not a long-term solution to the situation.

The mission of the Commission on Youth and Family Ministry is the mission of our church. Although the challenges seem great, the commission is confident that Jesus will bless the children of our congregations as we take to heart and carry out the theme "Christ's Love, Our Calling."

Rev. Thomas Schneider, reporter

Rev. Thomas Schneider, chairman
Staff Minister Thomas Banaszak
Rev. Benjamin Berger
Rev. John Boggs
Rev. Snowden Sims

Advisory:

Rev. Raymond Schumacher, Northwestern Publishing House
Prof. David Sellnow, Martin Luther College

Commission on Lutheran Schools

Our calling

God's command to us as Christians is clear: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Luke 18:16). The mission statement of the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) is also clear: "to guide and assist congregations in advancing the gospel of Jesus by providing resources, training, and personal assistance for starting and strengthening Lutheran schools." It is with these two statements in mind that the CLS works to serve our 10,640 early childhood ministry (ECM) students; our 24,170 Lutheran elementary school (LES) students; our 5,128 Lutheran high school (LHS) students; and our more than 2,600 faithful and talented teachers, directors, and principals by providing resources and assistance to help strengthen the teachers and leaders of our schools, and encouraging a trusting and hope-filled vision for the future of our schools. The CLS helps our congregations and schools welcome children and young adults into the Savior's waiting arms through our schools' outreaching and nurturing ministries.

Our current situation

The commission has historically provided resources, training, and personal assistance in a wide variety of ways:

- Providing personal consulting with pastors, principals, directors, teachers, lay leaders, schools, and congregations to assist them with basic questions, legal questions, planning efforts, problem solving, and conflict resolution.
- Accrediting 20 to 30 schools each year through a nationally validated, intensive self-study and site-visit process.
- Developing approximately 450 call lists per year on behalf of the 12 district presidents.
- Managing personnel and statistical data for more than 2,600 teachers; 500 schools; and more than 40,000 students.
- Facilitating the induction and mentoring of new teachers and principals.
- Facilitating formative and summative assessments of directors, teachers, and principals.
- Helping to develop new school leaders from the ranks of experienced teachers.
- Serving as a visible link between 2,600 called workers and their church body through participation in various teachers' conferences and school visits throughout the synod.
- Publishing a weekly electronic news bulletin—the CLS e-News.
- Providing an accessible, useable, and attractive Web presence for our teachers and school leaders that provides information, resources, and the opportunity to interact.
- Developing and hosting district, regional, and national conferences for teachers and school leaders.
- Producing Bible studies, handbooks, planning guides, and video resources.
- Developing promotional materials to assist schools in raising the congregation and community's awareness of the school's mission to proclaim Christ through full-time Christian education.
- Coordinating a synodwide Lutheran elementary school testing program to assess our students' progress and provide tools for modifying instruction to improve learning.
- Representing WELS schools to the general public through interaction with the National Council on Private School Accreditation, the Council for American Private Education, the United States Department of Education, and various other state and national education agencies and organizations.
- Developing partnerships with the district schools coordinators, Northwestern Publishing House, Martin Luther College, and many others to provide resources to strengthen the instruction, materials, and curriculum within our schools (a list of resource partners is on the CLS Web site).
- Providing personnel support of our schools through its director, two associate directors, and two support staff.

During the last two years, key areas receiving attention from the CLS included the following:

- Partnering with the Task Force on Lutheran Schools to discuss the challenges and opportunities that exist for WELS schools and to provide insights, recommendations, and resources for the future. This task force was formed as a result of a 2011 synod convention resolution, and it concluded its work by the 2013 synod convention. A complete report on the work of this task force is also contained in the 2012 *Book of Reports and Memorials* and on the CLS Web site. A quick summary of task force activity:
 - Defined a set of foundational principles and guiding statements for WELS schools.

- Identified critical issues and resources for working with these issues.
 - Strengthening the mission/vision focus of our schools
 - Ongoing spiritual and professional growth
 - Appropriate funding and governance models
 - Enhancing and supporting school leadership
- Supported extensive reworking of the CLS Web site to better house the resources that address critical issues.
- Submitted a proposal to the 2013 synod convention to fund and staff the position of Forward with Lutheran Schools director/consultant to provide onsite consultant services for starting new WELS full-time children's ministries and revitalizing existing school ministries (Second Wind program). This resolution was approved with the additional responsibility of developing a School Leadership Candidate Training program and leading other leadership training efforts.
- Submitted a memorial to the 2013 synod convention that all non-accredited Lutheran schools achieve accreditation within the next five years or use appropriate tools to create a culture of continual improvement. This was approved after being modified to a ten-year goal.
- Submitted a proposal to the 2013 synod in convention to encourage all WELS schools to participate in the Voluntary Supplemental Contribution program.
- Providing spiritual and professional support for teachers and school leaders dealing with the challenges and complexity of operating Christian school ministries. While Christian education has always brought about the need for insights and wise decisions in serving children and families, the uncertain, complex, and rapidly changing world of education along with the enrollment, financial, and leadership challenges faced by many of our WELS schools, has resulted in the CLS experiencing an increase in the need for providing support and encouragement. Partnering in many situations with our district schools coordinators, our district presidents, WELS Human Resources, and others, CLS strives to help and serve called workers and church leaders by providing the encouragement, information, referrals, and prayers they need and request.
- Continuing Education for Called Workers (CECW): The CECW initiative for teachers, directors, and principals is encompassed in the three-part Growing Educators in Ministry (GEM) process. This initiative began as a task force working to redesign the Team Ministry Process (TMP) and has become a much larger multi-year WELS initiative to strengthen our educators and school leaders. This effort focuses on three areas: New Teacher Induction, School Leadership Development, and Veteran Teacher Development. The task force has been working for six and a half years of what is planned to be a ten-year redesign process leading to systemic processes that will continue to be reviewed and strengthened. The work and recommendations of the Growing Educators in Ministry Task Force and the CECW were supported by the synod in convention in 2011 and again in 2013 through passage of the resolution calling for a synodwide new teacher mentoring program and continuing education standards for all WELS teachers. In an effort to facilitate implementation of this resolution, a part-time CECW for teachers coordinator began work in January 2012 to facilitate and develop plans for new teacher mentoring and teacher professional growth in cooperation with Martin Luther College and the Commission for Lutheran Schools. The following is a synopsis of the focus and progress in the three areas of development:
 - New Teacher Induction (NTI): The New Teacher Induction is thriving through 36 New Teacher Center trained mentors who are working with approximately 77 first- and second-year teachers in the three Wisconsin districts and the Minnesota and South Atlantic Districts. The WELS Growing Educators in Ministry Task Force has patterned much of its work after that of the New Teacher Center from Santa Cruz, Calif., and its affiliate, the Wisconsin New Teacher Center. Supporting ministerial training school graduates during their formative initial years of ministry is critical for maximizing the synod's investment in these workers and is essential for the future health of our system of Lutheran schools. The redeveloped teacher mentoring program was designed to bring mentors into first- and second-year teacher's classrooms for observation and coaching. The program features training programs for mentors and periodic forums to support networking between mentors and beginning teachers. A WELS Induction Process Handbook and mentor standards have been written to facilitate greater understanding of and participation in the program. As the synod in convention resolved that the assignment of MLC teacher candidates be accompanied by a system of new teacher induction, efforts continue to extend the WELS New Teacher Induction Program to all new teachers in all districts of the synod. To this end, Martin Luther College has added a professor of continuing education position/ New Teacher Induction. Teacher Jonathan Schaefer began serving in this position in July 2013. His initial task has been to design a synodwide process of new teacher mentoring that incorporates the

best qualities of the current program and adjusts to the variety of contexts in a nationwide program. Reaching this goal will involve continued cooperation with New Teacher Center for mentor training, development of distance mentoring models via technology, the identification and training of qualified teachers as mentors, and the development of a financial model based on the congregational support of \$1000 per year for two years. Finally, full implementation of the induction program will support the seamless introduction of new teachers to formative and summative assessment models and ministry development plans (MDPs) being designed to promote continuing growth of WELS teachers. Presently the WELS New Teacher Induction Program is being managed by Mrs. Kathie Horn and the CLS, trained lead mentors, and WELS induction team members. Oversight of the induction program is to be handed off to MLC by May 2014.

- **School Leadership Development:** The Commission for Lutheran Schools continues to provide and promote the ten Leadership Institute Modules (LIM) developed by the New Teacher Center. This partnership has allowed the CLS to utilize the research and expertise of the New Teacher Center to train WELS leaders to co-present LIMs for WELS principals, early childhood ministry directors, pastors, and other school leaders. The first WELS-sponsored Leadership Institute Module was held in November 2009. Since then, LIM seminars have been presented in all 12 districts reaching more than 250 WELS school leaders. The institutes focus on the following areas:

- Culture and climate
- Time management and delegation
- Meeting facilitation
- Decision making
- Supervision—summative assessment
- Supervision—formative assessment
- Using data to improve instruction
- Professional learning communities
- Working with new teachers and school staff
- Vision and leadership style
- Possibly a module based on *Foundations*

The goal for the coming years continues to be that all school leaders would participate in the Leadership Institute Modules with a majority of them completing all ten. The LIMs have been positively received by school leaders; however, they are simply a first step in strengthening school leaders. CLS and MLC continue to examine additional methods of supporting, strengthening, and preparing school leaders. One area being explored is mentoring models designed to supplement the LIMs and better enable principals to implement plans for positive school change. By coaching principals in spiritual, emotional, and physical health, CLS believes we can increase the health of our schools.

MLC is nearing the completion of the development of its Master of Science in Educational Administration degree to meet the needs of both principals and early childhood directors.

The CLS has strengthened the Principal Apprentice Mentoring program by having a dedicated mentor (Dr. Lee Plath) serve as both the new teacher instructional mentor and the principal mentor. Dr. Plath currently mentors all eight of the graduates assigned in May 2013 as principal apprentices. Work continues on sustainability of this program.

Congregations are being strongly encouraged to provide sufficient Administrative Release Time (ART) for teacher-principals to be out of their classroom and focused on leadership, supervision, and administrative functions. This time is also known as School Administrative and Leadership Time (SALT). The goal is that all principals have one hour per week of SALT for every 7.5 students in their school (e.g., a 75-student school provides 10 hours per week). Congregations that are calling a principal are now expected to work through a pre-call document that helps congregations focus on the key role of the principal and the need to provide an appropriate amount of SALT, appropriate resources for training, appropriate secretarial support, etc.

- **Veteran Teacher Development:** The 2011 synod in convention adopted the proposal expressing an expectation for ongoing continuing education for all teachers and directed that standards for continuing education be developed along with a plan for creating, following, updating, and reporting a Ministry Development Plan (MDP). Continuing education standards for WELS teachers will be built upon the WELS Teaching Standards and Continuum. These teaching standards and the continuum

have been rolled out to WELS schools in conjunction with guidance to support a model of formative and summative teacher assessment aimed at development of Ministry Development Plans (MDPs) to promote teacher growth and student learning. It is a goal to see future development of the continuing education standards and MDPs be coordinated through a full-time position at Martin Luther College. Currently, Principal James Henrickson leads the development of the veteran teacher portion of the Growing Educators in Ministry (GEM) process.

- Transitions in staffing: Teacher Ken Proeber completed his service as the CLS interim associate director in June 2013, as new associate director James Rademan was welcomed to the CLS team at that time. Rademan's main role has been to direct the WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) program. In addition, Rademan prepares call lists, provides support to schools and called workers, and represents WELS schools.

CLS thanks Ken Proeber and others who served during the vacancy of 2012–13:

- Dr. LeDell Plath: interim director of WELSSA; Principal Apprenticeship Program coordinator
- Mr. Karl Peterson: CLS special project coordinator (grant writing and special projects)
- Teacher Kathie Horn: interim coordinator of WELS New Teacher Induction
- Teacher Jim Henrickson: coordinator of the GEM initiative
- *Foundations*: A major emphasis for the CLS has been encouraging our schools and congregations to make use of *Foundations*. Released in April 2013 and produced in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House, this program is designed to meet parents and congregations at their need points of love, joy, peace, and hope and use this connection to strengthen the understanding of and value placed on WELS schools. The program is made up of a book, a book study guide, a faculty Bible study, sermon studies, hymns and songs, classroom devotions, and more. This suite of materials is designed to inform parents and congregation members about the advantages of Christian education and to help bring parents and teachers and congregations into a closer partnership as they approach the education of children from a Christian perspective. The *Foundations* project has six specific objectives:
 1. Reestablish God's Word as the bedrock for Christian education.
 2. Serve as a powerful witness for Jesus as the Lord of life and our Savior from sin.
 3. Reassert the proper application of law and gospel as the basis for the motivational model used in WELS schools.
 4. Reorient WELS schools to a supportive role that assists the work of parents in training their children in body, mind, and spirit.
 5. Provide opportunities for non-member parents to participate in group Bible study during their children's first years in a WELS school or childcare center.
 6. Embrace the parent-teacher partnership as a critical component of the Christian education model.

Additional information on *Foundations* is available at the Northwestern Publishing House Web site, www.nph.net.

- WELS Early Childhood Ministries: Each day we thank God for the opportunities he provides to share the gospel with little ones and their families from both WELS congregations and their communities throughout the synod. As we consider this privilege and opportunity, CLS is focusing on ways to encourage and equip congregations in their efforts. Included in those areas of focus is work through the early childhood district coordinators. The coordinators are implementing ways of connecting and collaborating within their districts for those in early childhood ministries. Regional conferences for early childhood ministry directors and teachers as well as joint principal/director conferences are planned for spring 2013. In addition:
 - A listserve for early childhood ministry principals and directors has been created and is actively used each week.
 - The 2013 synod convention passed a resolution that encourages all WELS schools to become accredited or to use some other appropriate tool to create a culture of continual improvement. In response to this, the CLS is working to create an addendum to the K-8 set of WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) standards for those schools with a preschool (age 3) through grade 8. This will provide such schools with an accreditation tool for preschool through grade 8 in one process.
 - The CLS has received a grant that will provide the funding to consider ways to equip and support early childhood directors in their leadership roles.
 - The Ministry Committee of the Synodical Council is considering the current status and needs for WELS early childhood ministry, particularly relating to staffing.
 - The WELS National School Leadership Conference is again including a strand of workshops for directors and teachers in early childhood ministry, including an all-day pre-conference workshop.
 - Support continues for congregations and individuals in early childhood ministry. This support includes phone conferences, resources, workshops, and onsite visits.

- The continued decline in the number of Lutheran elementary schools (now at 318, down from 345 in 2006–07) and the decline of enrollments in both our Lutheran elementary schools and area Lutheran high schools (ALHS). See chart below).

WELS Lutheran Schools Enrollment by Level, 2006–13

Level	2006–07	2007–08	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14
Early childhood	9,354	9,567	9,823	9,600	10,019	10,725	10,423	10,640
Elementary	26,035	25,712	25,289	24,597	24,300	24,644	24,254	24,170
ALHS	5,912	5,847	5,816	5,510	5,577	5,600	5,128	5,128

Support efforts include the work of the Task Force on Lutheran Schools, increasing awareness of the critical issues affecting our schools; working to enhance the quality of instruction and leadership; encouraging the accreditation of schools, developing materials to help increase faculty, parent, and congregation understanding of why our schools are important; and providing limited onsite consulting through Forward with Lutheran Schools’ Second Wind program.

- Voluntary Supplemental Contribution (VSC) program: Encouraging support for this program and using the resources to benefit and bless our schools continues to be a major emphasis of the CLS. All of our schools are currently encouraged to contribute \$4.00 per high school student and \$7.50 per elementary and early childhood student. Current numbers indicate that approximately 40 percent of WELS schools participated in the program this last year. This includes 182 LES (56.5 percent), 18 Lutheran high schools (75 percent), and 11 stand-alone early childhood ministries (.6 percent). The program has provided approximately \$153,000 to support ministry to Lutheran schools. One hundred percent participation could allow the CLS to rebuild the Forward with Lutheran Schools program and process to help start new and strengthen existing ministries, and it could provide additional resources for district ministry and leadership growth in WELS schools. Contributing schools receive the *Parent’s Crosslink* newsletter, Learn360 video-streaming library service, a promotional CDToolkit, and the knowledge that they are true partners in allowing the services of the CLS to exist. The funds are allocated for district ministry to schools (\$46,000), CAPE membership (\$6000), *Parents Crosslink* subscriptions (\$11,000), and Learn360 subscriptions (\$20,291) with the remainder used to cover further development of the GEM program and CLS support staff salaries/office expenses.
- The WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) program: The list of accredited schools in WELS continues to grow. WELSSA can expect 30 or more site visits annually as it continues to accredit schools new to the program and reaccredit those schools coming to the end of their five-year accreditation cycle. We are thankful for the hundreds of active and inactive educators who volunteer to serve on site visitation teams as part of the process. WELSSA maintains three core tools to accredit early childhood ministries, Lutheran elementary schools, and Lutheran high schools. Updates and revisions to our accreditation tools now allow us to accredit all grade levels (Prek-12) in a single site visit.
- The priorities of the Commission on Lutheran Schools: The CLS team worked with Mr. Karl Peterson to rank the current list of priorities and tasks of the CLS. This process helped CLS leaders identify the areas that need the greatest amount of time and effort. Efforts are continually being made to direct energy and time to the highest priorities. One of the greatest challenges facing the CLS is holding to those established priorities and not doing ministry and providing resources that have not been identified as priorities. This is especially difficult considering the many challenges and opportunities for our school ministries and the lack of full-time personnel to spur leadership growth and to help with onsite consulting to start new school ministries and strengthen others.
- Forward with Lutheran Schools (FWLS): The ministry of Forward with Lutheran Schools, which had been part of Parish Assistance, was incorporated into the CLS in 2009–10. Forward with Lutheran Schools continued to provide personal onsite consulting services to congregations who desired to begin new children’s ministries and also to congregations who desired to strengthen/revitalize their schools through the Second Wind program. Through the use of part-time lead consultants and associates, the program served some of the congregations requesting help through 2012; however, in September 2012, the CLS officially ceased all onsite ministry support work for Forward with Lutheran Schools and Second Wind. Congregations seeking assistance are now encouraged to use district services if available and are provided some support through phone, email, and Skype. There continue to be requests both for new starts and school strengthening. Due to this ongoing need, the 2013 synod convention approved calling a full-time associate director for the CLS by July 1, 2015, subject to funding, who would lead Forward with Lutheran Schools, Second Wind, and the School Leadership Candidate Training program.

A look ahead

The following areas will be a significant focus for the CLS during the coming year(s).

- **Staff transitions:** The summer of 2014 will be a time for significant staffing transitions in Lutheran Schools. Teacher Greg Schmill, director for the Commission on Lutheran Schools, accepted a divine call in February 2014 to serve as the president of the Ministry Leadership Institute, an entity of Grace in Action. Schmill will continue to serve the CLS office through June 2014. The Conference of Presidents issued a divine call to Teacher Jim Rademan, CLS associate director, to replace Schmill, and Rademan accepted the call in early April. Rademan's brief, but excellent, focused work with WELSSA will draw to a close this summer as he officially transitions to the role of CLS director on July 1. The Conference of Presidents is calling for a new associate director. In addition, Mrs. Rachel DiGiorgio, CLS administrative assistant and project manager since 2004, will be leaving the CLS this summer and will be greatly missed. Through all of these changes, the CLS will remain focused on the mission of providing resources, training, and personal assistance for starting and strengthening Lutheran schools!
- **Communication:** The CLS will continue to strive to communicate more effectively with our teachers and school leaders. The strengthening of the CLS e-News is a key part of that effort. Each week, more than 2,200 individuals receive critical information, educational insights and resources, news about our schools, a dose of humor, and the vital link to call updates in their CLS e-News. The goal is that all WELS teachers, directors, and principals receive and read this newsletter. Sign up by visiting www.wels.net and click on "Subscriptions" at the bottom of the page. In addition, significant improvements to the CLS Web presence occurred in spring 2013, and improvements will continue. A team of WELS teachers work with WELS Technology and the CLS to provide and monitor Web site content, to encourage interaction, to invite others to make use of the CLS Web presence, etc. The goal is to develop and maintain an accessible, useable, and attractive CLS Web presence for our teachers and school leaders that provides information, resources, and the opportunity to interact.
- **The 2013 synod convention passed key resolutions impacting schools.** Work has taken place and will continue to take place to implement these decisions. Look for
 - continued encouragement to our schools to become accredited or to use some other appropriate tool to create a culture of continual improvement. The CLS will be making adjustments in order to be able to provide sufficient support and accreditation teams for a growing number of schools.
 - continued efforts to seek increased CLS staffing in order to once again provide the services of Forward with Lutheran Schools for starting and strengthening schools and for leadership enhancement for our principals and directors.
 - continued efforts to increase support for our school leaders and help for congregations to understand the role of principals and ECM directors
 - continued encouragement for WELS schools to participate in the Voluntary Supplemental Contribution program in order to support current and expanded services of the CLS.
 - continued and growing CLS efforts to identify, encourage, and begin training potential school leaders and continue the Principal Apprenticeship Program
 - continued encouragements that congregations highly prioritize funding each called worker's continuing education at least as much annually as the cost of new teacher induction (currently \$1,000 per teacher).
 - continued CLS encouragement that schools provide Administrative Release Time (ART), also known as School Administration and Leadership Time (SALT), for principals according to WELSSA guidelines.
- **WELS Growing Educators in Ministry (GEM):** There remains much to be done in the area of GEM. Here are the highlights of planned growth in the three key areas:
 - **New Teacher Induction process:**
 - Complete expansion to Minnesota and South Atlantic Districts.
 - Prepare for and carry out expansion to Nebraska and South Central Districts in 2014–15.
 - Prepare to serve the projected 110 first- and second-year teachers with 59 mentors in 7 districts in 2013–2014.
 - Carry out a focused effort to strengthen the services provided to teachers assigned to Lutheran high schools.
 - Complete transition of oversight of process to Martin Luther College in May 2014.
 - Transition to greater training responsibility resting with MLC in the persons of Teachers Jon Schaefer and Kathie Horn as WELS establishes its own consortium and training sessions.
 - Work with MLC on modifications needed to the current NTI process in order to expand to all 12 districts and serve every graduate no matter where he or she is assigned.
 - **School leadership development:**
 - Efforts will be made to revitalize the use of Leadership Institute Modules throughout WELS.

- Exploration will occur of principal mentoring/coaching processes such as Coaching Leaders to Attain Student Success (CLASS).
- Use of a recently received grant to help fund the School Leadership Candidate Training program with a hoped for rollout this summer with the goal of producing potential Lutheran elementary school principals and early childhood ministry directors.
- Additional steps to provide a new CLS position specifically focused on leadership training.
- Additional CLS and partner programs that support, strengthen, and prepare school leaders.
- Veteran teacher development:
 - Continued development and promotion by GEM and the CLS of the use of Ministry Development Plans by teachers and principals.
 - Continued promotion of the use of WELS teaching standards and continuum to all on the CLS Web site.
 - Continued development of both formative and summative assessment for WELS teachers and tools to record these assessments.
 - Continued encouragement for congregations to provide \$1,000 continuing education funding per teacher in their budgets.
- The National Leadership Conference planning is underway for the June 15–18, 2015, event, which will be held at the Country Springs Hotel and Conference Center in Waukesha, Wis. The theme of the conference is *Soul, Mind, Body—Sanctified Through and Through*. Presentations will focus on themes such as leadership in the classroom, in early childhood ministry, in technology education, in urban education, in health and wellness, and in the secular world.
- Call list production improvements: The time and labor intensive service to provide teacher call lists for the district presidents will be modernized, strengthened, and streamlined with the addition of the WELSource database in July 2014. The improvements to the database will allow the CLS to search for and identify call list candidates and better handle the necessary information of more than 2,600 teachers. An upcoming step will be an online data entry system that will allow teachers to enter and update their biographical information directly into the database, saving many hours of data entry for the CLS that can then be redirected to other school supporting and strengthening efforts.
- Technology: The CLS will continue to work with several individuals and groups to encourage the use of technology in our schools. Efforts include the following:
 1. Area Lutheran High Schools Online continues to fulfill its mission to develop and offer a set of high school online courses taught from a scriptural perspective. Area Lutheran High Schools Online continues to expand its course offerings to include Advanced Placement courses, language courses, and religion courses. Superintendent James Grunwald oversees the program.
 2. WELS Technology continues to provide leadership and assistance for individual schools and the commission's technology needs.
 3. PowerSchool: a Web-based student information system that is subscribed to by our schools and supported and coordinated in connection with the CLS office, has solidified its base, and it is hoped that more schools will find this product useful and subscribe through the CLS.
- Uncalled teachers: As a result of downsizing within schools and the closing of once-thriving schools, there exists a significant number of qualified and willing, yet uncalled, teachers in WELS. Every effort is being made and will be made to use these teachers on call lists and to look for opportunities for these people to return to ministry. Please keep these teachers in your prayers.
- Common Core task force: The WELS Task Force on Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will continue through the next years to provide resources, training, and personal assistance to our schools as they seek to understand the impact of the Common Core standards and plan appropriately. The WELS CCSS Taskforce works in close conjunction with area Lutheran high school and district leaders to carry out its work. Thus far, the task force has researched the status of CCSS and WELS, planned presentations for the 2013 and 2014 Area Lutheran High School Convention, and also developed a set of FAQs on the CCSS and WELS schools that is being published in the CLS e-News. As the education and implementation process continues, school leaders and teachers, from all ministry types, will be encouraged to actively participate through their federation/association/district connections and professional learning communities.
- Task Force on WELS Testing: Our current testing program, the TerraNova Achievement Test given in grades 3-8 every spring, reveals that on average the WELS class of 2014 outperformed the nation in the areas of reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies achieving a 73 to 79 percent national percentile ranking, which is 23 to 29 percentile points higher than the national average. The value-added benefit of the WELS instructional

program is clearly evidenced for all three levels of learners as each group consistently outperformed similar students across the country in each of the five content areas. As the contract for the current testing program is due to expire in 2015, the CLS has appointed a task force to study the current testing program of WELS schools and make recommendations and decisions on the future of the program. This group is studying the timing of the tests, the format—written or electronic, the impact of Common Core State Standards, and much more. Input has been sought from WELS teachers through a recent survey.

As the Commission on Lutheran Schools works with all of the above, we continually express our gratitude to the Lord for the faithful service of all of the teachers, principals, and staff of our WELS schools! Their tremendous service to the children and families of the schools, their reflection of the love of Christ in all they say and do, and their willingness to go the extra mile make it a joy to partner with them in the ministry of our WELS schools.

Those working on behalf of Lutheran Schools are blessed to receive daily comfort from the gospel, which flows to us from the eternal promises of our Savior. The news of free and full forgiveness, won for us by Jesus' death and resurrection, motivates us to carry out the daily tasks entrusted to our care. Our ministries are designed and delivered with one goal in mind—to extend and preserve the proclamation of that gospel to children and their families through our Lutheran early childhood ministries, Lutheran elementary schools, area Lutheran high schools, and our Lutheran prep schools.

May our gracious heavenly Father bless this effort for Jesus' sake! May the students who hear the proclamation of the gospel in our Lutheran schools be well-equipped to lead faithfully the Lord's church well into the future!

Teacher Greg Schmill, reporter

Teacher James Sievert, chairman

Rev. Phil Heyer, secretary

Rev. Matt Brown

Mr. Ron Conradt

Teacher Stephen Granberg

Teacher Shawn Herkstroeter

Mr. Jim Sexton

Advisory:

Teacher Greg Schmill, director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools

Teacher James Rademan, associate director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools

Teacher Cindi Holman, national coordinator of early childhood ministries

Prof. Robert Klindworth, Martin Luther College

Vacant, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Translation Liaison Committee

Formation and purpose of the committee

The 2013 synod convention resolved that a new standing committee be appointed by the Conference of Presidents (COP) for Bible translation matters. The purpose of the committee is “to evaluate major Bible translations; to communicate with their editors and publishers; to offer, when appropriate, suggestions to improve such translations; and to share its findings with the synod at large” (*Proceedings*, p. 68).

In November 2013 the COP established this committee and gave it the title “Translation Liaison Committee” (TLC). The COP appointed four professors—two from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and two from Martin Luther College and three parish pastors, all of whom were involved in the WELS translation discussions of the previous three years. The TLC held its first meeting in December 2013.

Initial work

The TLC expects that it will eventually interact with the oversight committees of the English Standard Version, the New International Version, and other translations, in keeping with the directive of the 2013 WELS convention.

The TLC began its work, however, by focusing on the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB), since the HCSB is currently in the process of producing a revision. As the result of an initial inquiry, TLC members were invited to meet with representatives of the HCSB in Nashville to discuss the upcoming revision. A meeting was held on Jan. 15, 2014, at the LifeWay headquarters, involving Dr. Micah Carter; Dr. Ray Clendenen; Dr. Jeremy Howard; and two members of the TLC, Pastor Geoffrey Kieta and Prof. Thomas Nass.

HCSB plans

At this January meeting, the HCSB overseers shared information about the upcoming revision. Though the release date is not able to be disclosed, the HCSB publishers are taking a top-to-bottom look at the HCSB with a view toward improving it in whatever way they can.

The HCSB overseers emphasized repeatedly that they want the HCSB to be a Bible translation that serves Christians of many denominations including Lutherans. As proof of their intent, they have put two confessional Lutherans on the nine-person oversight committee for the HCSB—Prof. Andrew Steinmann of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and Prof. Andrew Das of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The HCSB overseers went so far as to say that they would be delighted someday to help in the production of an HCSB Lutheran Study Bible.

The HCSB overseers stressed that they welcome input from WELS and will consider it carefully. They had read the WELS “Review of the 102” on the Internet and already had a pretty good idea of the major concerns of WELS about the HCSB. They also reacted quite favorably to some of the suggestions that we shared in the meeting.

The TLC is not naïve to think that all of the suggestions of WELS will be accepted and that in the end the HCSB will win easy acceptance in WELS. But the TLC recalls that in the “Review of the 102” there were many favorable comments about the HCSB, with a number of reviewers commenting that the translation could use a good revision.

The HCSB does have some things in its favor. It does not do anything controversial with gender language or gender roles. It is stronger in its presentation of messianic prophecy than the NIV. The publishers are Christians who would like to make it easy for others to use their text. Maybe if a good revision is undertaken that addresses the concerns of WELS, the HCSB could become a translation that WELS could coalesce around in the future. Time will tell.

As a result of the meeting, the TLC is making plans to submit recommendations from WELS to the HCSB overseers during the next year. Regardless of whether or not the HCSB becomes a translation widely used in WELS, the TLC is looking forward to helping it become a better vehicle for communicating God’s Word.

Input welcome

The TLC welcomes suggestions from WELS members, especially concerning the HCSB, as the TLC formulates official recommendations from WELS for this translation. For more information, visit www.wels.net/tlc.

Prof. Thomas Nass, reporter

Prof. Thomas Nass, chairman

Rev. Glenn Schwanke, secretary

Rev. Brett Brauer

Prof. Kenneth Cherney, Jr.

Prof. Joel Fredrich

Rev. Geoffrey Kieta

Prof. Paul Zell

Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee

Our calling

The 2009 synod convention authorized the Conference of Presidents to re-establish the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee (CECW). The convention directed the CECW to develop a coordinated and comprehensive program of continuing education for called workers that meets real ministry needs and that understands various learning styles and preferences of our workers, realizing that programs of professional growth can be flexible and can incorporate many different kinds of professional growth opportunities. While growing up strong as oaks of righteousness is the goal for every believer, there is a special application we can make to our called workers. Since public ministers are charged with leading and feeding eternal souls, it is especially critical that pastors, teachers, and staff ministers be growing up strong in every way God intended for them to grow.

Continuing education for teachers and staff ministers

Our current situation

Much of our efforts are aimed at carrying out the work of recent synod conventions regarding continuing education. The 2011 convention resolved that the committee a) provide New Teacher Induction for beginning teachers, and b) establish a means for called teachers to create and report Ministry Development Plans (MDP) to encourage and document each teacher's planned professional growth. The 2013 convention resolved a) that Martin Luther College expand its graduate program to specifically train more Lutheran school principals and early childhood directors, b) that the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) identify, encourage, and begin training potential school leaders and continue the Principal Apprenticeship Program, c) that congregations highly prioritize funding each called workers continuing education at least as much annually as the cost of New Teacher Induction (currently \$1,000 per teacher), and d) that schools provide Administrative Release Time for principals according to WELSSA accreditation guidelines.

New Teacher Induction (NTI)

MLC has called Prof. Jon Schaefer to coordinate NTI. He is working with the CLS to provide induction services to all new WELS teachers in their first and second years of teaching. New teachers receive help from informational seminars during the academic year and mentors trained to provide instructional feedback through weekly contact, monthly conferencing, and quarterly observations. A \$1,000 annual fee for the new teacher's first two years covers all costs associated with the program, including teacher seminars and mentor costs such as travel, substitute teachers, trainings, and stipend. The work culminates with the new teacher creating his/her first Ministry Development Plan.

In 2013–14, 77 first- and second-year teachers are being mentored by 36 mentors in five WELS districts (Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin, South Atlantic, Southeastern Wisconsin, and Western Wisconsin). In 2014–15 that number is projected to be 110 new teachers and 59 mentors in at least seven districts (South Central and Nebraska added) with new districts added as the Lord blesses. WELS New Teacher Induction follows a program of mentoring established by the New Teacher Center (NTC). Teachers Jon Schaefer and Kathie Horn are preparing to become NTC trainers to enable WELS to establish its own consortium and trainings.

Ministry Development Plans (MDP)

WELS principal James Henrickson is leading the work involved with MDPs. Tools are being developed to assist principals and teachers to conduct professional reflection according to established WELS teaching standards. Tools include both formative (coaching) models of teacher assessment that encourage professional growth and summative (evaluative) models of teacher assessment to provide information for the Commission on Lutheran Schools and calling bodies. Tools and processes will be piloted before synodwide dissemination.

Principal/early childhood director training and support

In keeping with educational leadership preparation standards in the United States, Martin Luther College is creating a new graduate program designed specifically for preparing principals and early childhood directors for WELS schools. The graduate program results in a Master of Science in Educational Administration. WELS principal and early childhood director standards were created and approved by Martin Luther College and the Commission on Lutheran Schools to guide the curriculum. Martin Luther College is seeking approval from its accreditor to offer the degree.

The Commission on Lutheran Schools has improved the Principal Apprentice Mentoring program by having a dedicated mentor serve as both the instructional and principal mentor. Specific goals and timelines have been added with an option to complete the training as part of a graduate-level course through MLC. Dr. LeDell Plath developed the current program and is mentoring the eight new principals assigned in 2013. Dr. Plath will complete the second year of mentoring these principals, but he will not be mentoring additional principals in subsequent years. The CLS is working to assure the sustainability of the program by identifying a mentor for the future.

Staff ministers

As the use of staff ministers continues to grow—currently one in eight WELS members belongs to a congregation served by a staff minister—continuing education becomes equally important for those serving in this form of public ministry. The staff ministry program at MLC marked its 20th anniversary in 2013, so preservice education for staff ministers does not have nearly the long tenure that our training programs for pastors and teachers do. However, in spite of that there have been many informal opportunities for continuing education that have already been available for staff ministers on the circuit, conference, and district levels. In much the same way that the work of a physician assistant parallels the work of a physician, the work of a staff minister serving in a parish parallels the work of a pastor. Therefore, many of the resources that have been or are being developed for pastors are able to be profitably used by staff ministers for their spiritual and professional growth. One continuing education event specific for staff ministers is the three-day Staff Ministers Conference held each year at the end of April. A graduate-level opportunity currently in development is a Master of Arts in Theology degree at MLC that will be open to staff ministers and teachers alike.

Other

The Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) continues to offer Leadership Institute Modules through district coordinators. The CLS is exploring additional ways to support and strengthen school leaders. Several models of coaching and mentoring are being reviewed. The 2013 synod convention approved—subject to funding—the addition of a CLS position to head up CLS leadership efforts (including the School Leadership Candidate Training process) and to carry out on-site consulting with churches to start and strengthen school ministries. Tools are being provided to congregations to use to consider the vital nature of the principal's role and the congregation's part in providing time, training, and support for its school leaders.

Martin Luther College continues to develop a variety of flexible and affordable options for continuing education programming specifically for WELS educators and staff ministers. Such additional options include Webinars, online and satellite courses, and faculty inservice materials across topics and areas of ministry resulting in 60 percent greater continuing education participation at MLC from 2012–13 to 2013–14.

A look ahead

The CECW will continue to encourage synod entities to carry out the will of the synod conventions. Future work includes:

- Piloting and implementing the Ministry Development Plans and accompanying assessment tools.
- Working with WELS Technology to develop a Web site dedicated to teacher continuing education and to develop plans to include additional teacher information in WELSource (e.g., Ministry Development Plans).
- Reaching all districts with New Teacher Induction.
- Gaining permission from the Higher Learning Commission for MLC to offer the graduate degree for principals and early childhood directors.
- Providing long-term solutions for principal/director recruitment, training, mentoring, and support.
- Developing and carrying out a School Leadership Candidate Training program (formerly Administrative Candidate Training Program) to identify, train, and mentor future principals and directors.
- Developing and offering the Master of Arts in Theology degree for teachers and staff ministers at Martin Luther College (formerly offered through Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary).
- Encouraging all schools to budget at least \$1,000 per teacher annually for continuing education.
- Ensuring each WELS principal and early childhood director has the time necessary to do their leadership and administrative work (1 hour per week for every 7.5 students in the school).

Continuing education for pastors

When it comes to the “pastor side” of continuing education much that is reported elsewhere in the *Report to the Twelve Districts* provides rich opportunity for pastors to be growing spiritually and professionally. So much of what is

offered by the various units of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group provides rich opportunity for pastors to strengthen their ministries (see their reports, printed on pp. 13-36, for details).

However, when it comes to those whose primary focus is on the spiritual and professional growth of pastors in the field, much of that work has been entrusted to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS). The seminary has always understood that its single purpose given to it by the synod (preparing faithful parish pastors) has two critical elements. The initial task is to prepare young (and at times, not so young) men to be ready to enter the pastoral ministry. However, the equally critical parallel task is to encourage and assist those already in the parish ministry to continue to grow spiritually and professionally for the sake of their souls and the souls they serve.

In order to underline a renewed emphasis on that task of encouraging and supporting the growth of current pastors, in 2010 the seminary established Grow in Grace: the institute for continuing education at WLS. Here are the vision and mission of Grow in Grace:

- The vision of Grow in Grace is that pastors in fellowship with WELS will find Grow in Grace a welcome partner in planning and implementing their pursuit of personal spiritual growth and professional lifelong learning.
- The mission of Grow in Grace is to advance the cause of the gospel in the 21st century by making ministry impacting continuing education resources available and accessible and by connecting pastors with partners who will encourage them in their spiritual and professional growth.

Under God's blessing, Grow in Grace seeks to reach that vision and accomplish its mission under four broad goals. Below are the four goals with a brief summary of current activities and future plans (God-willing) under each goal.

Curricular resources

Develop and/or deliver affordable ministry impacting curriculum resources in the four theological disciplines offered by Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (biblical, historical, systematic, and practical).

- WLS continues to offer for-credit courses on campus (during Summer Quarter and Winterim), online (fall, spring, and summer semesters), and at satellite locations around the synod. While face-to-face, on-campus enrollment has been struggling for several years, enrollment in online courses continues to grow. This summer WLS has four courses being offered.
- With the hope of not only continuing to see online course enrollment grow but also of reinvigorating face-to-face, on-campus enrollment, Grow in Grace is working on a revision of the Master of Sacred Theology (STM) degree. That revision of the STM would reduce the number of CE degrees offered by WLS from three [STM, Master of Practical Theology (MPT), and Master of Arts in Religion (MAR)] to one. The best elements of the MPT program would be rolled into the new STM. Martin Luther College (MLC) continues to move ahead with taking over the MAR degree, which will enable teachers and staff ministers to pursue additional continuing education course work focused on theology. Having the MAR run through MLC also provides credits from an accredited college so that courses can be applied toward maintaining teaching certificates.
- WLS professors also continue to offer many shorter presentations by request to circuits, conferences, and districts.

Mentoring for new pastors and continued support (Pastor Partners)

Provide formal and informal collaborative opportunities for called workers to learn from one another, as well as celebrate ministry milestones with their peers.

This part of the work of Grow in Grace goes by the name Pastor Partners. There are two key emphases of Pastor Partners. The first is providing mentors/coaches for individual pastors. The other is providing celebrations of ministry that assist pastors and their spouses to mark key ministry milestones.

Here is an update on the growth of the Pastor Partners mentoring initiative:

1. Well over 80 percent of the WLS graduates of 2012 and 2013 requested a mentor. Participation in mentoring is optional for WLS graduates. The goal is to make the initiative such a clear benefit that it soon becomes an easy choice for a graduating senior to request a mentor.
2. The mentoring program received a grant for \$25,000 for 2014 from the Antioch II Foundation. This grant will cover the costs of operating the entire mentoring initiative for this year. The long-term plan is to seek such special gifts to support for another year or two until congregations benefitting from the mentoring initiative begin to assume those costs. That latter path of funding mentoring awaits formal synod endorsement of this mentoring initiative.
3. Once the mentoring initiative is well established, the goal is to investigate the wisdom of providing trained coaches for experienced pastors who would like to work with a pastor who has been trained in helping an experienced

brother toward spiritual and professional growth. Two districts, Minnesota and South Central, have already begun to explore the potential of such trained pastor/coaches.

Here is an update on the Celebrations of Ministry retreats that are also part of Pastor Partners:

1. From April 29–May 1, the third annual Renewed in Grace was held in San Antonio, Texas. This retreat focused on pastors (and spouses) who were celebrating ten years in ministry. The retreat was built around Bible studies and workshops designed to strengthen joy in ministry for those serving God's people.
2. At the same time and location as the third ten-year retreat was being held, the first ever Finishing Well in Grace retreat also took place. This retreat was designed for pastors (and spouses) who have completed 25 years of ministry.
3. The long-term plan is to add two more such retreats:
 - One would be called Begun in Grace and would be for pastors (and spouses) who have just completed the mentoring initiative.
 - The other would be called Completed in Grace and would focus on pastors (and spouses) who are entering retirement.

Evaluating ministry

Develop and/or deliver fresh and relevant resources that a pastor can use to assess his ministry faithfulness and plan for spiritual and professional growth in partnership with lay leaders and ministry peers.

- The goal is to deliver each year an essay and an accompanying resource packet (workbook) that can be studied by pastoral circuits around our synod. These essays and resources packages are intended to help pastors study and discuss key areas of spiritual and professional growth and provide them with resources designed to help them pursue such growth under God's blessing.
- In 2011 the first essay and resource packet was developed entitled *Ordained for a Life of Growth*. This packet was distributed in May 2011 to all circuit pastors. The circuit pastors were encouraged to study and discuss the essay (and the accompanying planning resources) with the pastors of their circuit. The goal was to help more pastors develop an annual pattern of planning for spiritual and professional growth. A survey of all circuit pastors conducted by Grow in Grace indicated that 82 percent of WELS pastoral circuits either had discussed the paper and resources or planned to do so.
- In January 2013 the second essay with accompanying resources was distributed. This package, entitled *Reclaiming Our Christ-Centered Lutheran Devotional Heritage*, sought to help pastors (and other called workers) to strengthen their personal devotional life of Word and prayer by emphasizing devotional life primarily as a gift of God's grace in which he serves us.
- The third package was released this spring. This included another essay and accompanying workbook. This package sought to help pastors analyze how God has uniquely wired them for growth (understanding better their unique strengths and personality as well as grasping their preferred learning styles). The package also sought to help pastors make better use of the support of family, lay leaders, and ministry peers in pursuing this growth. The package provided multiple options that a pastor could use to partner with others in developing an annual spiritual and professional growth plan.
- Grow in Grace continues to seek input from circuit pastors about what they would like to see in future essay and resource packages.
- The essays and resource packets have also been turned into workshops that can be scheduled by circuits, conferences, or districts.

Encouraging informal learning

Develop and/or deliver ministry impacting informal learning resources that enable individual pastors and/or groups of pastors to carry out spiritual and professional growth.

The vast majority of opportunities for spiritual and professional growth have nothing to do with credits and classrooms, degrees or diplomas (the more "formal" side of learning). These more informal growth opportunities appear regularly in pastors' daily schedules as well as arise as particular challenges of ministry confront them and their congregations. These growth opportunities are also found whenever ministry peers gather for study. Such gatherings range from less structured study groups of two or three pastors to the more structured gatherings of circuits, conferences, and districts. It is a goal of Grow in Grace to help pastors make the most of all such opportunities. Two particular encouragements for such informal learning are presently being pursued.

Regularly throughout the year, one WELS pastoral circuit becomes the “featured circuit” on the Grow in Grace Web site. As study plans and meeting agendas are shared, the goal is to develop a clearinghouse of ideas for how pastoral circuits can pursue spiritual and professional growth.

Each week a new book review is posted in PDF and MP3 format on the Web site. These book reviews, called The Shepherd’s Study, are put together by a group of pastors who have organized themselves so as to produce reviews of books in every area of theological study.

Much more could be done to support and encourage informal learning. This remains a task waiting to be claimed by partnering with more pastors out in the field.

Synod task force exploring pastor and staff ministry continuing education

The synod convention in July 2013 authorized the appointing of a task force to develop a synodwide coordinated plan to further the spiritual and professional growth of our pastors and staff ministers. This task force of seven has now been appointed and has begun its work. A preliminary report from this task force will be given to each district this summer. The task force is scheduled to present its final report to the synod convention in the summer of 2015. The Grow in Grace director is part of this task force. The work of the task force could be summarized in two ways:

1. How can called workers encourage one another so more pastors and staff ministers recognize and make the most of spiritual and professional growth opportunities?
2. How can we as a synod better encourage and document growth without compromising the gospel motivation for such growth, while still giving clear evidence for how important it is to pursue ministry-long growth?

Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee

Rev. James Huebner, chairman and first vice president of WELS

Prof. David Bauer, director of continuing education, Martin Luther College

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, coordinator of WELS Congregation and Ministry Support Group

Prof. Richard Gurgel, director of continuing education, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Teacher James Henrickson, coordinator of Growing Educators in Ministry, Lutheran Schools

Rev. Peter Kruschel, mission counselor

Prof. John Meyer, director of graduate studies, Martin Luther College

Prof. Lawrence Olson, director of staff ministry, Martin Luther College

Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education

Teacher Greg Schmill, director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools

Ministry Support

The Ministry Support category of the budget includes the Synodical Council and all entities overseen by the Synodical Council. These include:

Synodical Council

- Expenses for regular and special meetings of the Synodical Council
- Expenses for the Accounting Oversight Committee

President's Office

- Compensation for the synod president
- Reimbursement of costs to the congregations of the vice presidents
- Office staff serving the president, the Conference of Presidents, and the Synodical Council
- Travel expenses for the synod presidium
- Special support for displaced called workers
- Colloquy expenses

Facilities

All expenses related to the maintenance and operation of the Center for Mission and Ministry, including insurance and utilities

Synod Archives

WELS Historical Institute (see p. 115)

Publication Coordinating Commission

WELS Christian Aid and Relief

Expenditures related to humanitarian aid and relief programs; all funding for Christian Aid and Relief is provided by gifts from individuals and congregations and special grants

Technology Services

Financial Services

Human Resources

Synodical Council

The Synodical Council (SC) is responsible for the implementation of all decisions and resolutions made by the synod in convention and for overseeing all activities of the synod in pursuit of its mission (other than those that are the specific responsibility of the Conference of Presidents). The SC also has the authority to act in behalf of the synod between conventions when proper and necessary. The Convention Compliance listing is included in this report (p. 53) and provides a summary of the progress made to date in implementing convention resolutions.

As it carries out the broad oversight described above, the SC is responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and overseeing all programs of ministry carried out by the synod. A major responsibility of the SC is the management of all financial activities of the synod, assuring fiscal soundness, preparing and updating support forecasts, and monitoring expenditures in order to maintain a balanced financial plan. In the years when the synod meets in convention, the SC

is responsible for working with all areas of the synod to develop and propose a balanced biennial ministry financial plan (budget) that supports the work of the synod in keeping with its needs and long-range ministry plan.

Standing committees

The SC is organized into three standing committees. The Finance Committee is responsible for establishing the support forecast and for recommending the overall level of spending for budgetary planning. The Finance Committee also monitors the financial performance and works closely with the synod's chief financial officer to oversee the risk management, banking, and general financial situation of the synod. The Administration Committee is responsible for developing and implementing general policies and procedures, providing general oversight of the synod's subsidiary organizations, and providing recommendations for compensation (with the input of the Compensation Review Committee) and other human resources and technology matters. The Ministry Committee oversees and coordinates the plans and activities of all areas of ministry and works to evaluate and monitor how the various areas of ministry are carrying out their tasks in keeping with the "In Christ Alone" Long-Range Plan and the stated goals of the synod.

Since 2011 the Finance Committee has been establishing the overall spending level of the synod based on the support forecast, while the Ministry Committee then determines the proportion of the synod's resources to each area of ministry based on the long-range plan and the current ministry needs and opportunities. This change has proven to be beneficial in the planning process and has resulted in a close, cooperative spirit among the various areas of ministry.

"In Christ Alone" Long-Range Plan

The 2011 synod convention adopted a long-range plan entitled "In Christ Alone." The adopted plan was to serve as a guideline and roadmap for ministry and financial planning through the year 2017. In the years since, progress toward the goals outlined in the plan has been monitored, and necessary adjustments have been made. The synod has been blessed to be able to see progress in nearly all areas addressed by the plan. Some examples: The number of home missions has increased from prior years. The efforts in World Missions to seize new opportunities are being blessed, especially in areas where new approaches and strategies are required due to political or cultural factors. Our ministerial education schools have been blessed with higher enrollments and stabilized financial positions. New efforts to strengthen congregations are bearing fruit as the Commission on Congregational Counseling has developed its program, along with the work done by the other commissions of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group.

While progress has been made, the ministry levels hoped for in the long-range plan may not be achievable due to less than needed financial support. The plan envisioned that Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO), which is currently less than \$21 million annually, would exceed \$27 million by 2017. The plan envisioned that total synodical support from all sources, now \$26 million annually, would reach \$39 million by 2017. These goals seem unlikely to be met, and the plans for ministry will need to be adjusted.

As the year 2017 approaches, the Synodical Council is beginning to work on a new long-range plan that will extend beyond 2017 and incorporate current and expected realities in support from CMO and other sources. Once adopted, this plan will continue to serve as the guideline for determining priorities in ministry and in funding allocation for those ministries.

Relocation of synod offices

In 2010 the Synodical Council began to address the problem of maintenance needs at the Mayfair Road Synod Administration Building. Cost estimates were obtained for needed maintenance and repairs; those estimates were in the range of \$1.5 to \$2.0 million for each of the two buildings. A short time later the synod was approached by a developer who made an offer to purchase the property. Anticipating that sale, the SC reviewed the various options and made the decision to purchase a new building in Waukesha for \$2.85 million. The building was to be paid for from the proceeds of the sale of the Mayfair Road property and facilities funds already on hand.

Only one day prior to the end of the due diligence period, the buyer withdrew his offer to purchase, leaving the synod with two properties. In order to mitigate the financial risk to the synod, the SC placed both properties on the market. An offer of \$2 million was received on the Mayfair Road property and was accepted by the SC in the winter of 2013. After work was done to prepare the Waukesha building in the spring of 2013, the administrative offices of the synod were moved into the new WELS Center for Mission and Ministry in June. The building has been fully paid for with proceeds from the sale of the Mayfair Road property, facilities funds on hand, an allocation from the Financial Stabilization Fund, and a special gift that helped to provide for a suitable chapel. Financial details on the transaction are provided in the Facility Services report on p. 65.

The new building has been a blessing in many ways. It has enabled all areas of the synod administration to work together more closely. It is conveniently located and easily accessible. It provides a welcoming and inviting place for anyone who works, volunteers, or visits. The SC is grateful for the encouragement and support it received as it worked to complete this project.

Changes to insurance coverage

Significant savings were achieved by increasing the deductible level for the insurance coverage on the synod's properties. A portion of the savings has been set aside to create a "risk retention pool" that will cover necessary expenses while keeping costs lower. The SC will continue to monitor this situation, as well as continue to look for other ways to exercise good stewardship of synodical resources.

Adjustments to the ministry financial plan

In November the SC reviewed requests from Home Missions and Michigan Lutheran Seminary to increase their authorized expenditures through the use of existing special funds. The increase will result in four additional home mission openings and allow Michigan Lutheran Seminary to renovate dormitory rooms with a gift from a foundation.

Unfunded program priorities

The SC is responsible for maintaining a list of desirable ministry programs that were not included in the approved ministry financial plan. This priority list would guide the SC in the event that additional financial resources become available. A list was initially approved by the 2013 convention and updated by the SC in February 2014:

1. Home Missions	\$125,000	New home mission opening
2. World Missions	\$75,000	Nigeria
3. Ministerial Education	\$125,000	Student financial assistance
4. Ministerial Education	\$100,000	Programmed maintenance
5. Lutheran Schools	\$100,000	Associate director, leadership training
6. Synodical Council	\$100,000	Synod archives
7. Special Ministries	\$50,000	Prison ministry
8. Special Ministries	\$50,000	Military services
9. Synodical Council	\$100,000	Publication Coordinating Commission
10. Inter-Church Relations	\$100,000	Aid to confessional Lutheran church bodies

Synod finances

At its regular winter meeting in February, the SC began to address the situation that confronted the synod in view of the 2014 Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) subscriptions.

The ministry financial plan adopted by the 2013 convention called for a 4 percent *increase* in CMO in both 2014 and 2015 to maintain and, in some cases, to provide for expansion of ministry. Unexpectedly, CMO subscriptions for 2014 showed a *decrease* of more than 1 percent from what was received last year. This news, coupled with the relatively flat CMO receipts in the last several years, led the SC to reduce the CMO forecast to 1 percent growth in 2015. The difference between what was planned and what now appears reasonable amounts to approximately \$300,000 in fiscal year (FY) 2013–14 and \$1.2 million in FY 2014–15. If this situation were to remain unchanged, significant changes would need to be made in the plans approved by the 2013 synod convention.

In view of this substantial decrease in expected funding from CMO, the Synodical Council authorized the use of additional Financial Stabilization Fund reserves if necessary during the remainder of FY 2013–14 and directed the synod president, with input from the various areas of ministry, to develop a prioritized plan to reduce planned expenditures by \$1.2 million in FY 2014–15 (which begins July 1). This plan was presented to the Synodical Council at its April meeting and will be shared with the districts in June.

As it considered ways to reduce expenditures if the necessary financial support does not materialize, the Synodical Council recognized that financial support may increase from other sources (such as bequests and other types of

gifts). At the same time the SC has encouraged the Conference of Presidents to consider how the COP can work with congregations to respond to the potential shortfall. The Financial Stabilization Fund provides time to make reductions in a planned way if necessary, but it also provides time for congregations and individuals to respond with additional financial support.

As it began to address this current dilemma, the SC also has begun to work on the ministry financial plan for the 2015–17 biennium.

Compensation Review Committee

As a standing subcommittee of the SC, the Compensation Review Committee is responsible for bringing recommendations to the SC in all matters relating to compensation. At its February meeting, the SC approved a motion encouraging at least a modest increase in synod mission code salaries for the 2015–17 biennium. This recommendation was made even with CMO at significantly lower than planned levels out of a conviction that the burden of CMO shortfalls should not again be placed primarily on workers and their families. Once determined, any increase would be incorporated into the ministry financial plan presented to the 2015 convention. The committee, in collaboration with the Conference of Presidents, is also continuing to discuss alternate compensation plans which may allow more congregations to call workers with significant years of experience.

Cooperation and communication with the Conference of Presidents

The two leadership groups continue to work in close cooperation and communication with each other. In addition to having six members of the Conference of Presidents serving as either voting or advisory members of the SC, the two groups have met jointly during the past year on two occasions. The SC and the entire COP met briefly following the 2013 convention to discuss convention decisions and how they might best be implemented. Additionally, the Congregations Committee of the COP met with the Finance and Ministry Committees of the SC in February to discuss areas of mutual concern and responsibility. These contacts are vital to insure that our leadership groups are in a good position to work in close cooperation with and support for one another.

Rev. Mark Schroeder, reporter

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president and chairman
Mr. Warren Ehlke, Pacific Northwest District
Mr. Kenneth Gosch, Dakota-Montana District
Mr. Steven Hansen, Arizona-California District
Mr. Philip Hempel, Michigan District
Rev. Philip Hirsch, chairman of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Mr. Paul Holzhueter, Minnesota District
Rev. Joel Jenswold, pastor-at-large
Mr. Bradley Johnston, South Central District
Mr. Mark Massmann, South Atlantic District
Mr. David Metzger, North Atlantic District
Mr. James Moeller, teacher-at-large
Rev. Howard Mohlke, chairman of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Peter Naumann, Conference of Presidents
Mr. Dale Pohlman, Nebraska District
Rev. David Rutschow, Conference of Presidents
Mr. Thomas Schermerhorn, Northern Wisconsin District
Rev. Jonathan Schroeder, pastor-at-large
Mr. Timothy Snyder, Southeastern Wisconsin District
Mr. Art Tessmann, Western Wisconsin District
Rev. Earle Treptow, Conference of Presidents
Rev. Charles Westra, chairman of WELS Board for Home Missions

Advisory:

Rev. Keith Free, administrator of WELS Board for Home Missions
Rev. Bryan Gerlach, coordinator of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group
Mr. Lee Hitter, director of communications
Rev. James Huebner, first vice president

Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, director of the Ministry of Christian Giving
Mr. Todd J. Poppe, chief financial officer
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Larry Schlomer, administrator of WELS Board for World Missions
Mr. Todd Scott, human resources director
Mr. Martin Spriggs, chief technology officer
Rev. Joel Voss, second vice president
Mr. Sean Young, director of missions operations

Appendix:

WELS Long-Range Plan

“In Christ Alone” Underlying principles

Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 15:4-6).

We affirm that only the gospel of Jesus Christ can create and sustain faith. Thus, spiritual results related to the growth of the Holy Christian Church are completely in the hands of God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit uses the means of grace to accomplish the results that only he can work, and he has entrusted the means of grace to human beings as his messengers. It is, therefore, a stewardship issue that we are outlining in this document. We want to be faithful stewards of the resources God has given us by planning our activities (sometimes called “strategies”) in order to move toward the goals (sometimes called “results”) for the visible church known as WELS, which we, under God’s blessing, hope to attain.

At the heart of our planning for the future is our desire to seek the lost as well as nurture the found. We do that as individuals and as congregations working together in a confessional Lutheran church body, that is, we carry out our gospel ministry together while standing squarely on all the truths of Scripture as expressed by the Lutheran Confessions. At all times and in all we do our focus is the cross of Christ Jesus.

In planning for the future, the leaders of our synod not only desire to be good stewards but also recognize that they are responsible to the members, called workers, congregations, commissions, and boards of the synod. We trust them to do their work and ask them to provide reports as they have the opportunity. The leadership groups of our synod, in particular the Synodical Council (SC) and Conference of Presidents (COP), will continue to review the synod’s organizational structure so that it operates in the best and most appropriate way, fostering a spirit of unity, supporting the gospel ministry we carry out together, and making the most of every opportunity the Lord places before us. Therefore, we place all things confidently into the hands of our gracious God and make our plans in this working document in keeping with his revealed will.

“In Christ Alone, This Cornerstone, This Solid Ground” Foundation for long-range planning—our purpose

For the purpose of communicating to people inside and outside of our church body, the synod in convention has adopted this purpose statement:

As men, women, and children united in faith and worship by the Word of God, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod exists to make disciples throughout the world for time and for eternity, using the gospel in Word and sacrament to win the lost for Christ and to nurture believers for lives of Christian service, all to the glory of God.

The focused purpose of our work as a corporate synod structure is summarized in our constitution:

The object and purpose of the synod shall be to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church:

- a) By assisting and counseling in every appropriate way the pastors, teachers, and congregations affiliated with the synod;
- b) By establishing and maintaining theological seminaries, colleges, academies, schools, and other institutions of learning;
- c) By establishing and maintaining home and world missions and such charitable institutions as it may deem appropriate to its calling;
- d) By printing, publishing, purchasing, selling, and disseminating literature that maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice;
- e) By furnishing appropriate literature for parish schools, Sunday schools, missions, institutions, and churches.

For the purposes of planning, of marshalling resources as good stewards of God's blessings, and of encouraging unity in spirit, the leaders of our synod have noted the constitutional priorities articulated by recent synod conventions and have summarized the purpose of our work as a synod with this planning guide:

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod exists to give all glory to God by upholding, defending, and proclaiming the truth of the Holy Scriptures as articulated in the Lutheran Confessions, and by providing a means for congregations and their members to extend the reach of their God-given mission of proclaiming the gospel in Word and sacrament through joint mission efforts at home and abroad and through the training of called workers.

"In Christ Alone My Hope Is Found"

Long-range plans—the picture in 2017

Under God's blessing and by grace alone, we hope to see the following ambitious and realistic snapshot of our work in 2017. Details follow in the section entitled "Strategies to reach long-range plans."

Worldwide identity as confessional Lutherans

As we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we note the potential realignment of confessional Lutherans in North America and beyond so that by 2017:

- 1.1 - WELS will be more widely known as a confessional Lutheran church body, firmly founded on the Holy Scriptures and joyfully proclaiming the saving love of Jesus Christ in Word and sacrament to as many people as possible around the globe.

World Missions

Recognizing the need for billions of souls to hear the gospel, by 2017, the Board for World Missions (BWM) will:

- 2.1 - have a world mission team (from administration to national churches) that agrees on a scriptural understanding of missiological terms and philosophy.
- 2.2 - have six regional seminaries (5 in 2010),
- 2.3 - ten national theological professors (6 in 2010),
- 2.4 - ten functional Bible institutes (8 in 2010), and
- 2.5 - regular curricula supplemented by distance learning.
- 2.6 - publish at least 1/3 of the necessary Bible institute and seminary course materials in at least 20 languages.
- 2.7 - operate in 30 countries (23 in 2010).
- 2.8 - serve more than 150,000 souls worldwide (107,000 in 2010).

Home Missions

Recognizing that the process of encouraging, enhancing, establishing, developing and enriching missions in North America involves partnerships with congregations, groups, and individuals, by 2017, the Board for Home Missions (BHM) will:

- 3.1 - open 8 new missions a year (4 in 2010).
- 3.2 - support 8 new ministry enhancements a year (10 in 2010).
- 3.3 - subsidize mission efforts in 200 congregations (150 in 2010), with eight missions and five ministry enhancements achieving self-support every year.

Ministerial Education

Mindful of the precious Lutheran heritage of the unconditional gospel that has been passed to our generation with remarkable clarity, by 2017, the Board for Ministerial Education (BME) will:

- 4.1 - graduate from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) approximately 30 pastor candidates annually (42 in 2010), reflecting the actual number of pastor-track students already enrolled in 2010 at MLC. The COP recognizes that the smaller classes result in a workable 10 percent vacancy rate in our parishes (5 percent in 2010). As we open more missions and as congregations grow, there will be a need for more candidates.
- 4.2 - graduate from Martin Luther College (MLC) approximately 55 teacher candidates (50 in 2010) who can serve anywhere annually, allowing every early childhood center, Lutheran elementary school, and area Lutheran high school to be staffed by synodically-certified directors, principals, and teachers. There will be 45 additional graduates annually who can serve only in limited geographic locations (40 in 2010).

- 4.3 - graduate from MLC staff minister candidates and those trained for part-time and volunteer service to meet the needs of congregations.
- 4.4 - in collaboration with the COP and Congregation and Ministry Support Group (CMSG), have in place for all ministerial education schools self-supporting continuing education courses in a wide variety of formats for called workers, with a strong component of equipping the saints for the strengthening of congregations.
- 4.5 - have working relationships between WLS, MLC, Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS), Luther Preparatory School (LPS), and Home and World Missions to serve the needs of each of our mission fields, home and abroad, and our sister churches in the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC).

Congregation and District Ministry

Recognizing the vital importance of congregational health and the impact of called workers growing spiritually, personally, and professionally, by 2017, the COP and the CMSG will collaborate with WLS and MLC to provide counsel, resources, and training for all congregations to:

- 5.1 - strive for an increasing percentage of participation in worship and Bible study.
- 5.2 - improve assimilation, relationships and personal connections, and service opportunities in church and community, with an emphasis on Christian vocation.
- 5.3 - strengthen the overall quality of education, specifically instruction and leadership, in our early childhood centers, Lutheran elementary schools (LES), area Lutheran high schools, and other children's ministries, so that they demonstrate excellence in both nurture and outreach.
- 5.4 - find ways to connect with the people of their communities and make use of outreach opportunities to share Jesus' love with as many people as possible, including those with special needs.
- 5.5 - support formal and informal programs for the spiritual, personal, and professional growth of called workers.
- 5.6 - support the work of the synod with 10-15 percent of offerings for Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) (7 percent in 2010), with 100 percent of congregations participating (92 percent in 2010).
- 5.7 - reflect synodical unity and vitality in all aspects of congregational doctrine and practice.

Publishing

Mindful of one of the main reasons we joined together as a synod, by 2017, Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) will:

- 6.1 - work toward providing dignified and quality materials that identify us as a confessional Lutheran church body that is serious about what we believe and interested in sharing our witness with the world.
- 6.2 - coordinate the publishing plans and needs of the boards and commissions of the synod and NPH to avoid duplication and promote consistency.
- 6.3 - explore and implement all methods of proclaiming our message, including print and digital media, in a cost-effective way.
- 6.4 - develop literature for the adults, teens, and elementary children that helps them grow in knowledge and devotion to the gospel of Jesus Christ and the confessional Lutheran truths we treasure.
- 6.5 - develop material that can be translated and shared through Multi-Language Publications' efforts among other cultures in our country and worldwide.

Resources

- 7.1 - It is the stated goal of WELS leadership and the synod in convention to have Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) serve as the primary source of financial support for synodical ministries. In order to carry out the plans and goals listed in this long-range plan, under God's blessing and by his grace alone, by fiscal year 2017 we pray that our synodical ministry plan will be funded by unrestricted gifts of \$39 million per fiscal year with \$27.5 million of that coming from Congregation Mission Offerings (\$29.6 million with CMO of \$20.9 million in fiscal year 2010-11). The increase in CMO amounts to congregations moving from giving 7 percent of their offerings to 10 percent of their offerings.

Except for publicity and communication purposes, publishing efforts will most logically be funded by Northwestern Publishing House through the sale of the material. For projects that cannot recover the cost of development, the Publication Coordinating Commission may seek budgetary funds or special gifts to fund new projects.

Resource allocation

With the direction of recent synod conventions, and flowing from the plans above, in fiscal year 2016–17:

- 8.1 - Missions will utilize 40-50 percent of CMO and Financial Stabilization Fund (FSF) resources (40 percent in 2011).
- Ministerial Education will utilize 30-40 percent of CMO and FSF resources (30 percent in 2011).
- Congregation and District Ministry will utilize 10-15 percent of CMO and FSF resources (14 percent in 2011).
- Ministry Support will utilize 10-15 percent of CMO and FSF resources (16 percent, including 5 percent debt retirement, in 2011).

“In Christ Alone, Jesus Commands My Destiny”

Strategies to reach long-range plans

Worldwide identity as confessional Lutherans

In the years leading up to 2017, WELS will:

- 1.1.1 - clearly and consistently express ourselves to the world as confessional Lutherans in doctrine and practice.
- 1.1.2 - maintain communication with the church bodies of the CELC and seek out the fellowship of other confessional Lutheran churches around the world.
- 1.1.3 - make every effort to identify confessional Lutherans in the United States and to rejoice in doctrinal unity when such unity can be determined.

World Missions

In the years leading up to 2017, the BWM will:

- 2.7.1 - enter new fields as God gives the opportunity.
- 2.9.1 - work with Home Missions and Ministerial Education to build awareness of the Church’s mission to the lost and support of World Missions work among called workers and constituency.
- 2.2/4.1 - work with Ministerial Education to develop a worldwide ministerial education system on the model of basic Christian instruction, then Bible institute, then seminary.
- 2.6.1 - publish foundational materials at all levels of theological development in as many targeted languages as possible.
- 2.9.2 - streamline administration and increase joint planning with other administrative units.

Home Missions

In the years leading up to 2017, the BHM will:

- 3.1.1 - prioritize funding with a balance of immediate opportunities and targeted efforts for long-range impact.
- 3.4.1 - streamline the communication, support structure, and resources in the field and in the offices.
- 3.2.1 - provide proactive assistance and strategies to reach the lost with the gospel.
- 3.3.1 - mentor new personnel in mission settings.
- 3.5.1 - partner with World Missions, Ministerial Education, and other leaders to communicate the urgency for outreach and to develop helpful tools and resources.

Ministerial Education

In the years leading up to 2017, the BME will provide coordination, stressing efficiency and fiduciary responsibility, as:

- 4.1.1 - Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) and Martin Luther College (MLC) graduate students who are confessional in stance, evangelical in approach, mission-minded in spirit, culturally sensitive, appropriately flexible, and zealous to nurture and to equip the saints.
- 4.5.1 - Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS) and Luther Preparatory School (LPS) graduate students prepared to succeed at Martin Luther College.
- 4.5.2 - MLC continues to recruit students from prep schools, area Lutheran high schools, public schools, home schools, and adults in our fellowship considering another career.
- 4.2.1 - MLC expands its efforts in the training of principals, early childhood directors, and early childhood workers.
- 4.4.1 - the ministerial education schools expand their efforts in continuing education of called workers, education of international students for service in their ethnic groups of origin, and education of those who want to serve part time or as volunteers in the congregation.
- 4.5.3 - it monitors the needs of the synod and encourages the schools to tailor their recruitment efforts to match those needs.

- 4.1.2 - the schools continue aggressively to recruit candidates for pastoral ministry, recognizing that, in every year, at every time, “the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few,” so that we graduate from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary as many pastoral candidates as possible.
- 4.2.2 - the schools continue aggressively to recruit candidates for teaching ministry, recognizing that, in every year, at every time, “the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few,” so that we graduate from Martin Luther College as many teaching candidates as possible.
- 4.5.3 - the schools increase the diversity of their student bodies.

Congregation and District Ministry

Recognizing the emphases in this area changing to “training the trainers,” in the years leading up to 2017, the COP will:

- 5.4.1 - foster the ministries of the CMSG (the Commissions on Congregational Counseling, Worship, Evangelism, Adult Discipleship, Youth and Family Ministry, and Special Ministries) to provide counsel, resources, and training to congregations and all called workers.
- 5.3.1 - foster the ministry of the Commission on Lutheran Schools to provide training, assistance, expertise, and resources for the precious and valuable resources we have in our early childhood ministries, Lutheran elementary schools, area Lutheran high schools, and other children’s ministries, looking for new opportunities and sustainable models of Lutheran education.
- 5.5.1 - work with WLS, MLC, and the CMSG to foster spiritual, personal, and professional growth for all called workers through flexible programs of continuing education and mentoring, to enable the called workers better to equip, empower, and encourage lay members in their vocations and in volunteer service for their congregations.
- 5.1.1/6.1.1 - establish a committee to plan and develop a new hymnal by the 500th anniversary of the first Lutheran hymnal (1524).
- 5.6.1 - work with all congregations to increase CMO using the 10/10 plan.
- 5.7.1 - work with parasynodicals to enlist and coordinate their support roles in funding and ministry.

Publishing

In the years leading up to 2017, NPH will:

- 6.2.1 - plan materials that will help us celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017.
- 6.1.2 - continue to publish materials that will help congregations carry out their ministries through the printed or digital word.
- 6.4.1 - explore new confirmation instructional material.
- 5.1.1/6.1.1 - put plans in motion to publish a new hymnal by the 500th anniversary of the first Lutheran hymnal (1524).

Resources

- 7.1.1 - In order to fund an annual ministry plan with unrestricted gifts of \$39 million in 2017, plans will be put in motion that will rely solely on the grace of God and his promises of undeserved love through Christ Jesus and will be applied to the hearts of God’s people through a carefully organized every-member visit for every member of WELS. The plans will offer specifics on how to do that in every congregation of WELS—tailored for small, middle-sized, and large congregations. The plans will feature materials that will be brief but pointedly directing all to the “why” of joyful and generous financial stewardship—the cross and empty tomb of Jesus—and will include the “how to” of joyful and generous financial stewardship through a percentage of income offered, through special gifts (a possible special offering for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation), and through planned and deferred giving (estate planning).

Leadership

In the years leading up to 2017, the SC and COP will continue to work together to make the most of opportunities the Lord is placing before us. Issues “on the table” include:

- 9.1.1 - reviewing church governance issues (process and function of synod conventions, boards, size of the SC, etc.).
- 9.2.1 - reviewing the size and number of districts, the size of circuits, possible term limits for district officials.
- 9.3.1 - reviewing the size and efficiency of synod technology, communication, and fiscal support offices.
- 9.4.1 - emphasizing continuing education for all called workers.
- 9.5.1 - encouraging collaboration in synodical support and ministerial endeavors.
- 9.6.1 - continuously updating the strategic plan so that the process continues beyond 2017.

2013 WELS convention compliance listing

Committee, resolution	Responsible group	Resolution description	Due by/status:
1-01	COP	Plan and implement offering for debt retirement	January 2015
2-03	President	Appoint Ad Hoc Commission II	Completed October 2013
2-03	SC/COP	Ad Hoc Commission II functions and reports progress to districts	June 2014
1-05	COP	Plan 2015 convention at MLS	July 2015
4-01	SC	Implement ministry financial plan	Ongoing
4-03	President	Appoint committee to develop capital projects funding plan	October 2013; plan incorporated into the ministry financial plan in Feb. 2015
5-02	Presidium/ COP/CICR	Continue contacts with LCMS leadership	Ongoing
9-01	BWM/CICR	Fine tune guidelines for dealing with emerging national churches	Spring 2014
9-01	BWM	Seek out creative approaches for reaching the lost	Ongoing
10-01	BHM	Implement resolution establishing Canadian Mission District	Spring 2014
13-03	COP	Oversee circuit pastors as they distribute information on the Called Worker Care Committee	Ongoing
14-01	CLS	Encourage culture of improvement and accreditation efforts	Ongoing
14-02	SC/COP	Include position of second CLS associate director and necessary staff on unfunded priority list; COP calls if and when funds are available	Include on list immediately; reprioritization of entire list in November 2013
14-03	BME/MLC	Expand graduate program to train a greater number of LES principals	Ongoing
14-03	CLS	Implement School Leadership Candidate Training	Ongoing
14-03	COP/CLS	Consult with congregations calling principals and ECE directors	Ongoing
14-03	COP	Reduce the number of candidates assigned to school leadership positions	Ongoing
14-04	COP/CLS	Encourage schools to participate in the Voluntary Supplemental Contribution program	Ongoing
15-01	SC	Provide funding for Publication Coordinating Commission	Include on list immediately; reprioritization of entire list in November 2013
16-01	SC	Include full-time archivist on unfunded priority list; hire archivist if and when funds become available	Include on list immediately; reprioritization of entire list in November 2013
22-02	COP	Appoint standing committee to communicate with the editors of existing translations	Completed October 2013
23-03	President/ COP/SC	Appoint task force to develop process for encouragement and reporting of continuing education efforts by pastors and staff ministers; COP to oversee task force work; task force to bring cost estimates to convention	October 2013; task force preliminary report to the districts in 2014, final report to the convention in 2015
24-02	COP	Develop and implement procedure for utilizing pastors willing to serve for less than code	Ongoing

Accounting Oversight Committee

Our calling

The Accounting Oversight Committee serves the synod, its schools, its subsidiaries, and its affiliates that are under the oversight of the Synodical Council (SC). The committee serves the SC by assisting in ensuring that appropriate accounting policies and internal controls are established and financial systems are efficient and effective; retaining external auditors; assisting in ensuring that financial personnel have the requisite skills; and by assisting in ensuring that financial reports are prepared timely, accurately, and in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. The committee keeps the SC informed of its action through the SC's appointed member of the committee; the synod's schools, subsidiaries, and affiliate boards, commissions, and committees are informed through WELS' chief financial officer.

Our current situation

The committee engaged the independent audit firm of CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, to conduct the annual audits of the consolidated financial statements of the synod, its schools, and its subsidiaries for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013. All audits were completed within five months of year-end, and all entities received an unqualified opinion, the best you can get, on the financial statement's compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. In addition, the auditors identified no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in any entity's control environment. Copies of the annual financial statements, quarterly consolidated financial statements, and quarterly budget reports are available on the synod's Financial Services Connect site.

In addition to the annual synod financial statement audits, the committee engaged the independent accounting firm CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP, to audit the WELS VEBA Group Health Plan and WELS Pension Plan for 2012. These financial statements also received unqualified opinions for 2012, and the auditors did not identify any significant deficiencies or material weakness in their control environments. At the time of this writing, the 2013 calendar year audits for these two entities are scheduled for early 2014.

A look ahead

We continue to believe that there are significant opportunities to reduce administrative costs, drive out administrative inefficiency, and improve the quality of support services through coordination and oversight of certain ministry support functions. As a result, more funds would be available for gospel ministry. Our belief has been repeatedly confirmed by our independent auditors, and the SC has resolved to have the synod president initiate the investigation of duplication of services and functions. More recently, these concerns and opportunities were also shared with the Ad Hoc Commission II.

At the heart of our concerns about inefficient services and functions is the synodical governance structure. The synodical governance structure calls for independent governance boards and management for each synodical entity. Rightly, these boards and management are focused on the ministries they have been called to serve. They have not been and they should not be burdened with designing and managing efficient and effective support services across all synodical entities, nor could they, since their vision and scope is limited to one entity. As a result, there are duplicate and inefficient support resources across synodical entities. To increase funds available for gospel ministry and achieve the cost savings and other benefits described above, we strongly believe that the leadership talent at the synodical level in the areas of finance, technology, and human resources should coordinate and oversee their respective functions and services at the ministerial education schools, Northwestern Publishing House, and other synod entities. We are confident this can be accomplished in harmony with the governance boards and leadership of each entity to ensure that the mission and purpose of each entity is fully supported—all to the glory of Christ our Lord.

We further believe that similar opportunities to reduce costs and/or improved services also exist in the areas of Christian giving and communications. Accordingly, the reporting relationship and service delivery operations in these areas should be reviewed and evaluated by those charged with governance of these areas, the Conference of Presidents.

Also, the synod has experienced significant cost savings through coordinated procurement of insurance, audit services, and rental cars to name a few. We believe there remain further opportunities in the procurement areas that

should be investigated. If the investigation confirms the existence of savings opportunities, procurement of these items should also be coordinated at the synodical level.

We are hopeful that these opportunities to reduce costs and increase gospel ministry will be made a high priority for the synod president by the Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents.

Mr. Tom Walters, reporter

Mr. Tom Walters, chairman

Mr. Jim Freer

Mr. Carl Rudolph

Advisory:

Mr. Paul Holzhueter, Synodical Council liaison

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, chief financial officer and treasurer

Publication Coordinating Commission

Our calling

WELS Publication Coordinating Commission (PCC) coordinates and prioritizes the publishing and media production of the synod's boards and commissions and Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) in order to avoid duplication of efforts. In the past it has solicited publishing proposals for material that would not recover the cost of production and yet are deemed by the boards and commissions of the synod to be important. The commission reviewed and evaluated those proposals and awarded funds from the Publication Fund to those it considered vital.

Theological Works Fund

The Theological Works Fund of the Publication Coordinating Commission provides subsidies for significant theological works of authors who share our theological position.

These works are intended first of all for our professional clergy so that they can continue their ongoing growth through the use of these materials. The materials fulfill the need for solid confessional Lutheran resources in a world where such resources are difficult to find. The works produced also provide a witness to those who do not share our confessional Lutheran position.

One challenge in producing these materials is the cost of preparing them and recovering those costs through the sale of the material. In order to make them affordable to pastors and teachers, each publication must be subsidized by the Theological Works Fund. Even when we consider the ability to distribute this material digitally, the cost of preparing the content remains and makes it difficult to recover those costs through sales.

The Theological Works Fund, at its current rate, will not have sufficient funds available to publish additional works. It is important to replenish the fund so that future works can be made available to those who need them. We seek donors who share a desire to make these important works available for our pastors and teachers.

Some works that have benefited from subsidy:

Galatians/Ephesians (John P. Koehler)

An Ecumenical Endeavor: A History of the Synodical Conference (Armin W. Schuetze)

Hoenecke's Dogmatics (4 volumes)

Who is Jesus Christ? (Wilbert R. Gawrisch)

Genesis 1-11: Commentary (Carl J. Lawrenz and John C. Jeske)

Psalms Commentary (John F. Brug) 2 Volumes

God So Loved the World (Lyle W. Lange)

History of Pietism (Heinrich Schmid translated by James Langbartels) Reprint

The Spirit of Pietism (Robert J. Koester)

Romans 1-8 (David P. Kuske)

Romans 9-16 (Robert J. Koester)
Ministry of the Word (John F. Brug)
Peter/Jude Commentary (David P. Kuske)*
Defense of the Lutheran Faith (John W. Montgomery)*
The Election Controversy (John M. Brenner)*

*Funds granted this year to subsidize production

Projects currently in need of funding:

Grace Abounds: The Splendor of Christian Doctrine (Daniel Deutschlander)
A Christian Guide to Mental Illness: A Guide for Pastors and Counselors (Saunders)

Rev. John Braun, reporter

Rev. John Braun, chairman and vice president of Northwestern Publishing House

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, Congregation and Ministry Support Group

Rev. Paul Hartman, WELS Multi-Language Publications

Rev. Curtis Jahn, Northwestern Publishing House

Rev. Brian Keller

Rev. Harlyn Kuschel

WELS Archives

Our calling

The archives of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is the official repository for records of historical value created by and about WELS and its congregations, called workers, and related parasynodical organizations and institutions. Its mission is to gather, preserve, and make available documentary evidence of the ongoing life and work of the synod and to offer a useful information service to synod administration, WELS called workers, and WELS congregations.

Our current situation

Materials held in the archives at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary are organized and accessible to researchers. Library staff has made significant progress in creating archival descriptions and finding aids for the collections. Many requests for information are successfully filled. But our shelves are full and new items coming into the archives are again being stacked up wherever room can be found. Very soon this will make accessing the organized materials difficult, if not impossible.

It must be noted that although requests for information are regularly filled, many of the functions crucial to a successful archival program are not being carried out. Examples include tasks such as preserving gathered items, the systematic collection of documents into the archives, advising areas of ministry and congregations on how to manage and preserve records, managing electronic records, and disaster planning. It is also to be noted again that the current archives space is not only insufficient in size but because its climate cannot be controlled it is also unsuitable for proper preservation of the historical record of our synod.

A look ahead

The synod in its 2013 convention once again resolved to hire a full-time archivist under whose direction the archives collections would be moved to a more appropriate home. This resolution is subject to funding (see p. 45), as was the similar 1995 synod resolution and the 2010 independent study of the archives appointed by President Schroeder.

If the synodically mandated mission of the archives program is to be achieved, a full-time archivist is needed. If the preservation of our synod's history in documentation and artifact is to be successful, the collection needs to be properly housed. It is hoped that the funding to fulfill the mission of the archives will finally be allocated.

Prof. John P. Hartwig, reporter

Christian Aid and Relief

Our calling

WELS Christian Aid and Relief is the synod's "ministry of compassion," bringing physical relief to victims of natural disasters in the form of cash grants, food, clothing, and medical supplies. Christian Aid and Relief also partners with WELS missionaries to support humanitarian aid projects that can help build bridges to proclaim the gospel. The mission of Christian Aid and Relief is drawn from the scriptural encouragement, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Galatians 6:10). Because of all that Christ has done for us, we are eager to reflect Christ's love and compassion to those in need. Christian Aid and Relief seeks to personalize its efforts by conducting careful assessments and distributing funds first through WELS churches and then through other trusted secular agencies.

Our current situation

Christian Aid and Relief is completely funded by the special gifts of WELS members.

From Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2013, its total expenditures for relief projects was \$301,648.

\$255,097 was expended for domestic relief efforts and \$46,551 for foreign relief efforts. In addition, \$306,000 was designated for humanitarian aid projects for fiscal year 2013–14. These projects assist world missionaries in building bridges to proclaim the gospel.

Major opportunities to provide relief in the past year included \$66,000 following Hurricane Sandy, working through WELS churches in New York and New Jersey; supporting our world mission work among several orphanages in Haiti to provide food and nutrition; and supporting the Central Africa Medical Mission with a \$12,000 grant.

Other domestic relief activities included \$50,300 for tornado disaster relief in Moore, Okla. Volunteers from several WELS congregations also personally assisted in the clean-up efforts. Funding was also granted to provide crisis counseling to tornado victims through Wisconsin Lutheran Church and Family Service. \$10,000 was granted toward Colorado flooding victims. Additionally, a relief grant assisted typhoon victims in the Philippines and general aid was provided to food pantries, inner city relief, and for called workers and congregational members suffering from extreme medical and financial burdens.

Christian Aid and Relief continues to work with WELS Board for World Missions, WELS Board for Home Missions, WELS missionaries, and sister congregations of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference around the world in funding humanitarian aid projects. Below is a list of this year's granted projects, totaling nearly \$306,023.

Nigeria

Funds have been granted to Nigeria to help organize the distribution of health care for the extremely impoverished people and to provide humanitarian aid during natural disasters. The ability to offer care and humanitarian aid to Nigeria's unchurched will serve as a bridge for Christ The King and All Saints Lutheran Churches of Nigeria to invite villagers to church to hear the gospel. Funds will also be used to stock a pharmacy that will serve the community. The location will allow for community advertising and the possibility of offering printed outreach materials. Funding is also provided to drill a borehole to provide villagers fresh water. These water systems placed near the church provide opportunities for the pastor and members to reach the unchurched.

Zambia

Aid granted to Zambia provides for home-based care that bridges the physical and spiritual care for the chronically ill and dying. This allows for compassionate connections between clients and caregivers as they help those with AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and other chronic and terminal illnesses. Training will also be provided to volunteer facilitators to teach adult literacy classes.

Malawi

Malawi was granted funds to drill three boreholes to provide fresh water next to our local churches, which will help outreach efforts of pastors and members to the community. The Central Africa Medical Mission in Malawi and Zambia also receives funding from Christian Aid and Relief for medical supplies and nutritional supplements for infants.

Russia

Funding has been granted to Russia to provide food, clothing, and medicine for the needy. These gifts will allow for law/gospel pamphlets to be distributed and to invite people to Bible instruction classes. This will let the workers' lights shine in the area and grow their reputation of helping those in need. Aid has also been granted to assist institutions such as hospitals, rehabilitation centers, orphanages, and half-way houses. The government values this work and presence, which is very important as it opens the doors for Bible classes and Christian counseling. Through this ministry, Sunday school lessons are left in public schools, and Bible classes for the disabled and orphans are offered.

Mexico

In Mexico, aid has been granted for the opening of a community center as a means of reaching out to the people of La Joya. Volunteers offer summer courses for children as well as health and other general education classes. Through these efforts, the church is establishing a Christian reputation with the hope of one day building a mission out of the community center. To provide clean water to the people of Mahahual, funding is provided for bio-sand filters and training of community health liaisons to promote healthy families.

Haiti

Christian Aid and Relief provides food and other health needs for orphanages in Haiti. Through this aid, doors are open to provide children spiritual nourishment by teaching them the gospel through our missionaries there. Many of these orphans have received the blessings of Holy Baptism.

India

Medical aid to India has been approved to provide supplies for major hospitals and rural health clinics. Basic necessities such as blood pressure cuffs, oxygen tanks, stretchers, thermometers, sterilizers, and masks will be supplied. Funds have also been granted for the digging of between 20 to 25 fresh water wells. As with most of the humanitarian work in India, these projects may not open new doors directly for gospel "bridge building," but they will help to ensure that the doors to India will remain open for WELS counselors living and working there. These kinds of projects are necessary for WELS' presence in India to continue; it is excellent and necessary public relations with the local medical community, government officials, influential families, and legislators.

Nepal

Aid supplied to Nepal provides funding for medical clinics. At each clinic, a medical person and a gospel worker minister to the physical and spiritual needs of those who receive care. Christian literature is distributed. Each clinic leads to the formation of a Bible study group, and nearly all of these clinics have developed into local churches. Financial support has also been granted for Nepal orphanages, which will support schooling and supply clothing, health care, and food for 10 orphans. This provides Christian instruction, and with God's help these young people are nurtured to become leaders in the church in Nepal. Aid is provided to reach out to women in rural and remote areas to offer activities and sessions to improve basic skills. Offering these skills provides opportunities to share the gospel. Funding was provided for a literacy program for Christians and non-Christians and also for drilling 10 boreholes. Aid also provides textbooks for higher secondary level students in several districts in the area of Tibet. This opens doors for sharing the gospel in these areas and also helps to train future leaders and teachers of the Christian church. A sports outreach has been funded, which will provide equipment and uniforms. The bridge provides opportunities to share the gospel message and literature with participants and the community.

Pakistan

In Pakistan, funding has been provided for midwife training. This is a three-month training course on how to perform safe deliveries in the villages. This gains the goodwill of the families and communities thus allowing for more gospel witnessing in the local villages. Humanitarian aid has also been granted to provide medical procedures for members of about 200 poor families. These desperate people learn through this kindness of the Great Physician of body and soul.

Financial aid continues to be supplied for a private hospital to maintain the good reputation for the care it provides. This grant helps to supply hospital beds, operating lights, and other medical equipment. This hospital and its Christian staff maintains good relations with the local Muslim leaders, thus enabling the staff to freely distribute Christian literature through the Bible Correspondence and Teaching School, which is currently serving more than 26,000 children and adults. Aid has also been granted for food distribution at Christmas and Easter in neighborhoods bordering Christian homes and schools.

Canada

Food and winter clothing is provided to immigrants and refugees through the outreach efforts of Hope Lutheran

Church, Toronto, Ontario. As Hope's members welcome these refugees to their new community by providing for their basic necessities, they also build relationships to share the gospel.

Arizona

The Apache Christian Training School reaches out to the Apaches with weekly meetings to assist people with physical, sexual, and/or substance abuse. Funding will purchase a used van to transport students to the Apache Christian Training School.

Japan

Following the devastating earthquake and tsunami in 2011, relief efforts provided opportunities to build relationships with people in Kesummuma. Funds will enable these families to travel to Tokyo for Bible studies, fellowship, and worship with fellow Christians at Aganai Lutheran Church to strengthen spiritual relationships.

Thailand

Christian Aid and Relief is supporting the efforts of medically trained volunteers who travel to Thailand to set up weeklong medical clinics in village churches. As these clinics draw people from surrounding communities, they offer opportunities for our missionaries to show that they care and to present the gospel.

WELS Christian Aid and Relief also continues to provide help for families with catastrophic personal and medical difficulties. We thank the Lord for moving the hearts of WELS members to show how much they care with their prayers and gifts of love.

A look ahead

Annually, Christian Aid and Relief reviews humanitarian aid grant requests forwarded from the Boards for World and Home Missions. These projects build bridges for proclaiming the gospel.

WELS Christian Aid and Relief continues to look for ways to improve its communication to WELS members. *Lifeline* videos have been developed so that those who support our work can see firsthand how their gifts are being used. Our Web page, www.wels.net/relief, continues to offer timely information and a convenient way to donate online for Christian Aid and Relief projects. Members can also find us on Facebook at Christian Aid and Relief. Committee members and volunteers also make presentations to various groups to "tell our stories," letting WELS members know about the needs and opportunities to help people through Christian Aid and Relief. DVDs of *Lifeline* videos and other written materials and photos are also available upon request. Christian Aid and Relief is partnering with other WELS agencies, such as Kingdom Workers, Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, and the synod's worker training schools to coordinate volunteers to assist in relief efforts when appropriate.

Rev. Robert Hein, reporter

Rev. Robert Hein, chairman

Staff Minister Tom Hering, secretary

Rev. Harmon Lewis

Teacher Gary Thoma

Mr. Mark Vance, director of operations for WELS Christian Aid and Relief

Mr. Steven Wright

Support Services

Support Services is the area that encompasses Financial Services, Technology, Human Resources, and Facility Services. These areas support the ministry of the synod and its four ministerial education schools.

Technology

Our calling

WELS Technology exists to support the work of synodical organizations and areas of ministry by providing a strong technical infrastructure, facilitating digital communications, assisting congregations and called workers to better leverage technology, and coordinating technology initiatives that can't be done at smaller organizational levels. To best accomplish these objectives WELS Technology is made up of ten related "service areas." Together the dedicated men and women that support these service areas seek to help the spread of the gospel with technology tools the Lord continues to make available in the 21st century.

The ten WELS technology service areas include IT administration, workstations and peripherals, project management, disaster recovery, servers and storage, documentation and training, end-user support, network and telephony, application and Web development, and application and Web maintenance. In order to provide these services WELS technology has organized itself into three departments that handle different service components. These departments exist solely to support the ministry efforts of Home and World Missions, Ministerial Education, the Congregation and Ministry Support Group, other synod agencies, and individual churches and schools. Great care has been taken to organize according to ministry need. As a result, the services provided by these departments can be tied directly to the activities of those areas of ministry.

Information Services provides maintenance and support for all synod technical infrastructure, provides end-user help desk support, ensures integrity of network and data, and manages access to technical assets.

Software Services provides development and programming services that fill synod application requests; integrates applications with other related synod systems as necessary; manages the quality and efficient collection of synod data, especially as it relates to called worker and congregation information; and determines future application development platforms and best practices. This team also coordinates the creation and management of www.wels.net and associated Web applications and Web sites, provides support for more than 50 WELS Web sites, creates and maintains tools to enable synod communications, and promotes and facilitates Web usage and technologies to internal and external groups.

Project and Administration Services provides and coordinates project and program analysis services to all areas of ministry, provides documentation and training, coordinates management of all projects in the technology portfolio, and acts as primary project office for "significant" projects that require complex coordination. This group also provides strategic planning, budgeting, resource management, and training.

Our current situation

This year the Software Services team continued the gradual migration of the longstanding synod database called Progress to a newer platform called WELSource, which is based on Microsoft technologies. Thousands of hours have been spent planning and architecting a solution that will provide accurate data about called workers, churches, schools, performance evaluations, pension benefits, and the calling process. Currently in Phase 2, the project is focusing on the call system, call reporting, and called worker reporting and evaluations.

Two years ago the synod's donor management system called Raiser's Edge was upgraded to allow for a better integrated online giving experience. Countless hours have been saved in the process of moving a gift and acknowledgement through the system without manual intervention. Currently a project is underway to make the giving pages for the synod and its four worker training school more mobile friendly.

Synod Web sites are built using a variety of open source tools for Web pages, blogging, learning, and e-commerce, which are then customized to meet synod ministry needs. Two of the most popular are, of course, wels.net and WhatAboutJesus.com. Each year more than 1 million unique visitors view wels.net pages. The most popular pages are devotions and the Question & Answer section. Social networking strategies are underway in cooperation with Communication Services to reach out to online communities and new friends. Facebook and Twitter pages see excellent activity and growing numbers of visitors. The *El Mensajero Luterano* Spanish Web site was also launched in 2013 and provides evangelistic resources to Spanish speakers wishing to reach out to friends and family.

WELS Mobile, the synod mobile app available on iOS and Android platforms, has more than 5,000 downloads. It is also available by any mobile Web browser at <http://m.wels.net>. Devotional text, audio, and video content are available through the app as well as news, call reports, and basic called worker and congregation “yearbook” data. Through the app you can also locate a church near you or a specified location.

The Information Services team has strengthened the technical infrastructure that supports all electronic assets of the synod and its subsidiaries. The recent move of the synod offices required many hours of planning, moving, and configuring technical resources to allow for a smooth transition. Everything went well, and only a couple days of downtime was needed to complete the job. The new building provides a much more reliable physical infrastructure for networking and allowed for significant audio/visual improvements in each conference room.

In late 2013, the Information Services team migrated all synod office workers to Microsoft Office 365 subscriptions. The move not only saves license fees but should also ease support time and costs. This further protects the office from outages and security threats. Eventually this will provide a more robust platform for the synod’s Intranet site, Connect.

Together with Home Missions and the Commission on Evangelism, WELS Technology sponsored a conference on Distance Outreach and Technology. This by-invitation-only event brought together 40 individuals from around the synod who brainstormed ideas and action items that will ultimately be developed and shared with the synod at large. Topics such as online Bible study, streaming worship, and mobile apps were considered. Working groups are in the process of being formed.

WELSTech, a weekly audio/video podcast about technology and ministry, celebrated its 300th show last summer at synod convention. Recently the show moved to a new time, 4 p.m. on Tuesdays, to promote more “live” audience participation. Each week a relevant technology in ministry topic is discussed as well as interviews with people from around the synod and beyond who are willing to share what has worked for them. Excellent feedback is provided by the show’s audience that may be useful for others. The show notes page for the podcast is <http://welstech.wels.net>.

A look ahead

In 2014–15 WELS Technology will aim to increase synod office efficiencies and continue to roll out a new WELSource application that will touch all aspects of ministry by redesigning and migrating processes away from an antiquated database system. A digital forms project will also launch to help all areas provide a way for incoming data to be easily gathered and moved into synod systems. WELS Church Extension Fund and WELS Missions will be early beneficiaries of this project.

As the way people interact online evolves, so must our strategies to innovate creatively and deploy new technology. More than 25 Web sites and 42,000 unique visitors to the wels.net site alone each month from 134 countries is evidence that people are seeking Jesus on the Web, and we must help ministries to reach out with the Word to bring people to faith. A focus will be given to improving current mobile applications that provide text, audio, and video content to smartphone users. Further efforts will be made to make wels.net easier to navigate and maintain. As a result, the site will be migrated to a new platform, and its purpose and content will be reevaluated. Due to the new platform, the cost of day-to-day maintenance will decrease. The entire site will be more mobile friendly. Additionally, two new foreign language sites will launch in 2014–15—sites in Japanese and Urdu (Pakistan). Each site will represent a new challenge as they will require the use of non-Latin character sets.

In 2015 a WELSTech conference will be held to offer called workers and laypeople an opportunity to learn technologies that may assist in ministry efforts. The last such conference was held in 2005. The exact date and location have not been set, but it will likely be in the summer and held in the upper Midwest. Topics could include Web site development, audio and video techniques, social networking approaches, worship technologies, stewardship management, and church management systems. A likely track will also include educational technology topics.

The WELS Technology team looks forward to opportunities for service. As God has made new technologies available for our use, the team strives to be good stewards of them to enable our synod’s ministries to use these technologies to spread the precious news of Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection. To him be the glory.

Mr. Martin Spriggs, reporter

Financial Services

Our calling

Financial Services prepares and provides accounting and financial information and services that support and serve WELS ministries. This is done by

- providing timely, accurate, and complete financial statements, reports, and analyses that facilitate ministry;
- providing God-pleasing, efficient, and effective financial services and operations that are in accordance with policies, procedures, and regulations; and
- installing and maintaining internal control systems that safeguard the assets God has provided.

Financial Services provides financial planning and forecasts; accounting, audit, and financial statement preparation; gift processing; special funds accounting; accounts payable; accounts receivable; unclaimed property; special funds accounting; payroll; risk management; insurance; records retention; banking; cash management; investments; contract review; corporate credit card and rental vehicle programs; trust administration; tax advisory services; and legal services coordination. These services are provided to WELS, WELS Church Extension Fund (CEF), WELS Foundation (Foundation), WELS Investment Funds (WIF), WELS Pension Plan, and WELS Voluntary Employee Benefits Association (VEBA). Financial Services also serves as consultants for these services to Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) and WELS' four ministerial education schools.

Human Resources and Facility Services report to the Chief Financial Officer (CFO). The CFO is the WELS Treasurer and an advisor to the Synodical Council. In addition, the CFO, as the synod president's designate, serves as an advisory member to the board of directors of Northwestern Publishing House, WELS CEF, WELS Foundation, WIF, and the WELS Pension Plan and VEBA Commissions.

Our current situation

Financial Services is blessed with a dedicated, talented staff with complementary education, training, and work experiences. The synod support allocated to Financial Services is adequate for the services the area has been tasked to provide. Financial Services will continue to identify, investigate, and implement strategies that improve effectiveness and reduce costs within the area and across WELS. In spring 2012, the director of risk management and assistant treasurer retired, and this position has not yet been filled. Although replacement of the position is included in the plan, existing staff are continuing to pick up the position responsibilities, and it appears that this position will be eliminated from future plans.

Even with four fewer staff than several years ago, Financial Services is focusing on maintaining day-to-day operations, reducing costs, and improving effectiveness. Recently the following occurred:

- Completed all audits within five months of year end and the auditor's opinions were unmodified (the best you can receive).
- Collaborated with Information Technology, ministerial education schools, and Northwestern Publishing House on the evaluation, selection, and implementation of an integrated synodwide human resources and payroll software.
- Created the WELS Donated Property LLC to facilitate the acceptance of property gifts, while limiting WELS' risk exposure.
- Providing payroll processing services to the four ministerial education schools and Northwestern Publishing House.
- Completed a collaborative implementation project to achieve cost savings by switching administration of Charitable Gift Annuities to Financial Services and by switching Donor Advised Funds and Charitable Remainder Trusts from TIAA-CREF to Renaissance.
- Reached the \$2,000,000 annual spend threshold for the corporate credit card program, which qualifies WELS for the cash back bonus program.
- Surpassed the minimum annual rental vehicle spend with Enterprise/National, which resulted in a further rate reduction of the guaranteed maximum price.
- Collaborated with WELS Church Extension Fund on the identification of cost-saving strategies by further transferring accounting responsibilities to Financial Services.

- Completed a comprehensive review of the banking services, which resulted in the elimination of unneeded services and account consolidation.
- Completed an evaluation of adequacy of the synod's self-insurance reserve.

A look ahead

While the scope and abilities of Financial Services are reduced by the budget reductions, we will continue to seek out and implement changes that reduce costs, increase effectiveness, and/or strengthen internal controls. Included in these efforts are:

- Conduct, in collaboration with the ministerial education schools, NPH, WELS VEBA, and Pension Plan, a request for proposal for the provision of banking services.
- Continue evaluation of processes, systems, and talent to identify efficiency and effectiveness opportunities.
- Evaluate and implement electronic receipt processing and retention for the corporate credit card program.
- Evaluate risk tolerance levels across insurance lines.
- Develop, in collaboration with Information Technology, Human Resources, and Communication Services, a comprehensive disaster plan.
- Guide and collaborate on the assessment and implementation of recommendations of the Ad Hoc Commission II.
- Collaborate in the development of a short- (biennium), intermediate- (3-10 years), and long- (>10 years) term capital projects plan for WELS, its schools, and its subsidiaries.
- Further leverage purchasing power through negotiated contracts for goods and services.
- Create an automated consolidated financial reporting model to facilitate unaudited quarterly financial statements and annual audited financial statements.

In summary, the Financial Services team is honored to serve and is prepared to use the available resources and their God-given skills and abilities to support the ministries of WELS.

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, reporter

Human Resources

Our calling

WELS Human Resources (HR) oversees the personnel functions for synod personnel, including development, communication, and implementation of personnel policies; recruitment; compensation; benefits; performance management; and employee relations. Human Resources provides advice to supervisors on matters such as federal and state legal requirements concerning the treatment of personnel.

Human Resources also serves as a resource to WELS congregations and to affiliated groups and entities on the matters mentioned above as well as for risk management and federal and state legal requirements related to personnel matters. Further, in addition to legally mandated reporting to authorities, any charge, report, or allegation of sexual misconduct or physical abuse that has been made of an incident involving pastors, teachers, vicars, full- or part-time employees, and volunteers in any capacity must be reported to the synod president, director of Lutheran Schools, or director of Human Resources.

Our current situation

The Human Resources department relocated to the new Center for Mission and Ministry (CMM) in July. One of many benefits from this relocation is that Human Resources and the Benefits Plans Department share an office area, which continues to aid in communication and resource allocation to both the organization and individuals.

The records and resources maintained by Human Resources have been review and updated. Although this project took significant time, this has allowed the synod to be confident in its compliance with Government/Department of Labor regulation.

Beyond day-to-day human resource management activities, there are a few key activities/accomplishments that deserve special attention:

- 403b—Our Shepherd Plan (403b Plan) has been moved from Gold Leaf Partners/AUL to RPC/Wealth Management. Part of this process included a blackout period that lasted from Jan. 10–Feb. 11, 2014. During this blackout period the funds from AUL transferred to Wealth Management and each participant was set up in the RPC system. The conversion went smoothly, and all 403b participants now have access to the RPC site to review and make any changes they wish.
- ADP—All synod schools and the CMM are now active on the ADP systems for HR and Payroll processes (moved from the Mangrove system). As a result, all payroll processing for the synod entities has been centralized to the CMM. NPH will be moving to the ADP system as of Oct. 1, 2014. There are still parts of the ADP conversion process that are ongoing for all entities with the plan for completion by mid-year 2014.
- Performance review—The new performance review/assessment process has been rolled out to the CMM and all synod entities (WLS, MLC, LPS, MLS, and NPH). Training has been conducted for all those who directly supervise staff to ensure they understand their roles in coaching of their staff as well as how to use the new forms. We are in process of mid-term reviews to establish short-term goals for staff as well as to provide insight into what the measures and expectations will be in July, which is the typical review timeframe.
- HR model—The HR model has been used, which is where HR has used volunteers to provide assistance on an as-needed basis for both needs within the synod entities, as well as congregation support. A recent occasion allowed for a volunteer HR person to provide training at a congregation related to harassment/sexual harassment training. The model provides value for HR as well as the synod, and HR will continue to use this method as needs arise.
- HR due diligence—HR continues to perform due diligence on the vendors and systems in place within the HR structure. This has been, and will continue to be, an important step to ensure that both the outcomes provided, as well as the costs, are appropriate and expected.
- HR continues to work with congregations and COP members related to risk and personnel matters, as well as general compensation issues.

A look ahead

Beyond completion of some key items such as the ADP software changes, a key area of focus will continue to be to look at current operations and then to identify where efficiencies could be implemented, while maintaining effectiveness. Over the next biennium HR will, with God's guidance and blessings:

- develop compensation guidelines, matrices, and models for the 2015–17 biennium.
- provide continued training with synod leaders to continue to reinforce and develop the supervisory skills required.
- continue to work with all synod entities to identify areas that can be developed, improved, or modified to create better efficiency and effectiveness.
- review outcomes from the performance review process for the synod entities with the intent of creating additional training and feedback for leaders and the synod.
- continue to use the HR model where volunteers will be available to provide assistance on an as-needed basis for both needs within synod entities as well as for congregation support.
- continue to update and maintain the WELS and Connect Web sites to ensure information and details assist members from both an informative as well as practical aspect.

The Human Resources Advisory Committee (HRAC) is in place and operating to assist the HR function in ensuring policies and procedures are established and applied across all synodical entities. Further, the HRAC ensures that these systems are efficient and effective, that HR is staffed appropriately to include the requisite training and experience, and to investigate and review any issue related to HR. The Human Resources Advisory Committee continues to be active. The committee meets at a minimum biannually and will meet more regularly as needed. The committee's focus has changed from assistance and direction for day-to-day operational HR issues to involvement, planning, and assistance in strategic items such as compensation/benefit design, succession planning, and organization architecture/design issues.

Questions can be directed to hro@wels.net or by calling 414-256-3268.

Mr. Todd Scott, reporter

Facility Services

Our calling

Facility Services provides support services to the ministries conducted at or through the synod corporate headquarters. This objective is accomplished by providing a God-pleasing physical work space conducive to ministry operations and by creating a welcoming environment to passersby, visitors, guests, and employees.

Our current situation

In spring, the synod finalized the sale of its administration building on Mayfair Road in Wauwatosa, Wis. The building served as the synod's headquarters since it was purchased in February 1984. It was in need of extensive renovation, so when an unsolicited offer to purchase the building was received, the Synodical Council authorized the purchase of a building in Waukesha for \$2.85 million. Unfortunately, the first sale of the Mayfair property fell through. The \$2 million offer of another buyer was accepted in January 2013, and the sale closed in May 2013.

This new home for synodical administration is located in Waukesha along I-94 on Stone Ridge Drive. It is called the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry. The building has 33,000 square feet of space on two floors. All areas of ministry and departments of the synod, along with the WELS subsidiaries (WELS Church Extension Fund, WELS Foundation, and WELS Investment Funds), WELS VEBA, and WELS Pension Plan are located at the new site. The building also has an unfinished basement level that provides ample storage and a possible future home for the WELS Archives, now housed at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.

To prepare the building for housing of the synod's administrative offices, a chapel that can also serve as a large meeting room was added along with several private offices. Also, the parking lot was resealed, the building was tuck-pointed, the carpeting was replaced, and furnishings were acquired (mostly at a very reasonable price from the used furnishings market).

Funding to cover the difference between the proceeds from the sale and the cost of relocation (building purchase, building preparation, furnishings, moving) was available from the Facilities Fund, Financial Stabilization Fund, and individual gifts.

The move into the new building occurred near the end of June. In October, the building was dedicated, and nearly 300 people attended the open house.

Office relocation summary

Funding:

Sale proceeds	\$2,000,000
Grants & payments	245,000
Building Fund	1,212,000
Financial Stabilization Fund	<u>575,000</u>
Total	\$4,032,000

Expenses:

Purchase price	\$2,850,000
Holding costs (utilities, insurance, etc.)	251,000
Realtor & closing costs	129,000
Build out, furniture, & moving costs	<u>802,000</u>
Total	\$4,032,000

A look ahead

As mentioned previously, the new location has a full basement and this area has been identified as a possible home for the synod archives. Exploration of this option will be initiated as funding becomes available.

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, reporter

Finance and budget

Financial results and ministry financial plan

Overview

The Lord continues to provide financial blessings for missions; ministerial education; and support to districts, congregations, and ministries.

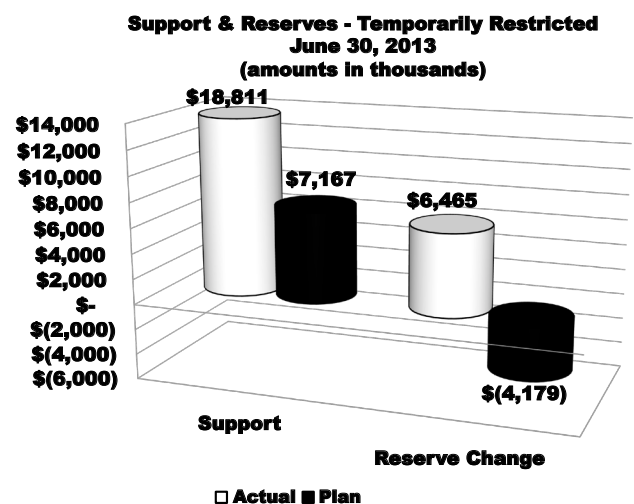
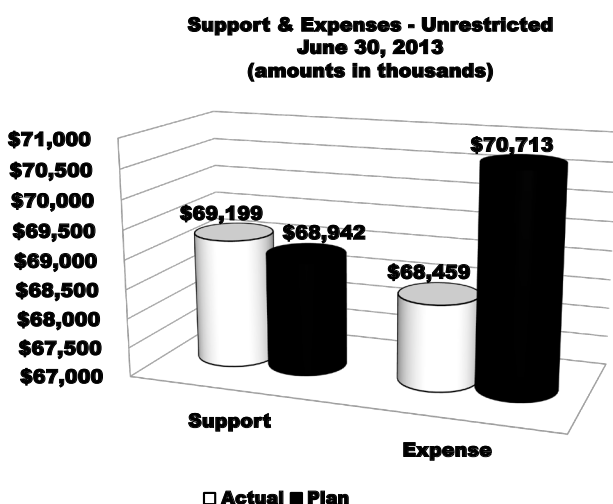
The synod operates on a fiscal year (FY) that runs from July 1 to June 30. Until FY 2009–10, the ministry financial plan (budget) included only the synod’s Operating Fund. To increase financial transparency and to provide a more complete ministry picture, the ministry financial plan reports now include the synod’s operating and special funds and the synod’s four ministerial education schools’ operating and special funds. Prior to this change, special funds were not included in the plans approved by the convention but were utilized at the discretion of each area of ministry and the school. Special funds continue to be used to account for gifts that donors have designated for a specific ministry or purpose.

In addition to greater transparency, the predictability of support for the ministry financial plan was enhanced by the establishment of the Financial Stabilization Fund (FSF) in FY 2009–10. The FSF holds all non-CMO (Congregation Missions Offerings) sources of support until the year after receipt. Establishment of this fund has worked as intended; as a result mid-year adjustments due to non-CMO support decreases have not been necessary.

Please refer to pp. 129-132 for the FY 2012–13 consolidated financial results for the synod, its four ministerial education schools, and its subsidiaries—Northwestern Publishing House, WELS Church Extension Fund, WELS Foundation, and WELS Investment Funds.

Fiscal year 2012–13

Collectively, WELS, its special funds, and its schools benefited from stronger than planned enrollments, investment returns, and grants and from lower than planned expenses to end the year with a \$740,000 increase in unrestricted reserves. In addition, temporarily restricted reserves increased \$6.5 million primarily due to strong investment performance, gifts for the Martin Luther College Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC), gifts from individuals, and bequests. Gifts for the ECLC were not included in the plan.

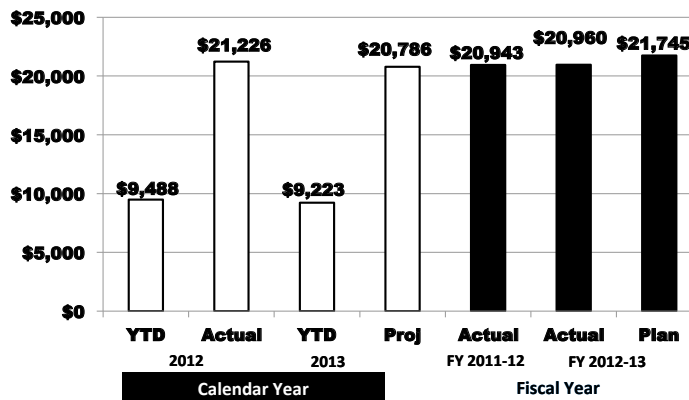


WELS Operating Fund

The Operating Fund provides synod support to the various ministries and their complementary support services. For the year, the Operating Fund had support and expenses of \$27,100,000. Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) was \$785,000 below plan; however, lower than planned expenses of \$1,398,000 resulted in a \$613,000 reduction in the use of FSF funding. The lower than planned expenses is the result of a decrease in retiree health care costs and lower than planned costs in Ministry Support due to vacancies and in Congregation and District Ministry due to a grant that was applied to operating expenses.

For the year, CMO of \$20,960,000 was \$785,000 under plan. The plan of \$21,745,000 was based on subscriptions for 2011 and a 3.0 percent increase in both 2012 and 2013. Subscriptions for 2011 were not met, and although CMO receipts increased 3.5 percent in 2012, this did not overcome the prior year shortfall. Additionally, subscriptions and receipts for 2013 are 2.0 percent lower than 2012.

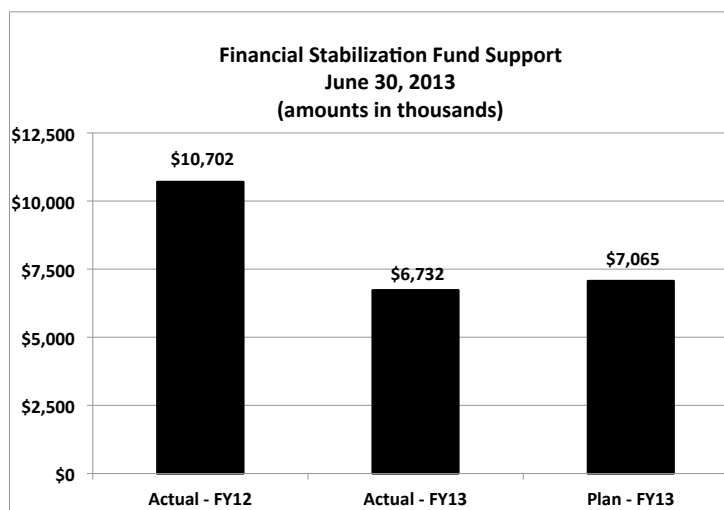
**Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO)
June 30, 2013
(amounts in thousands)**



WELS Financial Stabilization Fund

As mentioned previously, the FSF was implemented to reduce the risk of mid-year budget adjustments by holding unrestricted gifts and revenues until the year after receipt.

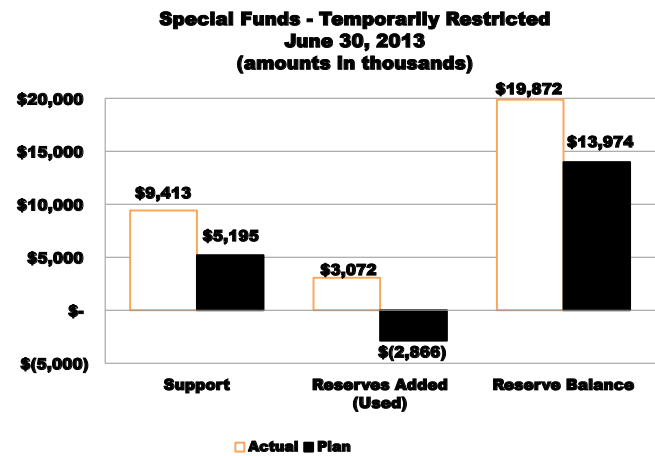
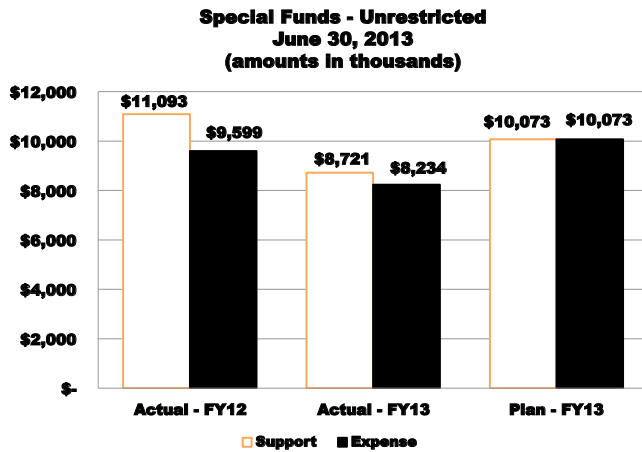
For the year, the FSF received support of \$6,732,000 or \$333,000 less than planned and transferred \$6,112,000 or \$613,000 less than planned to the Operating Fund. The support shortfall is due to declines in support from the Schwan Foundation and individuals. The shortfall was partially offset by strong investment returns. The transfer to the Operating Fund was less than planned due to lower costs for retiree health care, Congregation and District Ministry, and Ministry Support. In addition, the FSF provided funding of \$575,000 for the relocation of the synod office. This transfer was not planned. The FSF year-end balance remains strong at \$14,160,000 and is up \$45,000 from the prior year.



WELS Special Funds

WELS Special Funds hold gifts that have been restricted by donors for a specific ministry. When expenses meet the donor imposed restriction, the restriction is considered satisfied and funds are transferred to unrestricted to cover the qualifying expenses.

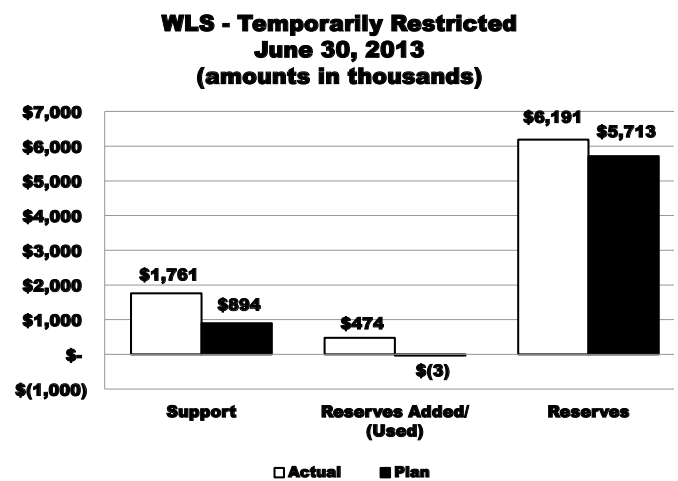
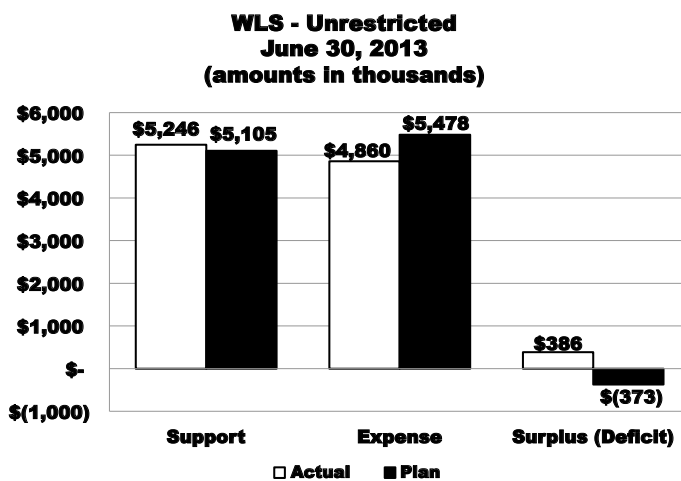
For the year, unrestricted Special Funds had a \$488,000 increase in reserves to \$10,550,000. The increase is due to expenses \$1,839,000 less than planned, which more than offset lower grants. Temporarily restricted reserves increased by \$3,072,000 due to gifts from individuals, bequests, and strong investment performance. WELS' permanently restricted reserves increased \$869,000 to \$20,663,000.



WELS schools

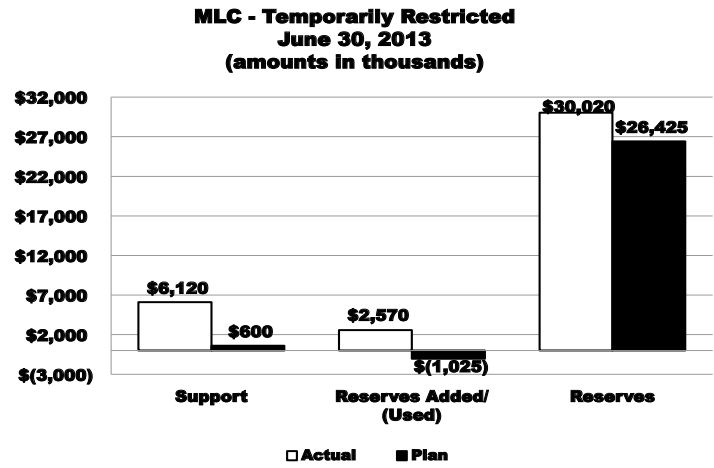
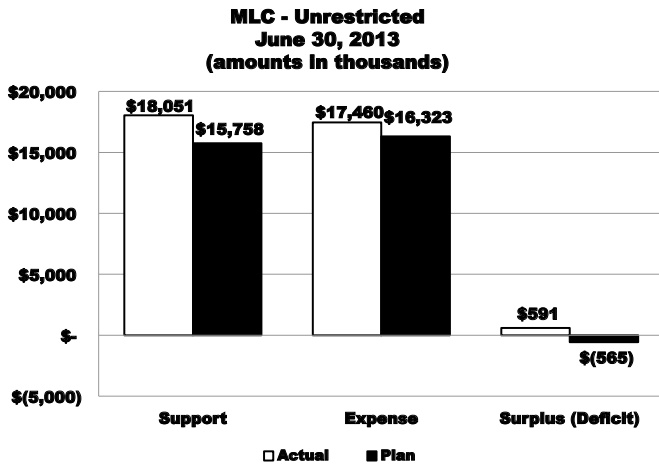
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

For the year, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) reported unrestricted support of \$5,246,000 and expenses of \$4,860,000 for a surplus of \$386,000. The plan included a \$373,000 use of reserves. The better than planned financial performance is due to greater than planned synod support, investment returns, gifts, and the deferral of programmed maintenance projects for a year. Also, temporarily restricted reserves increased \$474,000 or \$478,000 more than the plan due primarily to investment performance. Permanently restricted reserves increased \$324,000 to \$6.4 million.



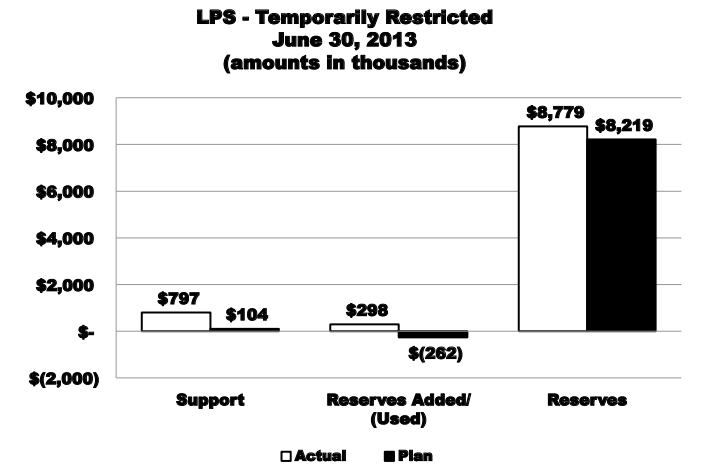
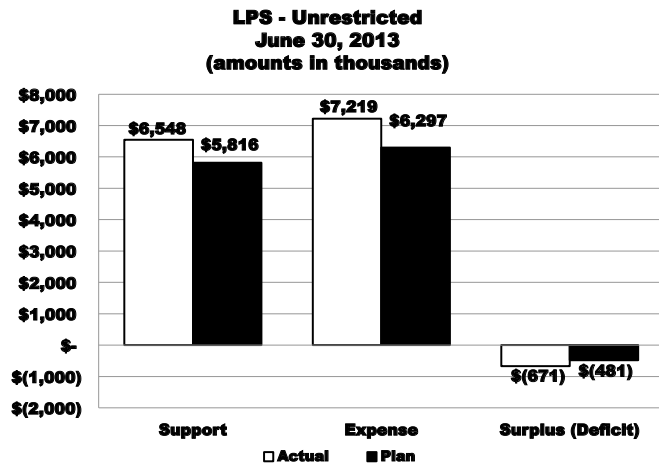
Martin Luther College

For the year, Martin Luther College (MLC) reported unrestricted support of \$18,051,000 and expenses of \$17,460,000 for a \$591,000 surplus. The plan included a \$565,000 use of reserves. The better than planned financial performance is due to greater than planned enrollments, which more than offset the associated costs. Support and costs were also greater than planned due to the receipt of gifts and construction costs for the ECLC. Temporarily restricted reserves increased \$2,570,000 due primarily to investment returns and gifts for the ECLC that will be spent in the next fiscal year when construction is completed. Permanently restricted reserves increased by \$912,000 to \$7,680,000.



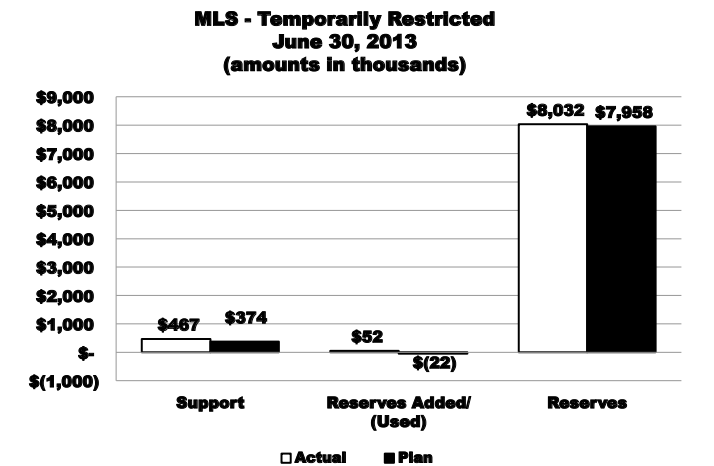
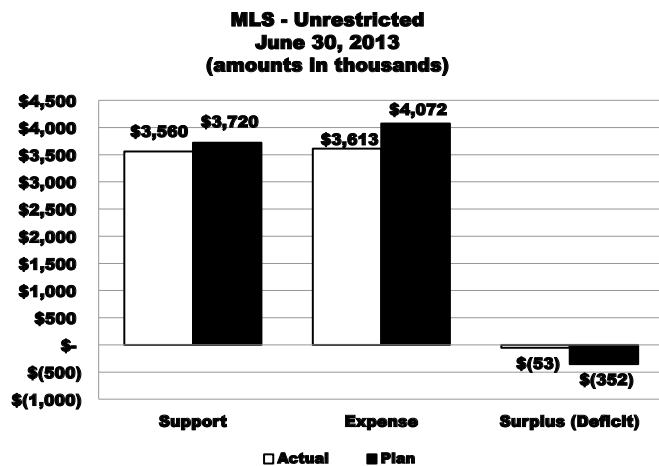
Luther Preparatory School (LPS)

For the year, LPS reported unrestricted support of \$6,548,000 and expenses of \$7,219,000 for a \$671,000 deficit. The plan included a \$481,000 use of reserves. The worse than planned financial performance is due to the unforeseen expenditure of \$350,000 for the replacement of two boilers and higher staff levels that more than offset greater than planned enrollments, gifts, and synod support. Also, temporarily restricted reserves increased \$298,000 to \$8,779,000 due to investment performance. Permanently restricted reserves increased by \$44,000 to \$758,000.



Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS)

For the year, MLS reported unrestricted support of \$3,560,000 and expenses of \$3,613,000 for a \$53,000 deficit. The plan included \$352,000 use of reserves. The better than planned financial performance is due to greater than planned gifts and expenditure restraint. Temporarily restricted reserves increased by \$52,000 to \$8,032,000 due to investment performance. Permanently restricted reserves increased \$46,000 to \$919,000.



2013–15 biennium

Planning for the 2013–15 biennium was initiated in spring of 2012, about 15 months before the start of the biennium. Early in 2013 the Synodical Council (SC) established, with the input of the Conference of Presidents on Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO), the following operating support assumptions.

- CMO: Following growth of 3.5 percent in 2012, congregations will meet their calendar year 2013 CMO subscriptions—a decline of 2.0 percent, and CMO will increase 4.0 percent in both 2014 and 2015.
- Schwan Foundation: Based on a \$2.2 million grant for 2013 and increases of 5.0 percent for both 2014 and 2015.
- Gifts from individuals: Includes Walking Together, Mission Partners, and other gifts from individuals and congregations.
 1. Walking Together is based on modest annual growth.
 2. Mission Partners was restructured to allow donors to restrict their gifts to a specific ministry. The forecast reflects this change though the continuing decline of operating support from this gift program.
 3. Other gifts are based on modest annual growth.
- Unrestricted bequests: Represents estate gifts that have not been restricted by donors to a specific ministry. The forecast is based on the lower end of actual gifts received during the prior five-year period as more donors are restricting gifts to a specific ministry.
- Investment income: Represents earnings on operating funds and the continued depressed interest rates for short-term investments, money market funds, and depository accounts.
- Other revenue: Represents income for services provided and assumes the amount will remain constant during the biennium.

The SC used the minimum allocation levels from the long-range ministry plan to distribute the forecasted synod support to areas of ministry. The SC asked the synod president to work with the areas of ministry to draft an initial ministry financial plan based on these parameters for review at its fall 2012 meeting. With this general direction by the Synodical Council, working with their boards or commissions, the areas of ministry proceeded to develop their ministry plans with the goal of maintaining or carefully expanding ministry.

In February 2013, the SC approved a plan that not only maintained ministry but also provided for careful growth while maintaining a three-tiered, four-school ministerial education system. The proposed financial plan again relies on areas of ministry and schools to use reserves or other one-time funds to sustain ongoing ministries.

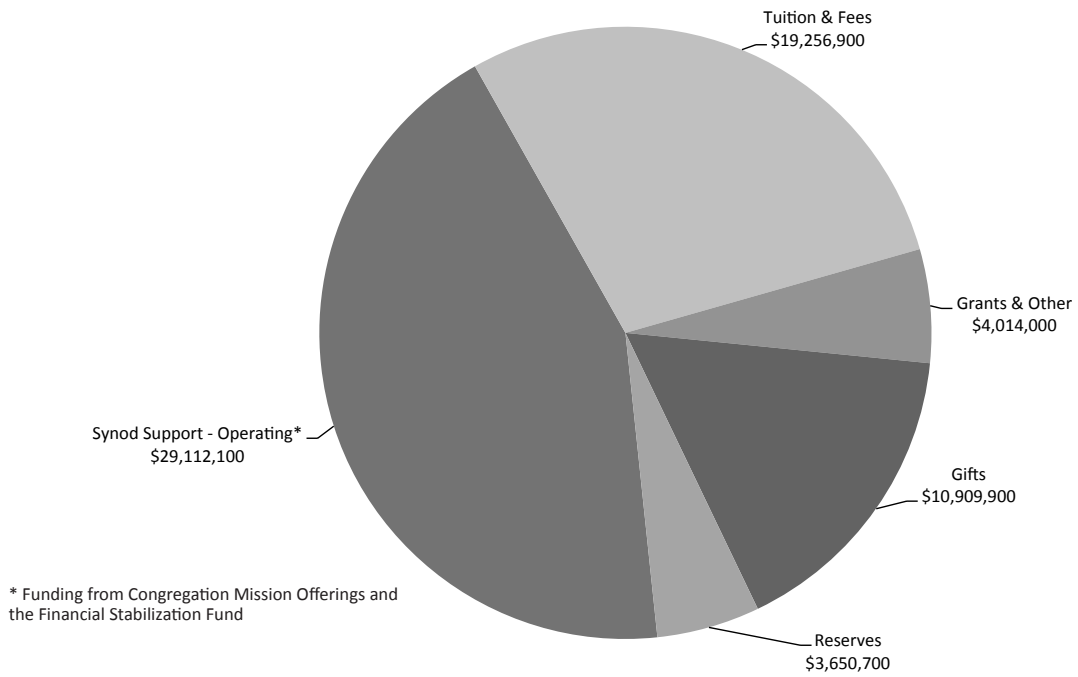
In February 2014, the SC reviewed the support forecast for the biennium based on CMO subscriptions for 2014 and projections for 2015 based on input from the Conference of Presidents. The plan included CMO growth of 4.0 percent in both 2014 and 2015; however, subscriptions for 2014 represented a decrease of 1.3 percent, and the Conference of Presidents decreased the expectation for 2015 to 1.0 percent growth. The result is CMO shortfalls of \$300,000 for FY 2013–14 and \$1,200,000 for FY 2014–15. The FY 2013–14 CMO shortfall will be made up by an unplanned grant that will be used to fund operating expenses and position vacancies in ministry support areas. In addition, the SC directed the synod president to develop a plan for eliminating the shortfall of \$1,200,000 for FY 2014–15.

At the time of this writing, work on the plan to eliminate the shortfall has just begun. The areas of ministry were asked to identify options for reducing expenses by 8.0 percent (or about twice what is needed) through the delay, reduction, or elimination of programs and the additional use of special funds if prudent. These options, along with across ministry strategies like reduced travel, wage and benefit freezes, tuition rates, and debt reamortization, will be prioritized by the president with input from the areas of ministry.

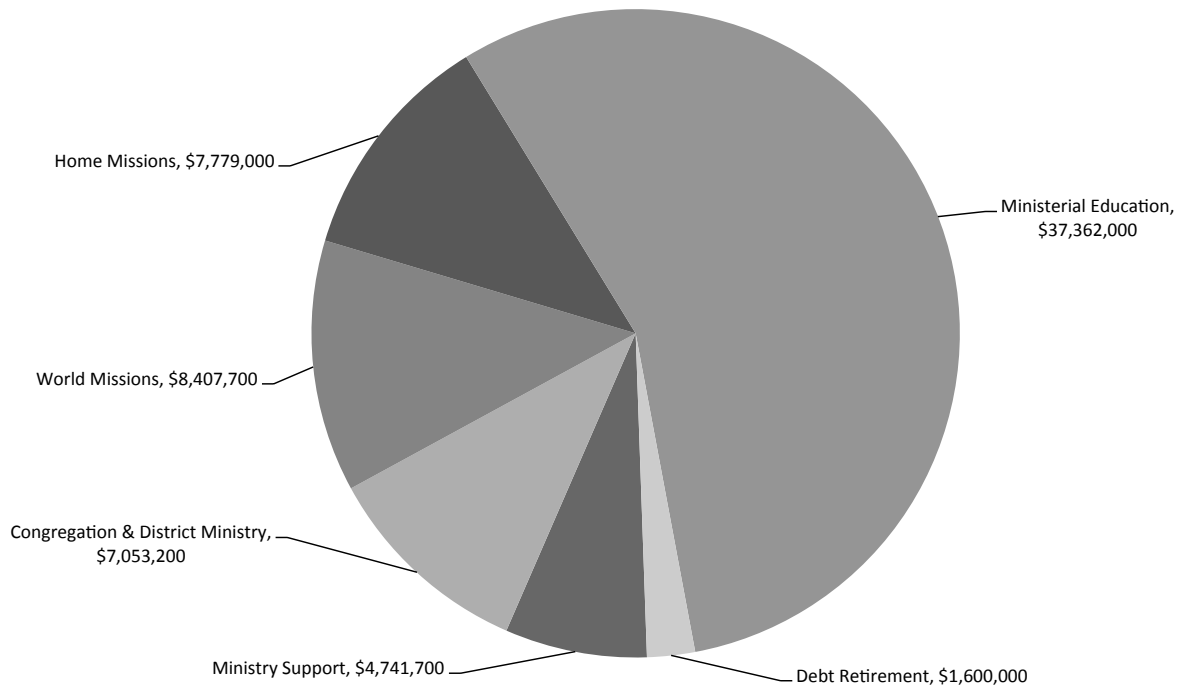
In addition, the Conference of Presidents is considering ways to increase CMO to at least the levels approved by the 2013 synod convention. Options it is considering include circuit pastor visits of every congregation to encourage congregations to increase their CMO for 2014 by at least 4.0 percent and committing to strive to grow CMO to 10 percent of their offerings or an increase of at least 4.0 percent in 2015.

The plan for closing the gap will be presented to the SC for its consideration at its late April 2014 meeting. The plan will be reported to the districts via an updated Synodical Council report available in late May for their consideration at district conventions this summer.

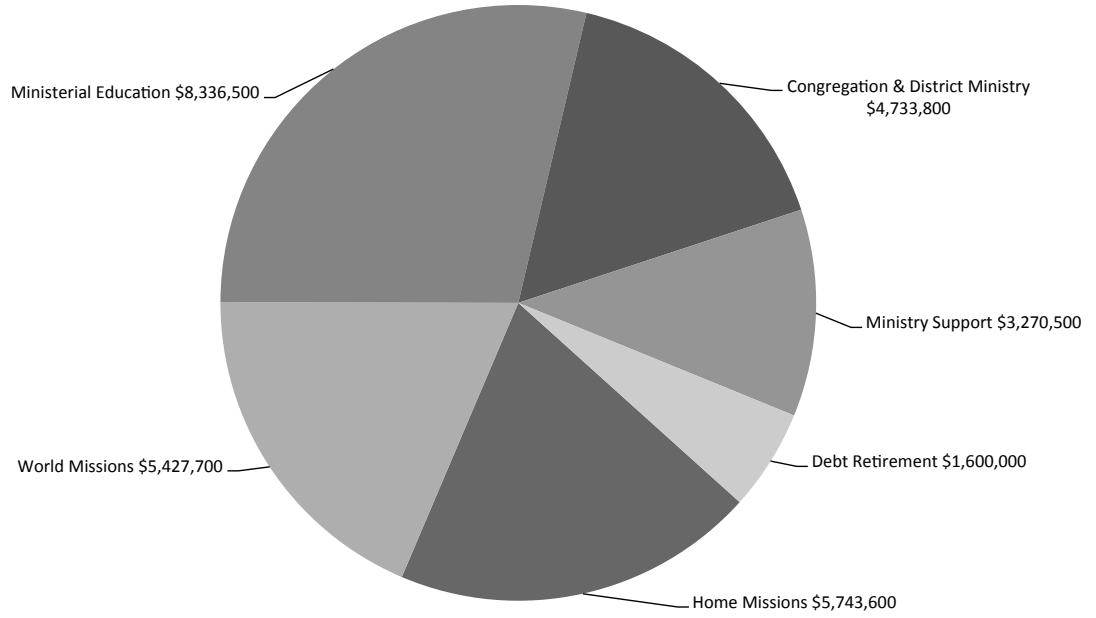
**FY 2013-14 Total Ministry Plan Support
\$66,943,600**



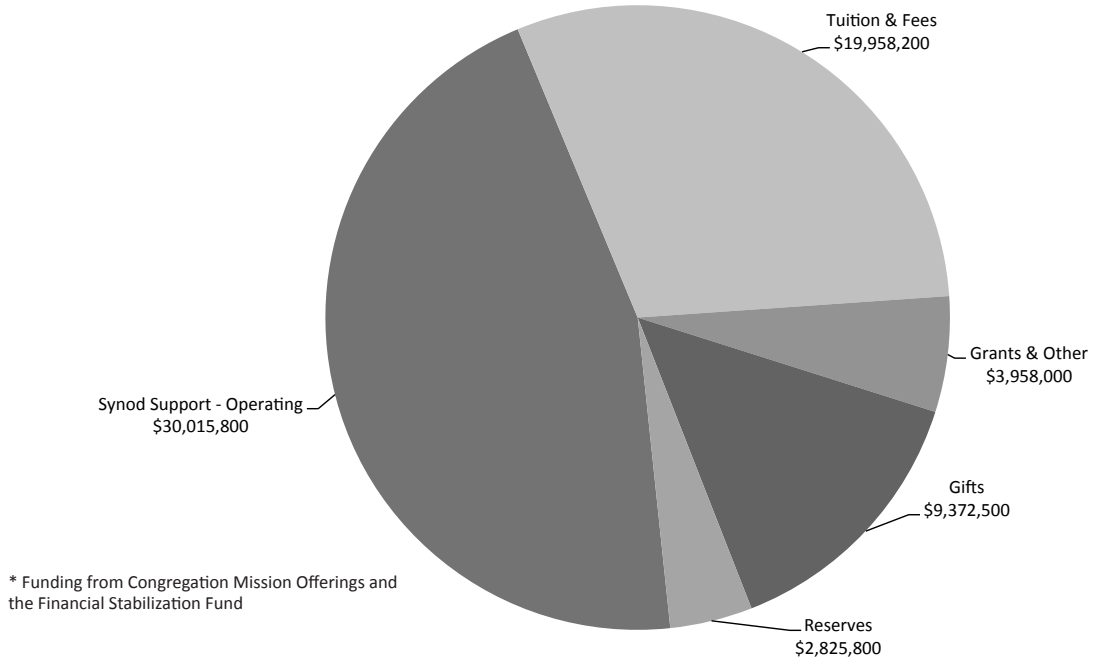
**FY 2013-14 Total Ministry Plan Expenses
\$66,943,600**



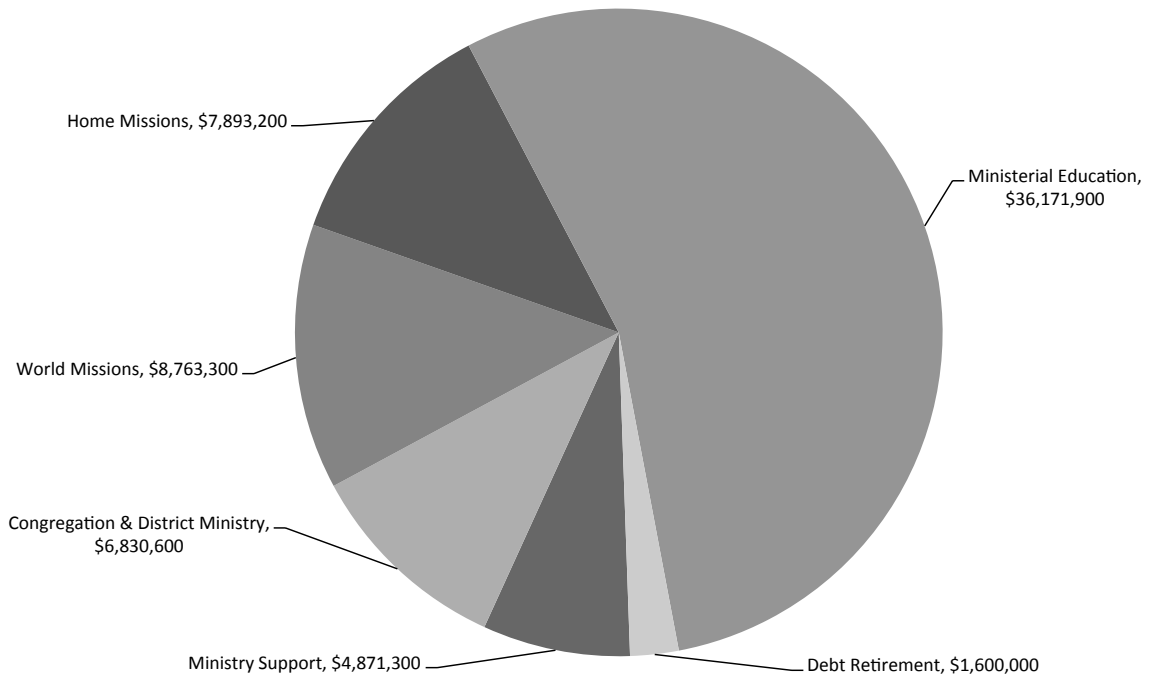
FY 2013-14 Synod Operating Support Allocation
\$29,112,100



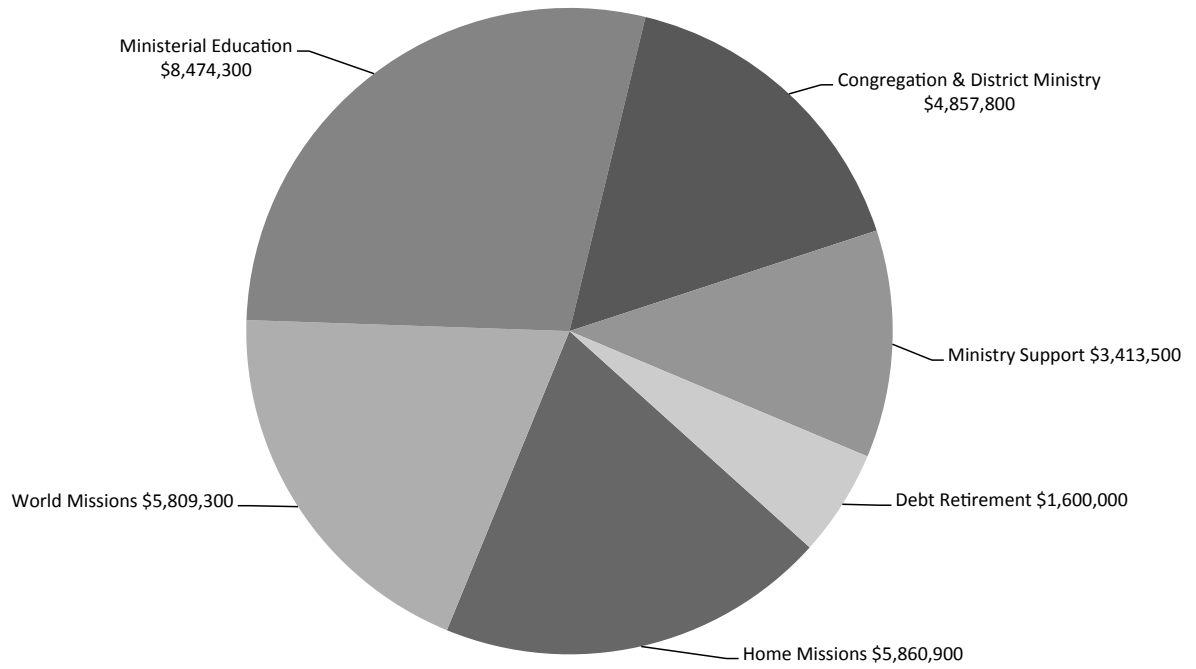
**FY 2014-15 Total Ministry Plan Support
\$66,130,300**



**FY 2014-15 Total Ministry Plan Expenses
\$66,130,300**



FY 2014-15 Synod Operating Support Allocation \$30,015,800



Synod schedule

0.50% Inflation Rate Adjustment

WELS COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

Salary Matrix

2013-14

Range Spread	14,214	14,924	15,665	16,376	17,116	17,827	18,568	19,279
Range Spread	14,214	14,924	15,635	16,346	17,056	17,767	18,478	19,189
<i>Service Incr.</i>	474	497	522	546	571	594	619	643
Ranges	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<i>Experience</i>								
0	28,427	29,849	31,270	32,692	34,113	35,534	36,956	38,377
1	28,901	30,346	31,792	33,237	34,684	36,129	37,575	39,020
2	29,375	30,844	32,315	33,783	35,254	36,723	38,194	39,662
3	29,849	31,341	32,837	34,329	35,825	37,317	38,813	40,305
4	30,323	31,839	33,359	34,875	36,395	37,911	39,431	40,948
5	30,796	32,336	33,881	35,421	36,966	38,506	40,050	41,590
6	31,270	32,834	34,403	35,967	37,536	39,100	40,669	42,233
7	31,744	33,331	34,925	36,513	38,107	39,694	41,288	42,875
8	32,218	33,829	35,448	37,058	38,677	40,288	41,907	43,518
9	32,692	34,326	35,970	37,604	39,248	40,883	42,526	44,161
10	33,165	34,824	36,492	38,150	39,818	41,477	43,145	44,803
11	33,639	35,321	37,014	38,696	40,389	42,071	43,764	45,446
12	34,113	35,819	37,536	39,242	40,960	42,665	44,383	46,089
13	34,587	36,316	38,058	39,788	41,530	43,259	45,002	46,731
14	35,061	36,814	38,581	40,334	42,101	43,854	45,621	47,374
15	35,534	37,311	39,103	40,880	42,671	44,448	46,240	48,016
16	36,008	37,809	39,625	41,425	43,242	45,042	46,859	48,659
17	36,482	38,306	40,147	41,971	43,812	45,636	47,478	49,302
18	36,956	38,804	40,669	42,517	44,383	46,231	48,096	49,944
19	37,430	39,301	41,191	43,063	44,953	46,825	48,715	50,587
20	37,903	39,798	41,714	43,609	45,524	47,419	49,334	51,229
21	38,377	40,296	42,236	44,155	46,095	48,013	49,953	51,872
22	38,851	40,793	42,758	44,701	46,665	48,608	50,572	52,515
23	39,325	41,291	43,280	45,246	47,236	49,202	51,191	53,157
24	39,798	41,788	43,802	45,792	47,806	49,796	51,810	53,800
25	40,272	42,286	44,325	46,338	48,377	50,390	52,429	54,443
26	40,746	42,783	44,847	46,884	48,947	50,985	53,048	55,085
27	41,220	43,281	45,369	47,430	49,518	51,579	53,667	55,728
28	41,694	43,778	45,891	47,976	50,088	52,173	54,286	56,370
29	42,167	44,276	46,413	48,522	50,659	52,767	54,905	57,013
30	42,641	44,773	46,935	49,067	51,229	53,362	55,524	57,656
31	43,115	45,271	47,458	49,613	51,800	53,956	56,143	58,298
32	43,589	45,768	47,980	50,159	52,371	54,550	56,761	58,941

See p. 78 for synodical salary range assignments and above base compensation for called workers.

Synod schedule

0.50% Inflation Rate Adjustment

WELS COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

Salary Matrix

2014-15

Range Spread	14,285	14,999	15,743	16,458	17,202	17,916	18,660	19,374
Range Spread	14,285	14,999	15,713	16,428	17,142	17,856	18,570	19,284
<i>Service Incr.</i>	476	500	525	549	573	597	622	646
Ranges	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<i>Experience</i>								
0	28,570	29,998	31,427	32,855	34,284	35,712	37,141	38,569
1	29,046	30,498	31,951	33,404	34,857	36,309	37,763	39,215
2	29,522	30,998	32,476	33,952	35,430	36,906	38,385	39,861
3	29,998	31,498	33,001	34,501	36,004	37,504	39,007	40,506
4	30,474	31,998	33,526	35,049	36,577	38,101	39,629	41,152
5	30,950	32,498	34,050	35,598	37,151	38,698	40,251	41,798
6	31,427	32,998	34,575	36,147	37,724	39,295	40,873	42,444
7	31,903	33,498	35,100	36,695	38,297	39,892	41,495	43,090
8	32,379	33,998	35,625	37,244	38,871	40,490	42,117	43,736
9	32,855	34,498	36,150	37,792	39,444	41,087	42,739	44,381
10	33,331	34,998	36,674	38,341	40,017	41,684	43,361	45,027
11	33,807	35,498	37,199	38,890	40,591	42,281	43,983	45,673
12	34,284	35,998	37,724	39,438	41,164	42,878	44,605	46,319
13	34,760	36,498	38,249	39,987	41,738	43,476	45,227	46,965
14	35,236	36,998	38,773	40,535	42,311	44,073	45,849	47,610
15	35,712	37,498	39,298	41,084	42,884	44,670	46,471	48,256
16	36,188	37,998	39,823	41,632	43,458	45,267	47,093	48,902
17	36,664	38,498	40,348	42,181	44,031	45,864	47,715	49,548
18	37,141	38,998	40,873	42,730	44,605	46,462	48,337	50,194
19	37,617	39,498	41,397	43,278	45,178	47,059	48,959	50,840
20	38,093	39,997	41,922	43,827	45,751	47,656	49,581	51,485
21	38,569	40,497	42,447	44,375	46,325	48,253	50,203	52,131
22	39,045	40,997	42,972	44,924	46,898	48,850	50,825	52,777
23	39,521	41,497	43,496	45,473	47,472	49,448	51,447	53,423
24	39,997	41,997	44,021	46,021	48,045	50,045	52,069	54,069
25	40,474	42,497	44,546	46,570	48,618	50,642	52,691	54,714
26	40,950	42,997	45,071	47,118	49,192	51,239	53,313	55,360
27	41,426	43,497	45,596	47,667	49,765	51,836	53,935	56,006
28	41,902	43,997	46,120	48,215	50,339	52,434	54,557	56,652
29	42,378	44,497	46,645	48,764	50,912	53,031	55,179	57,298
30	42,854	44,997	47,170	49,313	51,485	53,628	55,801	57,943
31	43,331	45,497	47,695	49,861	52,059	54,225	56,423	58,589
32	43,807	45,997	48,219	50,410	52,632	54,822	57,045	59,235

See p. 78 for synodical salary range assignments and above base compensation for called workers.

Synodical salary range assignments

Teacher	A-C
Principal	B-D
Prep professor	B-D
Staff minister	B-D
Prep vice president	C-E
Prep dean	C-E
College professor	C-E
Home missionary	C-E
World missionary	C-E
Associate administrator	C-E
Mission counselor	C-E
Prep president	D-F
College vice president	D-F
College dean	D-F
Seminary professor	D-F
Seminary vice president	D-F
Administrator	D-F
College president	E-G
Seminary president	E-G

Above base compensation components for called workers

1. Cost of living adjustment (using ACCRA or similar COLA index).
2. Cash housing allowance (using HUD Fair Market Rental Values established upon hire date + adjusted annually based on the percent change for the salary matrix. For 2013–14 and 2014–15 this adjustment would be .5%).
3. Social Security allowance (7.65% of salary, cost of living, and housing value/cash housing/fair market rental of parsonage-teacherage).
4. Housing equity of 2% of entry level base for workers in provided housing (parsonage/teacherage).
5. VEBA health insurance (\$1,000 deductible).
6. WELS Pension.
7. Reimbursement for business related expenses such as travel and conferences.

Note: An Excel compensation spreadsheet is available for download on the Human Resources page on Connect at <https://connect.wels.net/aom/hr>, under "compensation."

Compensation for synod president and congregational support for vice presidents

The synod president is compensated with a salary based on column "H." In addition to the base salary and the other components of compensation listed with the compensation guidelines, in 2013–14 the president will receive above base compensation the amount of \$40,816, which reflects a .5% increase from 2012–13. In 2014–15, this component of the president's compensation will be increased by .5% to \$41,020.

The budget for this biennium includes funding for the first and second vice presidents' congregations in the amount of \$20,000 and \$10,000, respectively. The congregations of the vice presidents are free to request and utilize these funds as they see fit to cover expenses and lost ministry time as a result of the synodical duties of their pastors.

Note: Salary matrices and compensation worksheets are available for download on the Human Resources page on Connect at <https://connect.wels.net/aom/hr>, under "compensation."

Board for World Missions

Our calling

Christ's love is the greatest treasure we share as we walk together toward our heavenly home. It is a treasure that goes to work in our hearts and moves us to share Christ's compassion for the lost. There are so many in this world who do not know that this love in Christ is God's gift to us all. For this reason we are so eager to carry out our calling to preach the good news to every creature. In response to **our calling**, the Board for World Missions is directed to carry out "... the responsibility of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ for the discipling of all people living outside the United States of America and Canada and those people who, because of cultural barriers, have not been made the responsibility of other agencies of WELS" (WELS Bylaws, Sec. 6.1). Into a world that desperately needs it, our missionaries and national church partners bring the light of God's Word. With this powerful tool deployed and in the hands of the Lord of the church, our work is bearing much fruit.

Our current situation

World Missions is serving 76,282 baptized souls in the 24 fields where WELS is training and partnering to do mission work. This is not including the many people who are being served through correspondence and online courses in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East but who have not been fully organized into congregations or national churches. More than 51,551 households are receiving printed material or mailings or are connected online.

Worldwide the national churches have called 366 national workers who serve the spiritual needs of 443 congregations and 256 preaching stations. The expatriate missionary force numbers 41 full-time missionaries and 9 teachers. Seventy-two lay workers from the United States are also presently serving in various fields.

The Board for World Missions has appointed seven administrative committees to facilitate this work around the globe. They are the

- Africa Administrative Committee, working with Cameroon, Malawi, Nigeria, and Zambia;
- Asia-Pacific Rim Committee, working with Indonesia, Japan, and Thailand;
- East Asia Administrative Committee, working among Chinese-speaking peoples;
- Europe Administrative Committee, working with Albania, Bulgaria, Russia, and Ukraine;
- Latin America Administrative Committee, working with Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Mexico;
- Native American Administrative Committee, working with the White Mountain and San Carlos Reservations; and
- South Asia Administrative Committee, working with India, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Information concerning independent sister churches who receive specialized help from WELS can be found in the report of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (p. 6).

The five-man Board for World Missions consists of two pastors, one teacher, and two laymen who are elected by the synod in convention. The administrative committees consist of pastors, teachers, and laymen who volunteer to facilitate the work of the world fields assigned to them. The administrative committee members are appointed by the Board for World Missions and work on behalf of the board to administer the activities in their respective fields. Of course the heart of this work is carried out by our missionaries and the national leaders who are hard at work as Christ's ambassadors in many lands.

Every aspect of the work our mission teams carry out in so many ways and so many places is worthy of note. Summaries of this work can be found at www.wels.net/missions. What follows are some highlights to give an example of what the Lord is using us to do on your behalf.

50 Years in Malawi

In October 2013, WELS' sister synod, the Lutheran Church of Central Africa–Malawi, celebrated its 50th anniversary. The synod organized a countrywide celebration to thank God for these years of grace. Work that started in 1963 with

two missionaries and one contact has now exploded to a synod of 120 congregations, 29 national pastors, and 40,000 baptized members. Our six WELS missionaries' primary focus is now on the continued training of leaders for this church.

Ordinations in Europe

For the past several years, our work in Europe has focused on men given the responsibility of leading congregations in various locations throughout Europe. In Bulgaria, two more pastors were ordained to join the three pastors already serving there. In Albania, the first two pastors were ordained after more than a decade of study. After years of work in Russia, the first two national pastors are being ordained this spring.

English teachers in Russia

Imitating the successful program of volunteers serving in East Asia, the Russian mission has five volunteers helping outreach efforts in Tomsk. These young teachers are being paid by a Russian English school. In off hours from teaching, the volunteers hope to develop contacts and friendships to create opportunities for sharing the precious gospel. This trailblazing group of teachers is paving the way for more WELS volunteers to participate in this new program as an effort to increase the gospel reach of our Russian congregations.

Latin America mission team

The growing maturity of national leaders, the expanding security issues in Mexico, the reduction of missionary manpower, the availability of Internet communication, and the many opportunities for outreach from WELS stateside Hispanic members have led to a flexible approach to WELS mission work in Latin America.

Any member of the Latin America missionary team can be deployed to different areas as the needs arise. Some will be used for exploration of new contacts and outreach opportunities. Others will be used for training congregational leaders, supporting existing churches, and seminary training. The mobile approach allows for long-term support for more areas of Latin America with a small missionary team. The team is also aware of the untapped potential of contacts through WELS members who are recent United States immigrants. Missionary Nate Wagenknecht will be developing stateside contacts to set up outreach to new areas in Latin America. Hispanic members in WELS congregations are encouraged to contact Wagenknecht to explore overseas outreach possibilities.

Pakistan

A gospel outpost supported by WELS is hard at work in a nation that is 97 percent Muslim. The small Confessional Lutheran Church is the springboard for evangelism. Materials—prepared with the assistance of WELS Multi-Language Publications—are mailed to more than 40,000 addresses in Pakistan on a monthly basis. There are currently 37 house churches conducting worship services. An outreach television program produced in Pakistan and broadcast on a satellite channel hopes to reach the entire Muslim world. Each episode includes a review of a section of Luther's Small Catechism. Design of a correlating Web site is underway.

Nepal

The use of digital technology is making it easier to share Christian literature with people living in remote mountainous areas of Nepal. The national leader now treks up the mountain with digital material and a solar powered portable projector instead of carrying hard copies. Leaders of groups that number in the thousands are being nurtured as the first seeds of the gospel have taken root, and training in discipleship continues. Working with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, a distance program for training leaders and pastoral candidates is underway.

Apache Lutheran Mission

The Administrative Committee for Native American Missions completed a thorough review of the Apache mission field. Following their recommendation, the Board for World Missions provided funding for a new field coordinator position designed to help bring unity and joint purpose to our entire mission team. Training Apache members at all levels of leadership is a key component of the new approach. Many Apaches have grown up as members of our Lutheran mission and will be key partners in the future work on the two reservations that minister to more than 3,000 souls.

East Asia outreach

The strong base God has provided in Hong Kong allows leaders and professors to share the gospel and train new believers through Life Net and Asia Lutheran Seminary (ALS) serving gospel-centered churches throughout East Asia. ALS professors serve more than 100 students on a regular basis and also train six full-time satellite seminary students. Four WELS missionaries and a team of more than 60 WELS volunteers are at work on the ground in Asia,

one of the most populated continents in the world. Volunteer teachers meet with more than 600 students weekly. Many teachers are Martin Luther College graduates sharing the gospel through after-hours Bible classes. More than 60 Asian students receive higher-level training through Christian Studies Institute classes and 100-plus students study online weekly. Local leaders have started four churches, and three smaller groups meet regularly and are organizing. The Translation Working Group provides Lutheran materials such as the Bible Teaching Series and People's Bible in local languages. Materials will be distributed in several ways including bookstores, eBook platforms, and online social networks.

Multi-Language Publications

WELS Multi-Language Publications provides a comprehensive listing and assists in the production of confessional Christian literature and other mass media in the languages of countries where our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is working and in other areas or language groups where we may never work, so that many more people throughout the world may come to faith in Jesus and know him as their crucified and risen Lord and Savior and thus have the hope of eternal life. Missionaries and our national partners carry the saving gospel in their hearts and can share it with their voices, but producing materials in multiple media formats and for use at all levels of Christian maturity can be a long-lasting support to this work. The impact of Internet, cell phone connections, and digital material is being seen in every area where our missions are working. Producing materials to engage people in new and long-lasting ways and to allow communication over long distances is a top priority for Multi-Language Publications, and current planning is working to address these needs.

Ukraine

In January 2014, WELS became the primary ministry partner for the Ukrainian Lutheran Church as a result of an agreement with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. WELS has had a long relationship with the Ukraine church, and the ongoing support will fall under the Board for World Missions. A summary of this partnership is found in the report of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations on p. 6.

Relationship with the Commission on Inter-Church Relations

The synod in convention asked that the BWM and Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) continue to review and finetune their guidelines for working relationships with emerging national churches. This past year discussions have taken place about current policies and practices. The relationship with the Ukrainian Lutheran Church provided an additional opportunity to review these guidelines. Every relationship with a sister church body is unique and changing. The BWM and CICR have agreed to use guidelines that allow the desired flexibility to meet the needs of our sister churches.

New missionaries

Pastor Dan Kroll has accepted the call to serve in Cameroon and hopes to arrive in Africa this summer. Pastor Matt Doebler has accepted the call to serve as a professor at Asia Lutheran Seminary and will settle in Hong Kong. Pastor Doug Weiser has accepted a call to serve as a visiting missionary to Nigeria and will be making frequent trips to support the churches there.

A look ahead

The world's population is growing by leaps and bounds. More than seven billion people share the globe with us. Unfortunately the vast majority do not share the treasure of Christ's love. Even many who live in so-called Christian nations do not know the peace that Jesus brings. We have before us the biggest mission field the world has ever seen.

World Missions appears to be able to continue to support the current mission work into the next biennium. A steady goal of our mission work is to help our sister churches stand in partnership with WELS and grow out of the need for deep subsidy. The training of pastors and lay leaders will continue to be a priority of our work as such leaders will be needed for a young confessional Lutheran church to weather the storm that the devil will try to throw its way.

In addition, new opportunities are being explored. Some are contacts that we have been working with for years, others are brand new. Nearby national churches are often the first points of contact and are busy helping with the exploratory work. Contacts have been made and will continue to be explored in the Philippines, Mozambique, Kenya, Turks and Caicos, Korea, and Vietnam. It is important to keep these needs and opportunities in front of our church body. The Board for World Missions will continue to enhance its efforts to tell the story of our mission work together to the members of WELS. Stories shared on www.wels.net/missions, *Forward in Christ* magazine, *WELS Connection*, printed handouts, and other means will be produced.

The work in East Asia is growing quickly and will continue to be a high priority for World Missions. Current plans call for the addition of mission workers to this field to meet the growing needs. In addition, Multi-Language Publications is a top funding priority. The development of sound materials in the many languages in our partnership is essential. Using the amazing tools the Lord has given us to produce and distribute digital materials will be the focus of strategic planning meetings in the spring of 2014 that will guide this work into the next several years.

Your World Missions team treasures the ongoing support of the members of WELS. Your prayers, attention, and gifts allow us to continue this work that is at the heart of being a Christian church body. May the Lord bless our work together as we take the treasure of Christ's love and share it with a world that will be lost without it.

Rev. Larry M. Schlomer, reporter

Rev. Howard Mohlke, chairman

Dr. Robert Anderson, secretary

Rev. Glen Hieb

Mr. Mark Schulz

Mr. Danny Wehmeyer

Advisory:

Rev. Larry M. Schlomer, administrator of WELS Board for World Missions

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Mr. Sean Young, director of WELS Missions Operations

Board for Home Missions

Our calling

Life can be pretty complex, or it can be pretty simple. The multi-millionaire is probably going to expend a lot of energy to make sure his assets are well diversified. He may have two or three financial planners who work full-time to make sure his investments are sound and his money is making him more money. On the other hand, I knew a man who lived from Social Security disability check to Social Security disability check. He wasn't concerned about how the market was doing. He simply budgeted his funds to make it through 30 days and then did it all over again. Financially speaking at least, life was quite simple for that man.

Relating to the direction our church body has given Home Missions, it is not complex but is quite simple. By God's grace we are to open more churches in North America so more people can hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. Home Missions doesn't have to wonder what its purpose will be next year or in five years. Our church body is very straight forward. Home Missions, with the financial support of Congregation Mission Offerings and special gifts of fellow members, opens missions.

That directive, while simple, is paramount to carry out. Jesus Christ lived and died and rose so we know "our citizenship is in heaven." Jesus took care of every last detail of earning our salvation. Whether living or dying, there is no question whatsoever where we will ultimately be. For us, Christ earned free and full forgiveness. By the Spirit's power, we believe we have forgiveness of our every sin. And as we live in the confidence of this gospel blessing, in his Word the Lord convicts us that this message isn't to hoard, but to share freely; not to mute, but to proclaim boldly; not to hide, but to speak openly to as many as we can. Yes, understanding who Jesus is and what Jesus has done and now what Jesus wants, our church body directs Home Missions to start more churches so more people will have the opportunity to hear a message that makes an everlasting difference.

Our current situation

At the spring 2013 Board for Home Missions (BHM) meeting, 10 missions were authorized. This is the largest number of missions that have been authorized over the past several years. The authorized mission locations are

- Gilbert, Ariz.;
- Carbon Valley, Colo.;
- Keller, Tex.;
- Dothan, Ala.;
- Las Vegas, Nev. (Korean ministry);
- Aiken, S.C.;
- Minot, N.D.;
- Greenwood, Ind.;
- Rock Hill, S.C.; and
- St. George, Utah.

In May 2013, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduates were assigned to Gilbert, Dothan, and Rock Hill. Keller, Las Vegas, and Greenwood already had pastors serving at those authorized missions. The other four missions called from the field.

In addition to authorizing 10 missions, the Board for Home Missions also approved enhancing six ministries. These ministries were already established. The additional financial support allows these ministries to continue outreach efforts. The enhanced ministries are

- Christ the Lord, Sterling, Va.;
- St. Andrew, Milwaukee, Wis. (Hispanic);
- Crown of Life, Eagan, Minn.;
- Trinity Hmong Lutheran, Manitowoc, Wis. (Hmong);

- St. Peter Hmong Lutheran, Clovis, Calif. (Hmong); and
- *Palabra De Vida*, Detroit, Mich. (Hispanic).

In May 2013, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduates were assigned to Sterling, Milwaukee (Hispanic), Detroit (Hispanic), Clovis (Hmong), and Eagan. Manitowoc already had a Hmong pastor serving at Trinity Hmong Lutheran.

Also at the 2013 BHM meeting, two Hmong exploratory missions were authorized. Funding for these missions comes from Home Missions divisional funding as well as local and area financial support. The two Hmong exploratory locations are

- Brooklyn Park (northwest Minneapolis), Minn.; and
- Fresno, Calif.

In May 2013, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Hmong graduates were assigned to Brooklyn Park and Fresno.

At the fall BHM meeting, two more missions were authorized. While the spring authorization activity was quite aggressive and allocated close to \$1.4 million in ministry, later in the spring Home Missions was the recipient of an estate close to \$500,000. Factoring in that gift along with additional generous support through the spring and summer, it was determined that up to another \$200,000 of new monies could be authorized for missions. Both missions are calling from the field. The two authorized missions are

- Mt. Horeb, Wis.; and
- Norman, Okla.

With the above missions factored into the Home Missions budget, what follows is a breakdown of the missions that synod dollars are supporting.

- Establishment phase—18; first phase of a mission, which typically means higher subsidy
- Development phase—21; second phase, subsidy is dropping and the mission is able to request permission to purchase land as well as request building/purchase of worship facility
- Enhancement—9; receive additional subsidy to help support existing pastor or support additional staff
- Cross-cultural—24; supporting ministry that offers worship in a non-English language or serves a number of multi-ethnic groups

Campus Ministry is also a part of Home Missions. Through campus ministries we look to serve our fellow WELS college students. We also look to reach out with the gospel of Jesus Christ to both students from the United States as well as around the world. About 6,500 WELS students are a part of the database.

One way in which all our WELS congregations can help support campus ministry is by finding out where their high school seniors are going to college, getting their school information, and sharing that information with the Campus Ministry staff member at the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry.

The Campus Ministry budget supports

- 1 full-time campus ministry at the University of Wisconsin–Madison;
- 6 part-time plus campus ministries; these ministries receive anywhere from \$9,000 to \$55,000 in financial support; and
- 24 part-time campus ministries, which together receive a total of \$23,000 in financial support.

To serve existing missions as well as to look at new areas to start future missions, district mission boards serve an invaluable role in Home Missions. In fact, the laymen and pastors serving on mission boards are the heart of Home Missions. Through the past years there have been 13 mission districts. At the 2013 synod convention, a fourteenth mission district was approved—WELS–Canada Mission District. The missions in Canada will remain members of their respective WELS districts, but the mission congregations in Canada will now be served by the WELS–Canada Mission District Board. We pray the Lord’s blessings on this mission board as well as on the other thirteen district mission boards.

Two men, a pastor and a layman, represent their mission board on the Board for Home Missions (BHM). Thus there are 28 members on the BHM. Serving as chairman is Pastor Chuck Westra. He represents the BHM at Synodical Council meetings, is a member of the Joint Mission Council, and in various ways represents the cause of Home

Missions in our church body. Westra serves full time at Christ our Savior, Columbia, Tenn. We give thanks to the Lord for his active leadership and involvement in Home Missions.

Another valuable component of Home Missions is the mission counselor program. Serving full time as mission counselors are Pastors Mark Birkholz, Peter Kruschel, and Ed Schuppe. Each mission counselor serves several districts working with district mission boards, mission congregations, and mission pastors. When a mission is authorized and the first pastor is on site, the mission counselor goes to the new mission and has a two- to three-day training orientation with the pastor and spouse. By walking through the steps a mission can take in its first months as well as discussing outreach strategies and ministry plans for the mission, the mission counselor assists a mission pastor and core group as it begins reaching out to lost souls. During the first years of a mission's existence, the mission counselor may visit the mission from two to four times.

Home Missions also has those who support and work with cross-cultural ministries. Pastor Tim Flunker, the national Hispanic consultant, not only serves the 12 Hispanic ministries receiving Home Missions subsidy but also works with a number of WELS churches to see if those churches might start Hispanic ministries or enhance the ministries they are doing. He also works with Prof. Allen Sorum through Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's Pastoral Studies Institute in the training of Hispanic men to serve as full-time pastors. Serving the 10 Hmong pastors and 9 congregations is the Hmong Asian Committee. Supporting outreach to Muslims is the Outreach to Muslim Committee. Through presentations across the United States, Pastor Pieter Reid, Muslim outreach consultant, has brought awareness to congregations of the opportunities to share the gospel with Muslims. Through the Joint Mission Council, Reid's directive is to work with congregations in gospel outreach to Muslims. In the United States we also have three Korean pastors (a fourth going through a colloquy process) and several groups of Sudanese that we are serving. And while certainly not a feature in the vast majority of our WELS churches, we do have more WELS churches where several cultures are joining together to worship our Savior, Jesus Christ.

In addition to supporting missions in the field, we also support them from the Center for Mission and Ministry in Waukesha, Wis. Missions (World and Home) has six full-time and two part-time staff who assist our missions. Coordinating the Missions staff in serving both World and Home Missions is Mr. Sean Young, director of mission operations. If you have a question for Missions, contact jmo@wels.net. Two of the staff work on promoting missions. Various print materials, presentations, quarterly updates, semi-annual newsletters, and blogs on missions can be found at www.wels.net/missions. To hear firsthand about missions, a Mission Promotions staff member is available to coordinate the event and contact a mission speaker/presenter.

Home Missions has a number of active partners. Those partners include:

- Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS): The ladies of the LWMS pray for mission pastors and families as well as offer substantial gifts at spring and fall rallies and at its annual national convention for special projects not funded through the Home Missions budget.
- WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. (CEF): This loaning institution of WELS exists to loan funds primarily to missions for land purchases and worship facilities. Through its service, mission churches receive loans that would not receive loans from conventional loaning institutions. In addition, since 1993 CEF has instituted a grant program that substantially lowers the debt of a mission on its land and worship facility. Since 1993 more than \$25 million in grants has been given. On Sept. 16, 2013, the CEF Board of Directors made a special grant to Home Missions of \$1.3 million. In the spring of 2013, Home Missions had brought this request to the CEF Board of Directors. The grant would be used by six missions to assist them to either purchase land or build/buy a worship facility. Home Missions thanks its partner at CEF for this generous grant (please note this grant is over and above the normal grant process in place).
- Kingdom Workers (KW): This organization looks to supply volunteers for mission work. Through Faith in Action teams, teens or interested adults are connected to missions for up to a week to help with outreach ministry. In addition, Kingdom Workers has been working on an Evangelism Mentor Team program where typically a husband and wife spend one to two weeks four to six times a year at a specific mission. Kingdom Workers also supports Builders For Christ. Through the years Builders For Christ has worked on more than 140 projects, most of them mission churches. Mr. Dale Mueller retired as the Builders For Christ director Dec. 31, 2013. We thank the Lord for all the blessings our church body has received through Mueller's efforts.
- Multi-Language Publications (MLP): The MLP primarily serves World Missions, but as our church body serves different cultures in the United States, the MLP has assisted Home Missions with some translation projects.

- Christian Aid and Relief: This ministry looks to provide financial aid as well as support to areas of the world affected by some type of catastrophe. In addition, Christian Aid and Relief offers some funding so individual ministries can offer humanitarian assistance.

Although we don't often discuss how Home Missions works with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS), Home Missions is active with WLS in these ways:

- Summer student assistants: First- and second-year students volunteer to spend a summer at a mission church. Home Missions works with a WLS professor who coordinates this ministry opportunity.
- Vicars in Missions: For years Home Missions has budgeted funds to support vicars in mission settings. The past years WLS has contributed funds as well as offered its input so that more WLS students can vicar in mission settings.
- Pastoral Studies Institute: As noted earlier in this report, Prof. Allen Sorum helps evaluate potential ethnic men for full-time ministry. Once a man is approved for the Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI) program, Sorum oversees the training program. Often graduates from the PSI are supported by Home Missions. In May 2013, three Hmong men and two Hispanic men graduated from WLS through the PSI. Also one Hispanic man graduated from WLS through the traditional program, and two Korean men entered WELS ministry through the colloquy process.
- Mission and Ministry: In February, WLS has a three-day Mission and Ministry seminar during which WLS students learn about many of the WELS ministry programs. One of the days is devoted to Home Missions. Working with a WLS senior, various aspects of Home Missions ministry are highlighted.
- Cross-cultural conferences (Hmong and Sudanese): In October a Hmong Conference takes place at WLS. In October 2013, in addition to nine WELS Hmong pastors attending the conference, there were one Lao pastor from another faith, one WELS Korean pastor, two guest Korean pastors from other faiths, one WELS pastor serving in Vietnamese ministry, and two Lutherans from Pakistan attending the conference. In February 2014, the first Sudanese Conference was held at WLS.

At the 2013 synod convention, five mission churches were received into membership:

- Arizona-California District: Crown of Life (third campus), Corona, Calif.
- Northern Wisconsin District: Bethany (second campus), Appleton, Wis.
- Northern Wisconsin District: Saving Grace, Green Bay, Wis.
- Northern Wisconsin District: Trinity Hmong, Manitowoc, Wis.
- South Central District: Christ the Lord, Sienna Plantation, Missouri City, Tex.

Another action that impacted Home Missions was the synod approving a bylaw change in an article relating to the Church Extension Fund (CEF). Now, if CEF's financial portfolio is healthy, in addition to grants for land and facilities for mission churches, CEF can grant Home Missions funds in support for other Home Missions opportunities including funds being designated to help open/to open a mission(s).

A look ahead

At the fall 2012 Board for Home Missions meeting, a strategic plan was adopted. Since that time Home Missions has been working to implement the seven vision goals. To encourage implementation, during the winter months, district mission boards gather for training and encouragement. Through this process, Home Missions is working to have each district mission board submit a request to start a new mission. Also, Home Missions is working with the district mission boards to take ownership of missions that start with the goal in mind that by the end of eight years that mission will no longer require subsidy.

Another part of the strategic plan wants to encourage more congregations to pursue mission reproduction as a primary outreach concept. Realizing that getting to every district takes time, this goal has a timeline of 2020. At this time five districts—Western Wisconsin, Southeastern Wisconsin, Northern Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota—have been working at this goal. At the spring BHM meeting these five districts will share a report on this vision goal.

For the past 15 to 20 years, Home Missions outreach through cross-cultural ministries has grown. For the fiscal year 2013–14 close to 28 percent of Home Missions dollars are spent on cross-cultural ministries. Relating to cross-cultural ministry, the Joint Mission Council has discussed the next steps. Please see the Joint Mission Council report (p. 89) for more information.

As we look ahead, we do so with confidence. We know what is in store for us as God's people, and we eagerly await our Savior's return. We know the precious promises of a risen Christ. We know we have in our arsenal a Word that changes

dead hearts into hearts alive with faith in Christ Jesus. God has told us his Word won't return to him void. And we know that as we continue to plant churches in North America more souls will hear what Jesus Christ has done to save them from their sins. We may not always see each mission mature to be a thriving self-supporting church. We may not always have smooth sailing as sinful people work to assist sinful people in starting a church. And yet, we can and do press forward because this is what God wants us to do—to tell more people the incredible, life-saving message of Jesus Christ. May God so bless our missions and mission pastors as well as our WELS membership to do just that.

Rev. Keith Free, reporter

Rev. Charles Westra, chairman
Mr. John Beeskow, Michigan Mission District
Mr. Bruce Burger, Nebraska Mission District
Rev. John Dorn, Northern Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. Dwayne Coryell, North Atlantic Mission District
Dr. Keith Eldred, Colorado Mission District
Rev. Mark Gabb, South Atlantic Mission District
Dr. August Gabert, Pacific Northwest Mission District
Rev. Jeremy Glowicki, Minnesota Mission District
Rev. Harland Goetzinger, WELS-Canada Mission District
Mr. Thomas Hansen, Dakota-Montana Mission District
Rev. Stephen Helwig, Nebraska Mission District
Mr. John Isleb, Southeastern Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. Steven Kalscheuer, Western Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. Daniel Kemnitz, Northern Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Robert Krueger, Michigan Mission District
Mr. Paul Kuske, WELS-Canada Mission District
Mr. Noel Ledermann, Arizona-California Mission District
Mr. Paul Mattek, South Central Mission District
Mr. David Sauer, Minnesota Mission District
Rev. Caleb Schoeneck, South Central Mission District
Mr. Donald Schuppe, South Atlantic Mission District
Rev. Douglas Semenske, Southeastern Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Nathan Strutz, Western Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Wayne Uhlhorn, Colorado Mission District
Rev. Matthew Vogt, Arizona-California Mission District
Rev. Craig Wasser, Pacific Northwest Mission District
Rev. Kevin Wattle, North Atlantic Mission District
Rev. Jonathan Werre, Dakota-Montana Mission District

Advisory:

Rev. Keith Free, administrator of WELS Board for Home Missions
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Mr. Sean Young, director of WELS Missions Operations

Joint Mission Council

Our calling

The Joint Mission Council (JMC) oversees those mission opportunities that are the operational responsibility of both the Boards for World and Home Missions. The members of the council are the elected chairmen and administrators of both boards, the director of Missions Operations, and a representative designated by each board.

The present focus of the Joint Mission Council is to

- coordinate the future expansion of multi-cultural ministries to enhance the reaching of more lost souls both in North America and the homelands of those being served,
- continue to work on developing a structure that will best facilitate the mission outreach of these areas of ministry,
- coordinate the actions of World Missions and Home Missions in situations where normal ministry responsibilities of both boards overlap, and
- provide resolution of conflicts between the two boards as a result of overlapping ministries.

Our current situation

With a new BWM administrator (Pastor Larry Schlomer) and a new BWM chairman (Pastor Howard Mohlke) in the mix, the group decided to have a meeting in August to discuss the direction of the Joint Mission Council. That meeting and several others led to the decision to call Pastor Paul Prange to serve as the coordinator of global cross-cultural outreach. This new position under the synod's Joint Mission Council will be responsible for exploring ways to coordinate people working in the same ethnic groups here in the States as well as to connect cross-cultural stateside ministries to new opportunities in international settings.

Prange will continue serving as BME administrator in a part-time capacity during this sabbatical. He will be serving in both roles, which should allow him new opportunities to examine how the ministerial education schools can further cooperate and work with both cross-cultural home and world mission fields, including how the synod can help serve these fields' sometimes very specific ministry and educational needs.

The Joint Mission Council is excited to welcome Prange onto the Joint Mission Council and is looking forward to working with him as we seek to grow in our cross-cultural ministry efforts.

The Joint Mission Council is currently concentrating on the following areas of ministry.

Hmong ministries

Ministering to the Hmong people is a worldwide affair, with both Home Missions and World Missions sharing the gospel with these close-knit tribal communities in the United States and Thailand. Yet even though these ministries are separated by thousands of miles, they are closely connected.

Pastor Kenneth Paasch, field coordinator for Thailand, describes the Hmong as a "people without a nation." Though most live in the mountainous area of southern China, more than 400,000 now live in Thailand after fleeing to refugee camps from Laos and Vietnam in 1975 to escape persecution for their assistance to the United States during the Vietnam War.

Part of the work that the Hmong Administrative Committee does is to work closely with the Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI). The committee spent considerable time discussing locations for Hmong ministry and placement of the three men in the PSI program who graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary on May 24, 2013. Chuhua Thao was called to Clovis, Calif.; Josiah Vang was called to Brooklyn Park, Minn.; and Tong Xing Yang was called to Fresno, Calif.

A priority for the Hmong ministries in the future will be the development of leadership in their home congregations. Coordination and collaboration between the Hmong Asian Committee in the United States and the Asia-Pacific Rim Administrative Committee will be essential to maximize the unique partnership for involvement, support, and prayers emerging from our U.S. Hmong congregations.

Please continue to pray for the Hmong people in the United States, that more of them hear the gospel message and that the Holy Spirit works in their hearts, and for the pastors and members involved in Hmong ministry.

Cristo Palabra de Vida

The Cristo Palabra de Vida National Council continues to help congregations plan, develop, and implement outreach plans to reach the Hispanic population in their immediate vicinity, as well as work with the congregations already doing work among Hispanics. Cristo Palabra de Vida works with all the congregations in WELS. By the grace of God, 18 congregations hold worship services in Spanish while an additional 87 are working among Hispanics and welcoming them into their English services.

Cristo Palabra de Vida also continues to promote and direct lay leadership training. In odd years (2013, 2015, 2017) Cristo Palabra de Vida coordinates regional leadership training workshops in four or five areas of the United States. The workshop provides a hands-on training session that helps the lay leaders of the Hispanic congregations improve their skills and abilities to help their pastor in doing ministry in their congregations. Cristo Palabra de Vida holds the workshops in areas where several congregations can drive to attend and sets the agenda for the workshops.

Another area of Cristo Palabra de Vida's work is to facilitate a biennial Hispanic Pastor's Conference by searching for a location, securing a grant to help cover the costs, setting the agenda, directing the worship leaders, and leading the conference. The most recent conference was held at Divine Savior, Doral, Fla., and was attended by 33 pastors, two council members, and one vicar. The two days were spent discussing various education resources and methods. Some time was spent also looking at ways in which the work done north of the border with Mexico could better be coordinated with the work done south of the border with Mexico.

Cristo Palabra de Vida continues to watch the one man in the Pastoral Studies Institute who will soon be assigned as a vicar. Cristo Palabra de Vida is also looking at new, innovative, and personal ways to mentor men currently involved with Hispanic outreach, especially those men who are working in areas that are far removed from other Hispanic work.

As the demographics show us, the Hispanic population in the United States continues to grow, and by the grace of God, it is growing around many of our established congregations. Cristo Palabra de Vida desires to help those established congregations reach out with the clear gospel message.

Muslim outreach

Pastor Pieter Reid continues to identify areas that have a Muslim ethnic base that can be developed into mission fields and is working to create outreach material that can be used by congregations in their efforts to reach those souls that need to be saved.

Outreach to Muslims requires training and patience among our people. Ever since 9/11, typical reactions among Americans, even American Christians, are: fear, fury, fascination, forgetfulness, or fatigue with the Muslim world. Therefore, the Outreach to Muslims Committee considers it to be vitally important to continue to offer awareness presentations throughout the country. With a presentation that hinges on the theme, "**I Sincerely Love All Muslims**," Reid emphasizes that Christian love in action is the most important ingredient in outreach to Muslims.

In 2013, Reid made 34 presentations, with at least eight presentations to smaller Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS) circuits and two larger women's gatherings (a women's retreat and the national LWMS convention). The Outreach to Muslims Committee feels it is important to keep presenting to women's groups as they see outreach to Muslim women as one of its primary opportunities. A 2014 goal is to have a committee member and/or knowledgeable WELS member at-large present at least 10 percent of the time. Geographical location and comfort level will determine committee/member presenters.

Sudanese outreach

The Lord continues to bless the outreach opportunities throughout the United States and Canada to reach Sudanese refugees with the gospel. This work has spread from Omaha, Neb., through Good Shepherd, our WELS congregation there to Seattle, Wash., where there is a core group of six families with more than 300 other Sudanese families in the South Sound area.

A planning meeting on leadership training took place in late February 2014 in which close to 20 people participated. Three levels of training were identified as needed for Sudanese male leadership: elder, evangelist, pastor. In addition, a need was also identified for training deaconesses.

Another idea that came out of the planning meeting was a proposal for an annual conference to be held for the Sudanese community in America. Organizers believe that this conference would be extremely valuable for the encouragement and continued growth of the outreach efforts of our churches to the Sudanese communities in our country. The proposed conference would

- continue to solidify our synod's network of leaders so they can better share their efforts, successes, and changes in the respective mission fields;
- evaluate progress, changes, additions, etc. regarding the training of spiritual leaders;
- evaluate and plan translation projects; and
- continue to work towards the opening of a South Sudan world mission field.

The need is urgent. Regular gatherings would organize, motivate, and encourage the workers in this mission field.

With the lack of materials in the Nuer language, more outreach and training materials are needed. *Christian Worship* liturgy has been translated and will be reviewed for the Sudanese who attend regular services at our congregations. *The Promise* booklet has been translated and will be reviewed, then published by Multi-Language Publications. Multi-Language Publications stands ready to assist in translating additional materials as needed, especially materials that will facilitate ongoing teaching and sharing of the gospel within a culture.

Although opportunities exist in Sudan, current security concerns and funding are keeping us from sending men into this area.

In conclusion

The Lord continues to bless the work of the Joint Mission Council and our mission boards as they continue to share the gospel message. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will provide us with the resources to meet these opportunities.

Mr. Sean Young, reporter

Dr. Robert Anderson, member of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Keith Free, administrator of WELS Board for Home Missions
Mr. John Isleb, representative of WELS Board for Home Missions
Rev. Howard Mohlke, chairman of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Larry M. Schlomer, administrator of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Charles Westra, chairman of WELS Board for Home Missions
Mr. Sean Young, director of WELS Missions Operations

Board for Ministerial Education

Our calling

“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Timothy 2:2).

The mission of the Board for Ministerial Education (BME) is the coordination of efforts for the provision of a preaching and teaching ministry qualified to proclaim the gospel faithfully and universally in accord with the Lutheran Confessions. The BME is responsible for establishing overall policy, for long-range planning, and for supervising the educational programs of the schools so that they individually and collectively fulfill the mission given to Ministerial Education by the synod.

The continuing scriptural purpose of our ministerial education schools is the preparation of candidates for the public ministry of the gospel to proclaim Christ’s love in the congregations, schools, and mission fields of our fellowship. The schools also include in their purpose the continuing education of those who already serve in the ministry of the gospel. An emphasis has been added to create, identify, and strengthen the partnerships with all of the areas of ministry, programs, and services in our church body. Our report gives an overview of the efforts to facilitate and coordinate that work. The reports from the four ministerial education schools that follow demonstrate how they are carrying out their mission on your behalf.

Our current situation

Guided by the synod’s long-range ministry plan, the Synodical Council allocates Congregation Mission Offerings and synod support to support services and areas of ministry including the BME. The BME distributes this support as subsidy to the ministerial education schools based on a funding model. The current funding model seems to be working for Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS), Mequon, Wis., and for Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn. A recent change in the model should also allow the preparatory schools over time to enjoy the financial stability that is currently a blessing of the Lord at WLS and MLC.

The BME has a working group on financial assistance with the goal that no student is denied the ability to train for the ministry of the gospel for financial reasons. In keeping with a synod resolution to both keep costs down and raise more financial aid, the ministerial education schools are developing their partnership with the Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) with the long-range goal that their financial assistance programs are adequately supported. The largest project continues to be reducing the educational debt of MLC graduates.

The BME has a working group on programmed maintenance to keep up with capital needs on our campuses. During the last biennium, MLC successfully piloted a partnership with the MCG to support the building of a new Early Childhood Learning Center at MLC. WLS is presently partnering with the MCG in a program called Heritage and Hope, celebrating the seminary’s 150th anniversary and meeting some of its capital needs. Luther Preparatory School hopes to celebrate the 150th anniversary of ministerial education on its campus with a similar program in the coming year.

The BME would like the long-range capital plans of the ministerial education schools to be part of the next synodical long-range plan, scheduled to be adopted in 2017. At the direction of the 2013 synod in convention, the BME has been involved in the formation of the synod’s new Capital Projects Committee. Using the results of software designed for school capital planning, the schools’ governing boards will be contributing their plans to the overall planning process.

With the blessing and encouragement of Home and World Missions administrations, the ministerial education schools are establishing increasingly close partnerships with the world mission fields and domestic ethnic mission fields in our fellowship in order to help in the development of their individual ministerial education programs.

Some progress has been made in the last biennium to address governance issues that arose since the incorporation of the ministerial education schools. We have clarified the roles and relationships of staff in the business and fiscal offices, information technology, human resources, facilities management, and mission advancement, and are developing new working protocols. The schools are planning more efforts in this area in the coming year.

A look ahead

We give thanks that the Lord of the church continues to supply our synod with young men and women who are willing to serve anywhere that the church needs them, who believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, who treasure the precious Lutheran heritage of the unconditional gospel that has been passed to our generation with remarkable clarity, and who present themselves for service as faithful ministers of the gospel who subscribe without reservation to the Lutheran Confessions. We also give thanks for the individual congregations and members in those congregations who still think—contrary to the practice of just about every other national church body—that the investment of energy and financial resources in the thorough preparation of candidates for the public ministry of the gospel and the deepening of those who are already serving is a sound and wise synodical commitment.

Rev. Paul Prange, reporter

Rev. Philip Hirsch, chairman

Rev. Kenneth Brokmeier

Rev. Douglas L. Free

Rev. Gregory Gibbons

Teacher Richard Gibson

Mr. Hogey Holtz

Mr. Kyle Koltz

Teacher Kurt Rosenbaum

Mr. Brian Scheele

Mr. Dean Waldschmidt

Rev. Thomas Westra

Teacher Jon Woldt

Rev. Michael Woldt

Advisory:

Pres. Matthew Crass, Luther Preparatory School

Pres. Joel Petermann, Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Pres. Paul O. Wendland, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Pres. Mark Zarling, Martin Luther College

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Our calling

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary prepares pastors for the worldwide mission of WELS. The seminary also offers continuing spiritual and professional growth opportunities for pastors.

Our current situation

150th anniversary celebration

Founded in 1863, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary has prepared more than 3,500 pastors to share the gospel. In 2013–2014 WLS celebrated its 150th anniversary under the theme “Heritage and Hope: Remembering . . . Rejoicing.” Here are some of the ways the seminary observed this milestone.

Concerts and services: An anniversary concert in May 2013 brought together the Seminary Chorus, Martin Luther College Choir, and The Lutheran Chorale. The annual symposium in October highlighted the pastor and his training. On Nov. 17, 2013, more than 3,000 people gathered—in person and online—for our anniversary festival service. WELS President Mark Schroeder preached the sermon. The presidents of Martin Luther College, Luther Preparatory School, and Michigan Lutheran Seminary read the Scripture lessons. For the first time in the synod’s history, the choirs from the four ministerial education schools sang together. In addition, Pastor Bryan Gerlach, administrator for the WELS Commission on Worship, served as the guest organist. Special worship resources, with an order of service similar to our anniversary service, were created and made available for congregations to hold a Seminary Sunday.

Publications: A special anniversary issue of *Preach the Gospel*, the annual magazine produced by our faculty, was published. *Heritage and Hope: Essays in Honor of the 150th Anniversary of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary* is the anniversary Festschrift. Edited by Prof. Kenneth Cherney, this book features essays that provide a survey of representative scholarship by graduates of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. *Jars of Clay: The History of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (1863-2013)* is a popular history written by Pastor Peter Prange and Prof. John Brenner. They chronicle the founding of the seminary in the midst of the Civil War and its growth and development over 150 years. Vignettes on each of the 12 seminary presidents are also included.

Heritage & Hope thank offering: To commemorate the anniversary, members throughout the synod participated in a thank offering. The generous gifts will allow WLS to place vicars in mission-minded congregations and support student outreach experiences in cross-cultural ministries. Additional financial aid and scholarships will also be available to students. Finally, generous offerings allow WLS to develop and maintain the campus not only for its students but also to open it up for a wider variety of WELS activities.

Lyceum: Lectures were held throughout the year. Guest speakers covered topics ranging from home missions to August Pieper, from outreach to Muslims to the mission of the seminary.

Video: A video in celebration of the anniversary was produced and can be viewed at www.wls.wels.net/seminary/anniversary-video.

District conventions: Seminary professors will visit each district convention as speakers, presenters, and guests.

Enrollment

This year WLS had 32 juniors, 32 middlers, 22 seniors, and three special students on campus. In addition, 33 vicars are serving in congregations throughout the U.S. and Canada this year.

In May WLS looks forward to placing 23 candidates into permanent fields of ministry and 32 vicars into congregations for a year of practical ministry experience.

After this year’s lower enrollment, the seminary is projecting a slight increase in the number of students. For the 2014–15 school year, WLS anticipates 30 juniors, 32 middlers, and 33 seniors. This would put the total student enrollment at 127.

Educational costs

The total cost of education is around \$25,000 per student per year. However, the seminary's budget is funded by tuition and fees, Congregation Mission Offerings, and gifts from individuals. This year, tuition was \$8,495 and an additional \$7,045 for room and board.

Due to a smaller on-campus enrollment, less money was awarded this school year. However, the average grant per student increased. This year, 83 of 86 students (97 percent) received an average of \$2,475 in grants. WLS disbursed \$205,460 in grants and awards as follows:

- scholarship grants, which are awarded on the basis of declared financial need: \$157,510;
- campus service awards, which acknowledge student faithfulness in carrying out tasks for the well-being of our whole campus family: \$19,350; and
- academic achievement awards, which recognize classroom performance as reflected in GPAs: \$28,600.

In 2013, 67 percent of WLS students carried debt. Across the entire student body, average debt per student was \$12,643. For the third year in a row, middlers had less debt than their junior year and seniors had less debt than their middler year. After they enroll at WLS, their indebtedness does not increase but decreases, presumably because they are making payments on college loans while not having to borrow from other sources to do so. Still, to address careful money management issues and encourage less toxic (credit card) debt, students are required to attend financial workshops each year that they are enrolled on campus.

Winterim

This two-week period between first and second semester gives students and professors an opportunity for both academic and practical enrichment. Specialized classes that are not part of the regular curriculum are offered. A student can propose his own independent study plan. Others sign up for off-campus mission trips and study tours. This year

- 27 participated in outreach opportunities in Austin, Texas.
- 12 students went on a study tour of Mexico to improve their knowledge of Spanish.
- 2 conducted independent research.
- 8 pastors participated in classes on campus.

Field services

Vicars

It costs about \$37,000 to fund a vicar. Currently the vicar year is funded in part by congregations, some of which pay all or a substantial part of the cost. Because the expenses of this vital program exceed the financial ability of many churches, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary has identified additional sources of funding to enable more congregations to consider hosting a vicar. The desire is to present students the broadest possible range of experiences in different districts and settings. Through \$60,000 in grants provided by the Conference of Presidents, the seminary is able to work with several congregations to make hosting a vicar feasible. In addition, for many years the seminary has been working in partnership with the Board for Home Missions on "Vicar in Mission" to provide substantial funding to ensure vicars get experience in mission settings. Last year the seminary provided \$270,000 and Home Missions gave \$270,000 to fund this program. The seminary is grateful for all the supervising pastors who act as its adjunct faculty.

Summer assistants

Seven mission congregations have received assistance from the Board for Home Missions to support a first or second year student who serves the congregation primarily in outreach programs during the summer months.

Early field training program

Each year, juniors and middlers are assigned to nearby congregations to participate in the Early Field Training Program. This program intends to provide a practicum for the various practical theology classes students take during their first and second years at the seminary. Under the supervision of the local pastor students complete a list of assignments that includes both observation and actual ministry, e.g., presiding at the liturgy, assisting with communion, teaching Sunday school and teen Bible classes, visiting the sick, making evangelism calls.

Senior assistants

Each year about half the members of the senior class secure part-time positions in local congregations and area ministries to both assist pastors and gain additional experience.

Mandarin scholarships

Two students are auditing Mandarin classes at Wisconsin Lutheran College. They receive scholarships from both WLC and WLS that allow them to devote themselves first and foremost to their WLS student work but secondly also to the Mandarin study without having to find additional part-time employment.

Seminary Chorus

This year, the 51 members of the choir completed a 10-day, 12-concert tour at congregations in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Texas.

Pastoral Studies Institute

The Pastoral Studies Institute guides and assists non-traditional students through their pre-seminary and seminary training. This year, four students attended classes on campus and eight are enrolled at their home congregations.

In June 2013, 22 men gathered for a North American Translation Conference. These men, immigrants to America, are now WELS pastors and serve Hmong, Latino, Korean, and African communities in the United States. They discussed concepts to guide them in their efforts to translate quality Lutheran materials into the languages of their audiences.

In October 2013, a Hmong Korean Anglo Conference was held. Participants discussed how to write sermons on the gospels and how to pray. They also reviewed strategic plans for their mission and ministry.

In February 2014, a conference was held to bring together Sudanese spiritual leaders and their Anglo pastor-partners from several communities in North America. The three-day conference allowed them the opportunity to determine a plan for supporting and encouraging this ministry.

Grow in Grace

Under Grow in Grace, the institute for continuing education, pastors have opportunities to grow spiritually and professionally.

In calendar year 2013, off-campus enrollment surpassed on-campus enrollment.

Spring 2013, online:	1 course, 14 students
Summer Quarter, on campus:	10 courses, 53 students
Summer Quarter, online:	4 courses, 49 students
Summer Quarter, satellite:	9 courses, 161 students
Fall 2013, online:	2 courses, 15 students

A comprehensive report from the pastoral side of continuing education can be found in the Continuing Education for Called Workers report on p. 38.

Faculty

Prof. Bill Tackmier is on sabbatical this year, working towards his Ph.D. in Old Testament exegesis.

Prof. Kenneth Cherney celebrated his 25th anniversary in the ministry. He is also nearing completion of his Ph.D. dissertation in the Department of Ancient Studies at Stellenbosch University in South Africa.

Prof. Joel Otto is taking continuing education courses in church history, working toward a master of theology degree.

World Mission Seminary Professor

In 2013–14, four different members of the WLS faculty taught and consulted on curriculum and instruction for seminaries of our fellowship around the world. Included were seminaries in central Africa, south Asia, Germany, India, and Indonesia. Eight different courses were administered to around 120 students.

Governing board

Teacher Michael Hein retired from the teaching ministry. We thank him for his faithful service to the governing board. Teacher David Wilson has taken his place, and we are grateful for his willingness to serve God's kingdom in this way.

Finance

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary depends on three sources of funding to carry out its calling. The first is the regular support it receives from the synodical budget in the form of subsidy and other support. The second is the money it receives from students' tuition and room and board. The third source is from gifts, which are essential for the seminary to sustain its calling.

For the fiscal year through Dec. 31, 2013, the seminary had unrestricted support, revenue, and net assets released from restrictions of \$3,006,000 and expenses of \$2,570,000 for a surplus of \$436,000. The ministry plan had included a \$79,000 use of additional reserves, but this no longer appears necessary due to investment performance and lower expenses to date. Also, temporarily restricted reserves increased \$1,000,000 due to investment performance and the Heritage and Hope thank offering. Permanently restricted reserves increased \$46,000 to \$6,469,000.

The seminary's Operating Fund receives support consisting of synod subsidy, tuition and fees, and transfers from seminary reserves. YTD the Operating Fund had support and expenses of \$1.54 million or 49 percent of plan.

Unrestricted gifts and memorials of \$209,000 for the first six months of this fiscal year represent an increase of 10 percent compared to the first six months of FY2013. Temporarily restricted gifts of \$310,000 (excluding the Heritage and Hope thank offering gifts) represent a decrease of 16.4 percent. Permanently restricted gifts of \$46,000 represent a decrease of 71 percent.

The Lord has greatly blessed the seminary through the Heritage and Hope thank offering. As of mid-January, WLS received more than 1,650 gifts totaling more than \$860,000.

A look ahead

While remembering our 150-year heritage, WLS has also been rejoicing in our hope.

Internships and field experiences

Thanks to the generous gifts of the thank offering, the seminary is giving its students more opportunities in mission settings. From cross-cultural to international experiences, the lessons they learn in the classroom are being practically applied in the field, increasing their passion to reach the lost.

Global center for theological learning

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is increasingly becoming a hub for theological education around the world. A variety of different relationships with overseas programs of ministerial education are possible. In some places (Apacheland, Germany, India, Nigeria, South Asia, Ukraine), WLS sends professors to teach in programs overseen by our missions or sister churches. In other places (e.g., the GRATSI program in Central Africa), WLS sends teaching professors and grants a degree in a program administered jointly with a national church. In still others, national students who live overseas take WLS courses online. This year, WLS was blessed to have on campus Pastor Mikael Simanjuntak and his wife Ester Wijihastuti from the *Gereja Luterana Indonesia* (GLI). Mikael and Ester are here to prepare to serve as liaisons and interpreters who will be ready when GLI begins to participate in the visiting professor program. God willing, this kind of institutional flexibility will continue to allow WLS to serve the very diverse needs of WELS' program of global gospel outreach.

Distance learning

Face-to-face instruction has many blessings. At the same time, Grow in Grace is developing more resources and expanding its online and satellite offerings for those who are unable to attend in person. In spring 2014, world missionaries from Asia, southern Africa, Central America, and Russia enrolled in the same online course. They are learning and growing, studying and discussing across the miles as part of Prof. Brug's online Revelation course. Being thousands of miles apart and living in different time zones does not have to prevent professional and spiritual growth.

It takes a synod

The prayers and support that we have received throughout our 150 years, but especially during this anniversary year, have impressed on us all the blessing of being part of a group that walks together in the Lord. From the ministerial education system to parents in the home encouraging their children to consider ministry as a career path, from the official agencies of WELS to the child writing a thank you note for his pastor, from the faculty and staff to the encouragement individual students give to one another, we have seen ample evidence of the generosity of our Lord in using this visible church to grow pastors to serve us.

For all this, we can only respond with the words of the Psalmist, "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His mercy endures forever!"

Pres. Paul O. Wendland, reporter

Rev. Thomas Westra, chairman

Rev. Jonathan Balge, vice chairman

Mr. Philip Becker, secretary
Rev. John Dolan
Dr. Arthur Eggert
Rev. Eric Hartzell
Teacher David Wilson
Mr. Gerald Zimpelmann

Advisory:

Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. David Rutschow, president of the Southeastern Wisconsin District
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Pres. Paul O. Wendland, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Martin Luther College

Our calling

On Jan. 29, 2014, the Martin Luther College (MLC) family celebrated the third annual “Tuition Freedom Day.” On that day, students paused to write note cards, sign banners, and produce short video clips to express appreciation to the members of WELS for their prayers and support of Martin Luther College. The idea is simple. College is expensive. But the cost of an education at MLC is shared by more than the student and his or her family. In school year 2013–14 a student’s tuition and fee structure at MLC would cover the cost from the beginning of the school year until Jan. 28. But from Jan. 29 onward, the costs of education at your college of ministry have been covered by synod subsidy, scholarships, grants, and aid. The “Tuition Freedom Day” activity is a time for the campus family, students and faculty and staff, to pause and praise the Lord Jesus for his generosity to us through the sisters and brothers of WELS. It is good and right for us to offer gratitude to the Lord of the church and to his people for such Spirit-worked faith. It is also proper for us to record and report the activities of this ministry to the generous people who support this unique college and its single purpose of training gospel servants. This report attempts to provide such accountability.

As a college owned and operated by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, MLC exists to serve the ministry needs of the synod. It does so by providing pre-seminary training for men who desire to train for pastoral ministry so that they can enroll at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. It does so by training men and women to serve as teachers and staff ministers for our churches and schools. It does so by providing continuing education opportunities for called workers currently serving in ministry. The mission statement of your college follows.

The mission of Martin Luther College is to train a corps of Christian witnesses who are qualified to meet the ministry needs of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and who are competent to proclaim the Word of God faithfully and in accord with the Lutheran Confessions in the Book of Concord.

To fulfill this mission, Martin Luther College carries out all instruction and programs of student life according to the gospel as revealed in the inspired and inerrant Word of God. With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the college desires

- *To strengthen the student in a consecrated spirit of love for God and his Word;*
- *To educate the student for faithful, capable, intelligent citizenship in today’s world;*
- *To assist the student in acquiring the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed for service in the church and for lifelong learning; and*
- *To encourage the student in developing and demonstrating a heart for service in the church, community, and world.*

To meet the current ministry needs of WELS, Martin Luther College

- *Prepares men for pastoral training at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary;*
- *Prepares men and women for service as teachers and staff ministers in the synod’s churches, schools, and other institutions;*
- *Prepares men and women for other church ministries, both full- and part-time, responding to the needs of WELS;*
- *Prepares international students for ministry in partnership with WELS mission fields; and*
- *Provides programs of continuing education that meet the ministerial needs of WELS.*

May a gracious Savior pour out his blessing upon our endeavors so that his saving name is glorified, precious souls edified, and lost souls sanctified.

Our current situation

God’s gifts to the church: MLC undergraduate students

The 2013–14 school year began with an opening enrollment of 714 for the first semester. This enrollment represents on-campus undergraduate students and is an increase of six from the previous fall. The first semester enrollment of 714 students represented 33 states, and 24 students in that total represented six foreign countries.

The second semester enrollment for on-campus undergraduate students is 694, one student higher than the previous year. Again this year MLC thanks the Lord Jesus for the Spirit’s work in the hearts of young Christian men and women to consider public ministry as a lifelong vocation. We recognize God’s grace in modest increases in enrollment and an

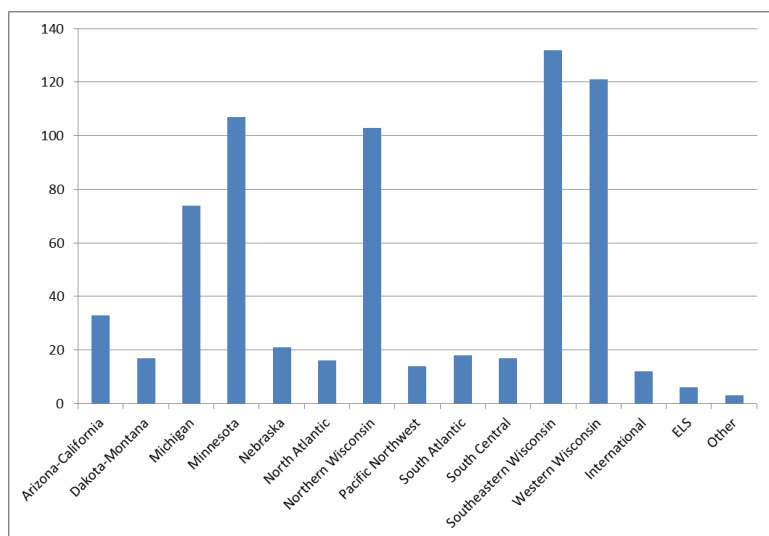
excellent retention rate among our student body. Please pray that Jesus bless these Christians in their studies so that Christ's petition is fulfilled in our midst. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth workers into his harvest field.

The following charts reflect the enrollment as of Jan. 28, 2014.

Program of study

Double major—Early childhood education and elementary	41
Double major—Elementary and secondary	155
Double major—Staff ministry and education	10
Double major—Early childhood education and parish music	1
Early childhood education	77
Educational studies	13
Elementary education	183
Unclassified	4
Pre-seminary studies	151
Secondary education	51
<u>Staff ministry</u>	<u>8</u>
TOTAL enrollment	694

Origin of students



High school origin

<i>High school type</i>	<i>Number of students</i>
Area Lutheran high school	370
Homeschool	5
Other	14
Preparatory school	204
Public	101
TOTAL	694

God's gifts to the church: MLC graduate students and continuing education students

Continuing Education

Martin Luther College strives to assist WELS in reaching its long-range plans for lifelong learning and professional development of its called teachers and staff ministers. To do so, your college of ministry gladly seeks to partner with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, the Commission on Lutheran Schools, the Congregation and Ministry Support Group, and other synodical entities involved in efforts of continuing education.

Specific continuing education at Martin Luther College involves on-campus sessions, online courses, and satellite locations for college courses. Since the 2013–14 academic year includes the 2014 summer session, numbers for the current calendar year are unavailable at time of writing. Official numbers for the last academic year show ongoing

growth in continuing education. During 2012–13, MLC’s continuing education efforts served 854 participants through 111 offerings. This statistic, 854 participants, reflects all academic services provided outside of MLC’s regular undergraduate program. It includes graduate studies, online courses, on-campus or satellite summer courses, and the professional development series. During the fall 2013 semester alone, continuing education served 245 students, which is a 42 percent increase over the previous year’s fall semester.

Master’s program

In the specific area of graduate studies, MLC offers a Master of Science in Education degree that is uniquely designed to serve WELS teachers at all levels. Current enrollment in the master’s program is 127, an increase of 15 percent from last year. Graduates of the master’s program, which is in its eighth year, number 45.

The master’s program has four emphases, and the numbers below reflect current year enrollment in each:

- Instruction (39 students)
- Leadership (46 students)
- Special Education (27 students)
- Educational Technology (15 students)

Of special note to the reader is the emphasis on leadership for our Christian schools. Approximately one-seventh of our WELS principals have either completed their master’s degree in leadership or are currently in the program. We are grateful to the Lord for such interest and involvement and pray for his continued blessing upon the efforts to strengthen our principals, and through them our Lutheran grade schools.

New Teacher Induction Program

The Lord of the church continues to bless this endeavor as it strives to provide encouragement and support to new teaching ministers in our church body. Our church body prayerfully expends much time and financial resources in training people to serve in the teaching ministry. Biblical encouragement and good stewardship of resources underscore the importance of helping new graduates become established in ministry—all by the grace of God. The New Teacher Induction (NTI) program continues to focus on growing its partnership with the WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools and the New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz, Calif.

Since program inception in 2009, 362 teachers have been served, of which 78 new teachers are in the program this current year. There are 37 mentor teachers, and 20 veteran teachers have applied to serve as mentors. The goal for NTI is to have as many of MLC’s May 2014 graduates assigned a mentor as possible. Meeting this goal requires a sufficient number of trained mentors in each district. MLC is grateful to the Antioch II Foundation for a grant of \$50,000 for such training in the next two years.

The NTI program is currently in the Minnesota District, Northern Wisconsin District, South Atlantic District, Southeastern Wisconsin District, and Western Wisconsin District. In the coming year the program will expand into both the Nebraska District and the South Central District. Although these districts have special emphasis, any teacher from another district who is interested in being a mentor is encouraged to apply. MLC will strive to answer every opportunity to serve its new teachers.

God’s gifts to the church: MLC personnel

During the past academic year the following professors celebrated ministry milestones.

Forty years in ministry anniversary:

- Barbara Leopold
- Robert Potratz
- John Schmidt
- Steven Thiesfeldt

Twenty-five years in ministry anniversary:

- Rebecca Cox
- Paul Koelpin
- Ross Stelljes

At the conclusion of the 2013–14 academic year, the following have announced their plans to retire from ministry.

- David Gosdeck, professor (theology, director of the library)
- Barbara Leopold, professor (physical education, assistant athletic director)
- John Nolte, professor (music, AVCO director)
- Robert Potratz, professor (music)
- David Wendler, professor (education, vice president for academics)

Listed below are the new faculty who began service this past school year.

- Mr. Joshua Danell (admissions counselor)
- Prof. Daniel Gawrisch (physical education)
- Prof. Daryl Hanneman (special education)
- Prof. Brian Hennig (theology and history)
- Prof. Jennifer Krause (student teacher supervisor)
- Prof. Jennifer Mehlberg (education, director of early childhood education)
- Pastor Michael Otterstatter (vice president for mission advancement)
- Prof. Jonathan Schaefer (continuing education, New Teacher Induction)
- Pastor Matthew Scharf (tutor)
- Prof. Scott Schmudlach (student teaching supervisor)
- Prof. Adrian Smith (music)

Due to the growth in the MLC early childhood program, two people were called as lead teachers at the MLC Early Childhood Learning Center.

- Elizabeth Klugherz
- David Wendland

Calling activity for the upcoming 2014–15 school year has begun and continues as of this writing.

- Tingting Zhang has accepted the call to serve as professor of Mandarin.
- Mr. Matthew Pearson has accepted the call to serve as professor of physical education with coaching responsibilities.
- Calling continues to fill a professorship for mathematics and instructional technology.
- Calling will commence to fill a professorship for music.
- Calling will commence to fill a professorship for urban ministry.
- Calling continues to fill a lead teacher position at the early childhood learning center.
- In May MLC will request an emergency assignment for the position of tutor.
- In May MLC will request an assignment for the position of admissions counselor.

The above information provides opportunity for prayer to the Good Shepherd. It is a time of transition at MLC, and we offer prayers of thanksgiving for the faithful labors of so many dedicated people. We also offer prayers that the Shepherd of the church provide the needed servants to join the ministry here. May Jesus pour out the Spirit upon us and bless everyone with the Spirit's gifts so that we in turn can be a blessing as we seek to train more to go and tell.

It is also a time of transition in the MLC Governing Board. MLC gratefully acknowledges the faithful labors of the following men on our board.

- Teacher Keith Bowe, served two six-year terms; ineligible for reelection.
- Teacher Jonathan Hahm, served two six-year terms; ineligible for reelection.
- Mr. Stephen Loehr, served two six-year terms; ineligible for reelection.
- Pastor Duane Rodewald, served two years; due to synod constitutional requirements, ineligible for reelection.
- Mr. William Steinbrenner, served two six-year terms; ineligible for reelection.

God's gifts to MLC: Facilities

Your college of ministry is located on about 80 acres of land in New Ulm, Minn., with an additional athletic complex about six blocks away that consists of 40 acres of land. The buildings and facilities on the campus have an insured value of more than \$100 million dollars. MLC thanks the members of WELS for these facilities that have been built and maintained for the sole purpose of training gospel servants.

This past year provided another beautiful display of the Spirit's power in believing hearts. God's people generously supported the construction of a new building to provide for the exciting growth in the early childhood education program here at MLC. A new early childhood learning center was dedicated on Oct. 27, 2013. The new facility, approximately 15,500 square feet, has designated rooms for 12 infants, 21 toddlers, and 60 preprimary students. There is also an academic classroom for the undergraduate program plus offices and utility rooms. Outside there are enclosed areas for supervised playground activities. This wonderful addition to our campus facilities was built without debt, thanks to the gifts of God's people through the "Let the Children Come" campaign. Working together with the Ministry of Christian Giving, MLC representatives and Christian giving counselors visited members and congregations over a period of roughly 16 months. Donations received for the campaign were in excess of \$3.7 million. Martin Luther College publicly thanks the Ministry of Christian Giving for its faithful partnership in this effort.

The "Let the Children Come" campaign funded the construction of the new building, all inspections and fees, landscaping, furnishings, etc. In addition, the campaign funded program enhancements for the early childhood education program, an undergraduate program that has doubled in the last five years. The campaign also raised almost \$100,000 in scholarships for the early childhood education program. Finally, the campaign also covered all expenses associated with the campaign itself. The MLC campus family rejoices in God's goodness to us. God demonstrated his generosity through his people and to him be the glory. God also encouraged the MLC family as we considered how many Christians around the county support the mission of the college and join us in praying for the Lord's blessings upon our efforts to train more gospel servants, also to serve as preschool teachers in this growing ministry within WELS.

God's gifts to MLC: Finances

There are many reasons for MLC to be grateful to the Lord. The chart below highlights a few of the many areas in which MLC has been blessed.

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014*
Opening enrollment	724	697	708	714
Tuition, board, & room	\$15,250	\$15,710	\$16,340	\$17,160
Synod subsidy	\$3,681,530	\$3,188,133	\$3,016,053	\$3,193,500
Gifts and bequests	\$1,517,039	\$1,521,291	\$3,232,578	\$1,683,674*
Unrestricted net assets end of fiscal year	\$5,967,185	\$5,892,226	\$6,482,306	* as of January 2014

Financial aid—student cost and indebtedness

MLC shares the synod's concern related to student debt. The chart below indicates a disturbing trend that merits sincere prayers.

	<i>% MLC graduates with debt</i>	<i>Average amount of debt</i>	<i>National debt average</i>
2009–10	63%	\$21,799	\$25,250
2010–11	78%	\$22,176	\$26,600
2011–12	80%	\$21,671	\$29,400
2012–13	84%	\$21,997	unavailable

The MLC Governing Board is continually striving to address this issue. Board policy caps any yearly increase in tuition and fees to five percent or less. Undesignated distributions from a supporting foundation have consistently been earmarked for financial aid. In a similar manner, undesignated bequests received are usually designated by the board for financial aid. Furthermore, our mission advancement office continues to keep student financial assistance as priority in its efforts.

In academic year 2012–13 we can report:

- 90 percent of our students received financial aid, which includes grants, scholarships, loans, and work study.
- 60 percent of our students received MLC need-based grants ranging from \$200 to \$7,000. Additional WELS based support was provided to students from congregations, districts, and prep and area Lutheran high schools. This aid is not insignificant, amounting to 9 percent of the \$6.88 million of financial aid funds disbursed.
- 75 percent receive MLC merit-based scholarships. The average merit scholarship is \$1,550.
- 35 percent of our students receive federal Pell Grants.

	<i>MLC tuition assistance</i>	<i>Average per student receiving aid</i>	<i>WELS subsidy per student</i>
2008–09*	\$2,063,794	\$3,339	\$6,203
2009–10*	\$1,934,896	\$3,257	\$5,128
2010–11*	\$1,914,100	\$3,112	\$5,085
2011–12*	\$2,036,105	\$3,434	\$4,574
2012–13*	\$2,147,421	\$3,366	\$4,260
2013–14**	\$2,210,000	\$3,464	\$4,498
2014–15**	\$2,321,000	\$3,638	\$4,612

*Actual

**Budgeted (estimated enrollments used for budget years)

Use of MLC unrestricted funds

As of June 30, 2013, the unrestricted fund balance at MLC totaled \$6,482,306. The MLC Governing Board has designated a large portion of these toward specific needs at MLC as follows:

Fund	Amount	Description
Economic Sustainability Fund (ESF)	\$2,319,472	Board designated funds to be spent at the approval of the MLC Governing Board. To address the Higher Learning Commission directives, the goal of this fund is to reach 25 percent of the MLC operating budget or approximately \$4.7 million.
Scholarship Fund	\$2,400,000	Amounts designated for scholarships are the equivalent of two years of MLC’s internal funding for student scholarships. Should there be an economic downturn, these funds will provide MLC time to react without necessarily reducing student assistance.
Program maintenance	\$625,000	The MLC campus has great need for many facility improvements, many of which come at a cost that cannot be absorbed through normal budgetary allotments. This fund is intended for larger facility projects during the 2014 and 2015 fiscal years. In particular, two projects underway at MLC include remodeling the student center entrance to meet ADA requirements. The second project includes the installation of an elevator in the chapel and finishing a portion of the lower level.
Operating and other	\$1,137,834	This funding represents net assets that have been designated for other operating functions such as the library, financing costs, etc.

A look ahead

Special education

A special education major was added to the curriculum this past year. Prof. Daryl Hanneman, a Doctor Martin Luther College graduate and licensed school psychologist, was called to develop the courses for the special education major. The courses, course descriptions, student learning outcomes, and syllabi have now been developed. The first course, Foundations of Special Education, was taught this year to 16 students. More courses will be added in 2014–15, and full implementation of the major will be in 2015–16.

Urban ministry

Because of the unique needs of urban schools, MLC is developing an area of study to address this need. The area of study includes course work, on-campus activities, field trips, and urban teaching experiences. The area of study will be a minor that emphasizes experiential learning, including teaching in urban settings. This minor is being developed and will be ready by the fall of 2015. At its February meeting the governing board of MLC authorized the calling of a professor of urban ministry who will not only teach but also coordinate and oversee these experiences.

Mandarin

In response to the 2009 synod convention's request to consider adding Mandarin to our foreign language offerings, MLC added Mandarin to the curriculum in 2012–13 as a pilot program. Miss Tingting Zhang from Hangzhou, China, is now in her second year of teaching Mandarin. In September 2013, the governing board made Mandarin a permanent language offering. For education and staff ministry students, Mandarin is a minor area of study. For pre-seminary students, Mandarin is a non-biblical language option. Zhang has accepted the college's call to serve as its Mandarin professor.

Study abroad

A pilot study abroad program will begin in 2014–15. Schools in Germany, China, and Peru have been identified as locations for students to study abroad. Students who study abroad at these locations can take courses in English or the country's language and transfer the course credits to MLC. Normally students study abroad for one semester.

Graduate studies and continuing education additions to program

The Graduate Studies and Continuing Education Office is exploring the possibility of additional master's degrees. A master's degree in Educational Administration for principals and early childhood directors and a Master of Arts in Theology degree are under consideration. The Commission on Evangelism and the Graduate Studies and Continuing Education Office are developing an evangelism certificate that could be offered online to pastors, teachers, staff ministers, and laypeople.

Pres. Mark Zarling, reporter

Rev. Michael Woldt, chairman
Rev. Jonathan Kolander, vice chairman
Teacher Steven Rosenbaum, secretary
Teacher Keith Bowe
Teacher Jonathan Hahm
Mr. Dale Krause
Mr. Steven Loehr
Mr. Timothy Petermann
Mr. Barry Price
Rev. Duane Rodewald
Rev. Duane C. Schmeichel
Rev. Michael J. Seifert
Mr. William Steinbrenner Jr.

Advisory:

Rev. Charles Degner, president of the Minnesota District
Mr. Randy Matter, board appointed advisory member
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Pres. Mark Zarling, Martin Luther College

Luther Preparatory School

Our calling

Luther Preparatory School (LPS), Watertown, Wis., has a single mission: To encourage and prepare young people for a lifetime of service in the public ministry of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

LPS is owned and operated by WELS. The synod has given LPS the privilege and responsibility to carry out this important work. The LPS Governing Board, faculty, and staff are grateful to our church body, which supports the work of LPS with its prayers and gifts.

Historically, 55 percent of all Luther Prep graduates have enrolled at Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn., since LPS was formed in 1995.

In the 2013–14 school year, LPS graduates made up 20 percent of the MLC student body and 35 percent of MLC’s pastor track students. LPS graduates comprise almost one-third of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary student body.

Our current situation

For the past three years enrollment has increased. LPS opened school year 2013–14 with an enrollment of 430, an increase of 8 percent from two years ago and 30 percent from five years ago. It is quite likely that there will again be an increase in enrollment this fall.

Students hail from 28 states, eight foreign countries, 173 congregations, and all 12 WELS districts. More than two-thirds of students come from lay families.

Recruitment to LPS, with an eye on future full-time gospel ministry, remains a top priority. LPS always invites and welcomes all WELS upper grade students to visit its campus, “shadow” a prep student, and spend a night in one of the dormitories to get a feel for prep life. Every school year LPS hosts “Phoenix For A Day,” a fall play, a musical, children’s theater, grade school basketball tournaments, etc., events that bring more than two thousand WELS grade school students on the campus. Over the summer LPS offers several basketball, volleyball, and music camps that afford hundreds of WELS grade school students and their parents an opportunity to take a close look at their synod school.

The LPS curriculum is designed to prepare students to meet or exceed the requirements of MLC. LPS recognizes the need and desire for future musicians in our Lutheran congregations and classrooms. More than 90 percent of LPS students take piano lessons, with several of them advancing to take organ lessons. Many are involved in the string, brass, and wind ensembles. Because the biblical languages are critical for the work of future pastors and in order to prepare all students for language studies, all freshmen take first year Latin and all students take at least three years of Latin, German, or Spanish.

LPS has received accreditation from both WELSSA (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation) and AdvanceED-NCA. LPS will continue to meet the standards set forth in the accreditation process to maintain its accredited status.

Because it is a mission-driven school for gospel proclamation, LPS offers age-appropriate experiences in speaking the gospel. All seniors take part in the Taste of Ministry program, in which prospective pastor students spend two days with an area WELS pastor and prospective teacher students spend two days in a classroom with an area elementary school teacher. Project Timothy is a program designed to provide mission, ministry, and cross-cultural experiences to LPS students. Approximately 50 students will assist with outreach and education programs of mission congregations in the Caribbean, Florida, Georgia, Texas, California, Virginia, and South Carolina. Also, senior boys are given the opportunity to prepare and speak an evening devotion to the student body.

Each year the entire junior class visits Martin Luther College. By the time students graduate each one will have met at least four times with an MLC recruiter. An array of missionaries, professors, teachers, pastors, and MLC and WLS students present topical ministry workshops at LPS’s annual Ministry Day. The entire student body takes part in Ministry Day. Sophomores also take an annual trip to the seminary. And seniors in the LPS pastor track visit the seminary each fall for worship, class visitation, and a tour. A gospel ministry atmosphere permeates campus life.

For the first time in two decades LPS has welcomed a college recruiter for ministry to reside and have an office on its campus. MLC recruiter Josh Danell has used the LPS campus as a home base for his recruitment work in Wisconsin and the surrounding area. God has blessed his ministry among the LPS students and other area high school students considering the public ministry. LPS is grateful to have him in regular contact with its students.

The Word is central in all Luther Preparatory School does. Worship services are held twice daily, all classes are taught from a scriptural perspective, and students are encouraged in their personal devotional lives. The Holy Spirit working through the means of grace continues to encourage and prepare young people for lives of gospel ministry and service.

Though there will always be maintenance items that need to be addressed on the synod's Watertown campus, LPS is grateful that its facilities are in good repair. Almost two years ago a 60-year-old boiler was replaced with a new one at the cost of \$350,000. The sale of off-campus synod owned homes provided the funding. Energy usage has since decreased by more than ten percent.

For the past two years LPS has been livestreaming its morning chapel services, concerts, football games, and many athletic events held in the gymnasium. Family members and friends—the vast majority living a distance away from Watertown—greatly appreciate this service. LPS hopes to offer a higher quality of livestreaming in the coming year.

A look ahead

“The harvest is plentiful” (Matthew 9:37). LPS rejoices that its synod, under the hand of a loving, saving, guiding God, plans to open 10 home missions each year for the foreseeable future. We ask the Lord's blessings on these plans. It naturally follows: The more congregations WELS starts, the more called workers WELS needs.

“The workers are few” (Matthew 9:37). LPS recognizes the recent graduating classes from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary have been smaller as compared to 20, 30, and 40 years ago. We ask and pray that the members of our church body continue to identify grade school boys who might someday with appropriate encouragement and preparation become “beautiful feet who bring good news and proclaim salvation” (Isaiah 52:7). And Jesus tells us we need more workers whether enrollments at our synod schools are increasing or declining.

In 2015 LPS will be celebrating 150 years of ministerial education taking place on the synod's Watertown campus. Thousands of gospel servants, most of them now living as saints triumphant, have walked, worshiped, studied, and played on these 40 acres as they prepared their hearts and minds to be gospel proclaimers. God has been our help in ages past and remains our hope for years to come.

July 2014–15, LPS will gather offerings, with the help of the Ministry of Christian Giving, to celebrate 150 years of God's grace. The Word of God proclaimed daily in chapel services always has been and by grace always will remain the heartbeat of campus life. LPS plans to refurbish its 60-year-old chapel through the anniversary gifts given by God's people. Another portion of the offering will be used for long-term financial aid.

Through the labors of the saints who have gone before us, the Lord of the church has blessed our synod for the past 149 years with a campus in Watertown committed to ministerial education. Luther Prep remains dedicated to the same purpose. We are grateful to our synod for its prayers, support, and gifts. We are grateful to the parents who offer their sons and daughters as gifts to Christ's gospel ministry by enrolling them at LPS.

Pres. Matthew Crass, reporter

Rev. Kenneth Brokmeier, chairman
Rev. Timothy Spaude, vice chairman
Prof. John Meyer, secretary
Rev. John Eich
Rev. Stephen Hein
Teacher Christopher Mueller
Dr. Douglas Rall
Mr. Joel Scott

Advisory:

Pres. Matthew Crass, Luther Preparatory School
Rev. Herbert Prah, president of the Western Wisconsin District
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Our calling

Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS), Saginaw, Mich., is an integral component of the WELS ministerial education system. The special purpose of MLS is “to train students for the public ministry of the gospel and to enroll them upon graduation at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.”

God’s blessing on that mission is seen in the fact that 41 percent of the graduating class of 2013 and 56 percent of the class of 2012 went on to attend Martin Luther College (MLC). This continues the trend that in recent years the number of students from MLS who go on to train for public ministry at MLC is roughly 50 percent.

In keeping with its purpose MLS also enrolls international students from congregations or missions in fellowship with WELS and trains them for service “either in the U.S. or in their native lands.” Thirteen international students are currently enrolled at MLS.

Our current situation

Enrollment

MLS began the 2013–14 school year with an enrollment of 241. Shortly after the beginning of the year, two additional students applied and were accepted. This brought the enrollment total to 243, which did not change after the end of the first semester. The 241 represents an increase of 4 over the previous year’s opening enrollment and the 243 makes it 6. Since a low opening enrollment of 181 in 2009–10, the enrollment has grown by 62 students. At the time of this writing MLS has received 48 applications for the 2014–15 school year. Based on past experience this would forecast a class of between 55 and 65. MLS will graduate approximately 60 seniors so it anticipates modest to no growth for the 2014–15 school year.

<i>Grade level</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
9	27	35	62
10	22	27	49
11	40	32	72
12	33	27	60
TOTAL	122	121	243

Dorm students: 155 (64%)

Commuting students: 88 (36%)

International students: 13

Districts represented: 8 of 12

States represented: 14

From Michigan: 214 (88%)

Faculty: 27

Staff: 32

In keeping with its mission, MLS currently only enrolls international students who belong to groups that are in some way affiliated with WELS World Missions. The goal is to assist these church bodies in raising up well-trained lay members and pastors or teachers who may someday be leaders and teachers in their home countries. At present, students from South Korea, Mexico, Hong Kong, China, and Canada grace our campus. Vice President Norval Kock, our international recruiter, has recently traveled in Southeast Asia and was welcomed to do presentations on MLS at some grade schools. The MLS Governing Board has encouraged Kock to continue to actively seek out students in many foreign countries who meet the criteria for WELS affiliation and who would benefit from the school’s program.

Preparing for our mission

Encouragement and preparation for the public ministry occurs on campus, in local congregations, and through field experiences.

All of MLS's students learn God's Great Exchange and how to share their faith with others. Seniors are visited regularly by the recruiters from Martin Luther College. Juniors enjoy a special banquet called "Junior Night" at which representatives of both Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary talk to them about the next levels of training for public ministry and what to expect. Sophomores go on "college tour" for a week to see the other three ministerial education schools of our synod. Freshmen attend Ministry Day at which local pastors and teachers share their stories, joys, and challenges of the ministry to get students thinking about whether they, too, might serve Jesus in this special way. The entire student body participates in an annual Mission Seminar, which highlights some area of our synod's gospel outreach at home and abroad. All students take piano lessons and some go on to organ playing, which is a recognized need in the synod.

Taste of Ministry is an opportunity for Michigan Lutheran Seminary's girls and boys to spend time with an experienced teacher or pastor in the area. Getting into the classroom or seeing what goes on in a pastor's life beyond the pulpit often has a profound effect on our students' ministry decisions.

Project Titus is the name given to MLS's program of early field experience that takes place during the summer months. Each year students have the opportunity to sign up for one or more experiences. This might include canvassing or helping with a vacation Bible school, soccer Bible camp, or a summer school program at one of our Lutheran elementary schools. In the recent past students have participated in Project Titus trips to North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Nevada, and Wisconsin. In addition there were foreign trips to South Korea, China, and Germany. These trips provide not only ministry experiences but also a sensitivity and understanding of other cultures.

All of these enable MLS students to make informed, mature, and Spirit-led decisions about full-time service in the public ministry.

Faculty and staff

Dr. William and Carolyn Zeiger have announced their intention to retire during the summer of 2014. Dr. Zeiger has served our campus for 39 years both as tutor and professor. He has also served as acting president for a total of nearly 6 years. Mrs. Zeiger has served part time for 37 years in various positions on campus but most recently as librarian and archivist. We thank the Lord for their faithful service.

Teacher Seth LaBair was added on a one-year basis as instructor of math, history, and phy ed. Teacher Jacquelyn Gawel was called for one year to assist in the dormitory and to serve as instructor in Spanish. Pastor Walter J. Gawel was assigned from WLS as tutor along with Teacher Emily Chandonnet and Teacher Michelle Hintz from MLC. Teacher Darrell Berg was called as piano instructor on a part-time basis. Pastor Joel Voss will complete two years of tutoring this year and return to the assignment committee for further assignment in May 2014. Mrs. Jane Petermann was hired as attendance secretary.

Facilities

The facilities of MLS are generally in good repair. The track was resurfaced in the summer of 2013. The refurbishing of the dormitories with new furniture (to replace 30-year-old furnishings), new paint, and new heating equipment will take place in the summer of 2014. This project is being funded through the efforts of the MLS Foundation. Maintenance projects that need attention soon are the replacement of tile in the 1950s classroom wing and the repair, enlargement, and resurfacing of the parking lot.

Finances

MLS's finances continue to be a challenge. However, recent additional funding from the Board for Ministerial Education and slight changes in the amount that is distributed to the prep schools from the Ministerial Education portion of the synodical allocations has given MLS a small amount of reserves heading into the second year of the biennium. Savings that have been generated by a new phone system will allow MLS to fund some improvements in technology. All of MLS's restricted and endowment funds have seen solid gains due to the improved market performance of the last year.

Governing board change

The 2013 synod in convention elected Pastor Greg Gibbons from Lola Park Lutheran in Redford, Mich., to be the new chairman of the MLS Governing Board after Pastor George Ferch stepped down due to term limitations. We thank the Lord for the faithful service of all the board members and welcome our new chairman to his position.

A look ahead

As MLS nears the completion of its 103rd year of service as a preparatory school of WELS, some needed changes

are on the horizon. Recognizing the need to operate in an increasingly digital world, MLS is upgrading its wireless capabilities as well as its ability to deliver instructional material through electronic devices. Technology will also streamline student information systems; financial aid processes; and prospect, applicant, and enrollment system. Yet even as MLS embraces some of this technology, the purpose is only to enhance the school's ability to carry out its mission: to present well-trained students to MLC for further training for the public ministry of WELS. May the Lord bless our efforts as we serve the members of WELS. To him be the glory!

Pres. Joel V. Petermann, reporter

Rev. Greg Gibbons, chairman, Michigan District
Teacher Steven Carlovsky, secretary, Southeastern Wisconsin District
Prof. David Bauer, Minnesota District
Mr. Mark Eubank, Michigan District
Mr. Loren Mathison, Western Wisconsin District
Mr. Peter Naumann, Pacific Northwest District
Rev. Philip Paustian, Northern Wisconsin District
Rev. Marc VonDeylen, South Central District

Advisory:

Pres. Joel V. Petermann, Michigan Lutheran Seminary
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Rev. John Seifert, president of the Michigan District

Subsidiaries and affiliate

A number of subsidiary groups and one affiliate serve the synod. These entities do not receive support from the synod's operating budget. Each is governed by a board that is accountable to the synod via the Synodical Council.

Northwestern Publishing House

Our calling

The constitution of WELS indicates, "The object and purpose of the synod shall be to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church." Then it lists a number of activities we do together as a synod, including "printing, publishing, purchasing, selling, and disseminating literature that maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice" and "furnishing appropriate literature for parish schools, Sunday schools, missions, institutions, and churches." For more than 120 years Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) has prepared materials that are consistent with Lutheran doctrine and practice.

NPH does not receive funds from WELS' budget. It funds the publication of Lutheran material through the sale of those materials to individuals, congregations, and schools. The bylaws of the constitution indicate that the proceeds NPH receives should be used to develop and publish new materials. NPH's calling is to continue to proclaim God's love in Christ through the careful use of the resources God grants. WELS' long-range plan assumes the function of NPH.

Our current situation

This past year after many years of faithful service to NPH both Mr. Jerry Loeffel, the president of Northwestern Publishing House, and Mr. Tom Siegel, vice president of finance, retired. We thank the Lord for his blessings to NPH through their service. New faces have taken their places to lead NPH as it continues its mission. Mr. Bill Ziche has assumed the role of president and Mr. Eric Krueger the role of vice president of finance. We pray that their leadership will continue to move NPH forward as it carries out its role in extending and conserving the truth of God's Word.

The Lord presented NPH with another change when he called Pastor Robert Koester back into the parish ministry. Koester has also served NPH for many years and is responsible for most of the Bible study material that NPH has produced over those years. NPH began calling a replacement for him this past fall but as yet all its calls have been returned. NPH patiently waits for a new editor to join the staff so it can continue to produce materials for congregations.

The remaining editorial staff continues to prepare Christmas and Lenten kits, *Forward in Christ*, *Meditations*, *Christ-Light*® curriculum, books on selected issues, and other resources. The priority is to produce materials that are time-sensitive for congregations, pastors, and teachers.

NPH has the privilege of celebrating the 100th anniversary of *Forward in Christ*. The first issue of the magazine, then called *The Northwestern Lutheran*, appeared on January 7, 1914. At that time the synod created the magazine to proclaim the gospel in the language of everyday Christians. It was a bold step to publish a magazine in English when most of our church body was more comfortable using German. Over the years their vision was validated as more and more members turned to English. NPH has also taken a bold step forward by making the magazine available in digital format so subscribers can read it on their mobile devices. Visit www.nph.net/fic for more information on subscribing.

Statistics indicate that more and more readers receive information digitally. NPH has begun to make the materials it produces available in digital format. Many of the materials it has been producing recently are available in digital form

and can be read on a variety of devices. More than 100 books are available and most new releases are available either in print or digital form. NPH has also taken steps to create an app for *Meditations*, which provides the content of its devotional magazine to WELS members and others for reading on their mobile devices. In order to better serve its customers, NPH has also upgraded its Web site, giving it better search capability as well as other new features. NPH has also upgraded the business system to help it manage the production and retail side of its work.

Four major projects are currently occupying NPH's attention. The first is the publication of a *Christ-Light* revision. The first year of Sunday school curriculum was released for the 2013–14 academic year. The first year of the Lutheran elementary school component will be released for this 2014–15 year. Both the Sunday school and elementary school materials will all eventually be available and both components have been adjusted so that a congregation can use the curriculum with any translation of the Bible. This approach will not weaken the educational goals of the curriculum but will allow classroom teachers to assign memory work from the translation chosen by the congregation. NPH has provided resources for whatever translation congregations choose. Sample lessons that can help everyone understand what a translation compatible version means are posted at www.nph.net/CL2.

Parts of the *Christ-Light* curriculum are already available, but the remaining three projects are still in development. The first is the hymnal project. Together with WELS, NPH has called Pastor Michael Schultz as director of the hymnal project. He reports:

“The WELS Hymnal Project has now taken shape to the extent that its executive committee and its seven subcommittees are fully populated and functional. A project Web site was launched in July 2013. The site, www.welshymnal.com, includes blog articles, resources (essays and papers), and forms through which all interested parties may submit either comments or actual materials such as hymns, prayers, canticles, etc. A survey of active pastors has been completed. Additional surveys have already gone out or will be going out to teachers and musicians. A survey of lay members is also being considered. A three-year research project is in full swing, through which congregations provide weekly feedback on the current lectionary selections as well as order of service usage and hymn selection. The subcommittees are working on setting the lectionary (three-year and one-year); establishing the church year calendar; reviewing all current hymnody, psalmody, and rites; identifying possible literary volumes; researching technological possibilities; standardizing liturgical texts; and compiling source lists for new materials.”

The executive committee for the hymnal project includes Pastor Aaron Christie, Pastor Bryan Gerlach, Pastor Caleb Bassett, Pastor Daniel Sims, Prof. James Tiefel, Pastor John Koelpin, Pastor Jonathan Micheel, Pastor Jonathan Schroeder, Pastor Jon Zabell, Pastor Jonathan Bauer, Pastor Michael Schultz, Teacher Mike Marquardt, and Pastor Paul Prange. Names of all those participating in the development of the hymnal are available at www.welshymnal.com.

The third project is a revision of the *Exposition of Luther's Small Catechism*. The exposition used in our churches at this time was created by Prof. David Kuske and has been in use since 1982. It replaced the Gausewitz exposition that carries the copyright of 1956. A working committee of NPH (Pastors Ray Schumacher and John Braun) and the education committee (Professors Stephen Geiger and Joel Otto) of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary are preparing the catechism exposition revision. The committee conducted a survey before the work began and recently have sent out field test material for a few pastors to evaluate with their confirmation classes.

The fourth project is the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017. A synod committee has been working to prepare material for congregations and schools to use in celebrating God's gifts to us through the Reformation. The committee has recently sent out a list of suggested topics for pastoral conference and district essays. The list was an attempt to help program committees throughout the synod as they made essay assignments in the next two years. Those suggestions are available from the district presidents or from Pastor John Braun at NPH. The committee has suggested that districts, conferences, or groups of congregations begin to plan special services, especially if large Reformation rallies will need special facilities. NPH is planning to make worship resources available for those rallies. Other materials are still in development, and NPH is still seeking funding for some of them.

Last summer's synod convention adopted an eclectic approach to translation usage. Congregations are not all using the same translation. NPH has decided to use the NIV 1984 version in publications that are already in production. NPH has given authors the right to choose a different translation if they feel another translation is better. Some projects in the past have used more than one translation so this approach is similar to what has happened on

occasion. The synod did not adopt a plan to produce a new Lutheran translation, but it did not discourage groups from working on a new translation. NPH publishes many works submitted by pastors, professors, and others. If a new translation reaches a point where publication is possible, NPH welcomes the opportunity to publish what will be helpful to the synod and to the larger church.

A look ahead

As NPH looks ahead, it notes with thanks and praise to God for the blessings he has provided. The future is not for us to know. Nevertheless, NPH looks ahead with a desire to be good stewards of the resources God has graciously given, a positive—even hopeful—attitude, and a willingness to work while we have the opportunity.

NPH has adopted a plan that will allow it to publish material intended for broader reach to those beyond our small synod. NPH believes that WELS has a message that is important for others to read and learn. In order to implement that plan NPH will be calling an additional editor with the primary responsibility for creating material that is targeted at that broader Christian market. While not sacrificing our confessional Lutheran witness, the material will allow that witness to find readers beyond our traditional market. NPH's prayer is that the Holy Spirit will work through those materials to touch hearts and strengthen, encourage, and comfort souls in need of the gospel.

We pause to give thanks for the service of Pastor John Stellick and Mr. William Strutz, both of whom have completed their elected service on the Board of Directors. We are grateful for their service and pray the Lord will continue to bless them.

Rev. John Braun, reporter

Prof. John Hartwig, chairman

Rev. Joel Schroeder, vice chairman

Mr. Christopher Snyder, secretary

Mr. Edward Wolf, treasurer

Mr. Michael McCormick

Mr. David Neujahr

Mr. Matthew Plocher

Rev. Luke Werre

Prof. Keith Wessel

Advisory:

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer

WELS Historical Institute

Our calling

Our calling as WELS Historical Institute is to “preserve and present the story of God’s grace to WELS.” Our calling brings to mind the stone monument God directed Joshua to build when the nation of Israel had crossed the dry riverbed after God had cut off the flow of the Jordan River. Forever after when children asked, “What do these stones mean?” they would hear the account of this special manifestation of God’s grace.

Our current situation

The members of WELS Historical Institute work to provide a lasting witness of how God has worked among WELS with his blessing as we have proclaimed the message of his grace in Christ. To that end, our work over the last year focused on several projects, including:

- Publication of two *Historical Institute Journals* each year (30-40 pages each). Each journal contains articles that focus on leaders, institutions, or events used by God to shape the course of Lutheranism and the history and work of WELS.

- Publication of two issues of the newsletter for members each year, which offers information about the work of the Historical Institute.
- Dedication of a Wisconsin State Historical Marker near the Salem Landmark Museum in Milwaukee, Wis., recognizing the beginnings of the Wisconsin Synod. This dedication took place on Aug. 10, 2013, in conjunction with the celebration of the sesquicentennial of the Salem Landmark Museum.
- Presentation of *Through The Years—A Look At The History Of Our Seminary*. In recognition of the sesquicentennial of the Theological Seminary of the Wisconsin Synod, WELS Historical Institute hosted this series of four presentations outlining the history of the seminary. Presenters reviewed the history from the beginning at the Watertown campus in 1863, through the years in St. Louis (1871–1877), Milwaukee and Wauwatosa locations (1878–1928), and throughout the years in Mequon. DVDs of the presentations will be available on our Web site, www.welshistory.org.
- Continued restoration of the Landmark Church Museum back to its original 1863 condition with the front narthex now completed.
- Revision of the WELS Historical Institute brochure.
- Development of online tools for receiving donations and membership renewals via www.welshistory.org.
- The year 2013 marked the official retirement of three dedicated women who had been giving tours of Salem Landmark Church and Museum from its early beginnings: Lois Balge, Char Sampe, and Phyllis Westerhaus. These women cheerfully gave of their talents and time to tell the story of God’s amazing grace shown in the history of WELS. A grateful Historical Institute and church body both acknowledge their contributions in preserving and telling the story of the Wisconsin Synod.

A look ahead

2014 will be another exciting year for the WELS Historical Institute as a number of events and activities are planned. Wisconsin Lutheran College (WLC) and the WELS Historical Institute will co-host the Lutheran Historical Conference, which is a national professional organization of Lutheran archivists, historians, and librarians. The Lutheran Historical Conference’s biennial meeting has as its main feature the presentation of scholarly papers written on various topics relating to the history of American Lutheranism. The meeting is scheduled from Fri., Oct. 11, through Sun., Oct. 12, 2014. Most of the paper sessions will be held at WLC. A bus tour to various sites of interest is also part of the meeting. Tentative sites to be visited include the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry; the Octagon House and Luther Preparatory School in Watertown; and the Norwegian-Lutheran settlement at Koshkonong, Wis., one of the sites of the 1880s Election Controversy. A “National Registry of Lutheran Historic Sites” will also be inaugurated at this meeting. Initial WELS sites nominated for the registry include the Landmark Church and the Watertown campus of Luther Preparatory School, a campus that will in 2015 commemorate 150 years of Lutheran secondary education. Other significant WELS historic sites will be added in future years. For more information on the 2014 Lutheran Historical Conference meeting, contact Dr. Joel Pless at joel.pless@wlc.edu or Dr. Mark Braun at mark.braun@wlc.edu.

The WELS Historical Institute will also continue the annual presentation series in fall 2014 with the theme to be determined in the spring. A newly refurbished late 1800s Ridgely reed organ will be dedicated with an organ concert this summer.

In 2014 special emphasis will be placed on the development of the Little School in the Woods program and curriculum. When the program has been completed, grade school students will have the opportunity to visit the classroom as part of a museum tour and get a taste of an 1880s classroom experience. An online curriculum will also be developed and available for fourth grade WELS classrooms. The curriculum will include information on our synod’s history as well early German immigration to America.

The WELS Historical Institute continues to offer tours of the grounds and building of Salem Lutheran Landmark Church and Museum, the site of the constituting convention of the Wisconsin Synod in May 1850. Tours can take up to an hour and are normally conducted between March and November. Special arrangements can be made for out-of-town visitors any time of the year. Individuals, families, congregations, schools, and organizations can arrange a tour by contacting Dr. Joel Pless, at 414-443-8930 (office), 262-677-2109 (home), or joel.pless@wlc.edu. With the retirement of three of Salem’s tour guides, the institute is actively recruiting new tour guides for the Landmark Church. Individuals giving tours of Salem need to live within convenient driving distance of the church—located on 107th St. and Fond du Lac Ave. on Milwaukee’s northwest side—and need to be readily available for tours during the spring, summer, and fall. Information and training will be provided. If interested and available, contact Pless.

This important work is done entirely by volunteers who wish to help us fulfill our calling to “preserve and present the story of God’s grace to the WELS.” The WELS Historical Institute is not included in the synod’s budget. You have the opportunity to join us and help with event planning, writing, research, restoration, and gathering of gifts or donations. Consider becoming a member of the WELS Historical Institute.

Prof. Robert Bock, reporter

Prof. Robert Bock, president
Mr. Daniel Nommensen, vice president
Mr. Duane Kuehl, treasurer
Ms. Naomi Plocher, secretary
Mr. Ken Artlip
Prof. John Brenner
Rev. David Dolan
Prof. John Hartwig
Prof. James Korthals
Rev. Joel Leyrer
Mr. Steven Miller
Mr. Carl Nolte
Dr. Aaron Palmer
Dr. Joel Pless
Ms. Charlotte Sampe
Rev. Raymond Schumacher

WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc.

Our calling

WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. (CEF), is a self-supporting, not-for-profit corporation, and subsidiary of WELS. Its primary purpose is to provide for capital projects to support mission congregations that are under the direction of WELS Board for Home Missions (BHM). WELS CEF provides loans and grants to qualified mission congregations so they can acquire land and ministry facilities to serve as tools for gospel outreach.

Our current situation

The funding to carry out our mission comes primarily from investments and gifts. Individual WELS members, congregations, and affiliates of WELS may invest in CEF certificates. Four thousand investors have entrusted WELS CEF with more than \$83.1 million, which provides funds for the Loan Program. Gifts and bequests made directly to WELS CEF are earmarked for the Grant Program.

Loan Program

Between July 1 and Dec. 31, 2013, eight new facility construction projects were started with anticipated final WELS CEF loan balances of \$13.8 million. We anticipate financing approvals of more than \$17.3 million of new loan dollars for 7 land purchases, 2 parsonage purchases, and 20 facility purchases and construction projects for fiscal year 2013–14. Total loans outstanding are \$120.3 million and consist of 216 WELS congregations and affiliates. CEF’s current base loan rate is 3.75 percent for eligible mission congregations looking to obtain initial land and facilities.

Grant Program

WELS CEF provides matching grants to eligible mission congregations after they have provided a minimum 10 percent down payment for a land purchase, existing facility purchase, or new facility construction project. A congregation’s down payment combined with a CEF matching grant allows the congregation to move forward with a more manageable loan payment. \$830,000 has been granted to 4 mission congregations through the first half of the current fiscal year. We anticipate disbursements of another 11 grants totaling \$1.5 million by the end of the fiscal year. Since 1993, more than \$25.9 million in CEF matching grants have been disbursed to mission congregations across North America.

A look ahead

WELS CEF continues to assist WELS Board for Home Missions in the development and support of new mission openings. WELS CEF approved a new \$1.3 million special grant to Home Missions in fiscal year 2013–14 to be used by mission congregations for land and facility projects. Six prioritized recipient congregations will benefit from the special grant that will assist with their purchase of land and/or facility project needs. We pray that, by God's grace, WELS CEF will continue to benefit from positive operational results and be able to provide future additional special grants over and above its matching grant programs to help assist more mission congregations. We anticipate congregational loan requests of more than \$40 million and \$5 million of eligible matching grants over the next three fiscal years. We continue to encourage individual WELS members, congregations, and affiliated organizations to invest in CEF loan, savings, and retirement/IRA certificates and consider gifts and bequests to WELS CEF to help support our mission and close partnership with WELS Board for Home Missions. The sustainability of our grant programs relies on the continued gifts of WELS members and positive operational results.

Annual meeting and general information

WELS CEF has no shareholders. WELS congregations are our members. Our articles and bylaws require an annual meeting of members. This year's meeting will be held in conjunction with our Board of Directors annual meeting tentatively set for Sept. 16, 2014. Congregations are not expected to have a representative at this meeting, and no business is required to be transacted. Advisory, non-binding recommendations can be made at this meeting or can be sent at any time to the care of the WELS CEF president. For information on how you, your congregation, or your organization can invest with WELS CEF or make a gift, please contact us toll-free at 1-866-511-7793 or by e-mail at cef@wels.net. Visit our Web site at cef.wels.net.

Mr. Jared Justman, reporter

Board of Directors:

Mr. Paul Beitlich, chairman
Mr. David Waldek, vice chairman
Mr. Kenneth Zehm, secretary
Mr. Rodney Christ
Rev. Timothy Gauger
Mr. Seth Hansen
Mr. John Tappe

Advisory:

Rev. Keith Free, administrator of WELS Board for Home Missions
Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer
Mr. Sean Young, director of WELS Missions Operations

Officers:

Mr. Ronald Hillmann, president
Mr. Jared Justman, vice president
Mr. Kenneth McGhee, vice president

WELS Foundation, Inc.

Our calling

WELS Foundation exists to help God's people support gospel ministry through WELS. It provides planned giving services and administrative support for gifts benefiting WELS congregations and ministries.

Established in 1965, WELS Foundation, Inc., is a Support Services entity of WELS. As a WELS subsidiary corporation, WELS Foundation serves God's kingdom by providing gift administration for complex gifts that ultimately benefit WELS congregations and ministries. WELS Foundation does not receive financial support from the synod's operating budget but instead relies primarily on unrestricted gifts and administrative fees to cover its operating costs.

WELS Foundation is the foundation of choice for members, entities, and affiliates of WELS. It is the only foundation whose purpose is to facilitate donor's desires to support WELS ministries. During the calendar year 2013, WELS Foundation had the privilege to administer and distribute \$6.7 million in donor directed gifts.

Our current situation

WELS Foundation provides various giving opportunities including charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, donor advised funds, and endowment administration.

As of Dec. 31, 2013, the total assets were \$83.8 million with net assets of \$52.7 million. The net assets held by WELS Foundation are managed for the benefit of the WELS ministries as designated by the donor. These ministries include WELS synodical ministries (i.e. Home and World Missions, Ministerial Education Schools—Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Martin Luther College, Luther Preparatory School, Michigan Lutheran Seminary), congregations, and numerous affiliated ministries such as area Lutheran high schools.

Charitable gift annuities

A charitable gift annuity is a contract between a WELS member and WELS Foundation, by which the member makes a gift of cash or securities in exchange for fixed quarterly annuity payments for life. After the Lord calls him or her home, the remainder of the gift annuity is distributed to the congregation or ministry as designated. Income payments from a charitable gift annuity may begin immediately, may be deferred until a specific date in the future, or may be deferred until an unspecified date in the future.

As of Dec. 31, 2013, WELS Foundation administered 617 charitable gift annuities with a total market value of \$9.9 million.

Charitable remainder trusts

A charitable remainder trust is created when a donor transfers cash, securities, or real estate into a charitable trust, but keeps a specified income interest—usually for life. When the trust ends per the donor's designation, the assets in the trust pass to the designated beneficiaries such as the church and/or synod.

As of Dec. 31, 2013, WELS Foundation serves as trustee for 165 charitable remainder trusts with a combined market value of \$28.4 million.

Donor advised funds

A donor advised fund is a charitable giving vehicle wherein an individual, family, or corporation makes an irrevocable, tax-deductible contribution of cash, securities, or other property to WELS Foundation and at any time thereafter can recommend grant distributions to qualified WELS ministries. The fund can be established with current gifts, deferred gifts (i.e. charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts), and testamentary gifts (i.e. wills, living trusts, beneficiary designations of life insurance policies, or retirement accounts).

The WELS Foundation donor advised fund program provides an alternative to a private family foundation. WELS members can accomplish many of the same goals but with far less administrative work and expense.

As of Dec. 31, 2013, WELS Foundation administered 40 donor advised funds with a total market value of \$2.0 million.

Endowment funds

Endowment funds are permanently restricted funds established to receive and administer all gifts that are designated by the donor(s) for an endowment from sources such as cash, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, bequests, life insurance, charitable gift annuities, insurance policies, trusts, real estate, personal property, or any other gift, whether current or deferred.

Lord willing, expenditures from endowments further the work of the church by providing ongoing financial support for ministry until the Lord returns.

WELS Foundation administers synodical endowment funds for WELS Ministerial Education and WELS Missions. In addition, donor-designated endowments have been established for the benefit of WELS congregations or ministries.

As of Dec. 31, 2013, WELS Foundation administered 37 endowment funds with a total market value of \$20.1 million.

Other gift administration services

WELS Foundation provides gift administration for letters of instruction, endowment administration, gifts of securities, IRA charitable rollover, real estate, life insurance contracts, agricultural crops, and other donor designated gifts.

Educational Webinars

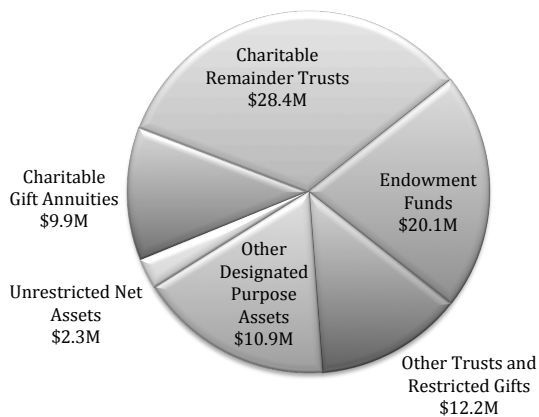
In 2013, WELS Foundation hosted a series of 12 educational Webinars offered by PG Calc. The monthly Webinars were timely presentations on various planned giving topics and made available by WELS Foundation at no cost to WELS Christian giving counselors, advancement officers, and congregational planned giving committee leaders. Contact WELS Foundation for recordings of past Webinars or to participate in future sessions.

A look ahead

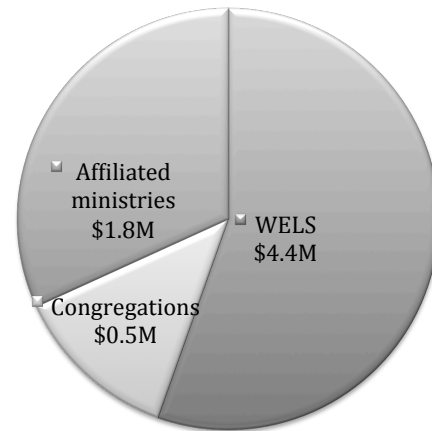
To carry out its mission, WELS Foundation will continue to identify the most cost-effective means to:

- Provide knowledgeable planned giving support to members through WELS Christian giving counselors and other WELS advancement representatives.
- Provide various planned giving opportunities including charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, donor advised funds, and endowment funds.
- Provide printed and online educational material regarding various planned giving opportunities for WELS and WELS-affiliated ministries.

**Total assets of \$83.8M
as of Dec. 31, 2013**



**Distributions to ministries of \$6.7M
Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2013**



Mr. James Holm, reporter

Board of directors:

- Mr. James Brenn, chairman
- Mr. Donald Schuppe, vice chairman
- Mr. Mark Schulz, secretary
- Mr. Paul Beitlich
- Mr. Nathan Birkholz
- Mr. Tim Boerneke
- Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, president and director of WELS Ministry of Christian Giving
- Mr. Tim McDonald
- Rev. Paul Prange

Officers:

- Mr. James Holm, vice president and executive director
- Mr. Jeffery Grant, vice president
- Mr. Richard Wichinski, vice president
- Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer

WELS Investment Funds, Inc.

Our calling

The mission of WELS Investment Funds, Inc. (WIF), is to strengthen and enhance the ministries of WELS and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and their affiliated organizations by providing professionally managed investment portfolios. WIF serves as the administrator of two investment portfolios: WELS Equity Fund and WELS Income Fund.

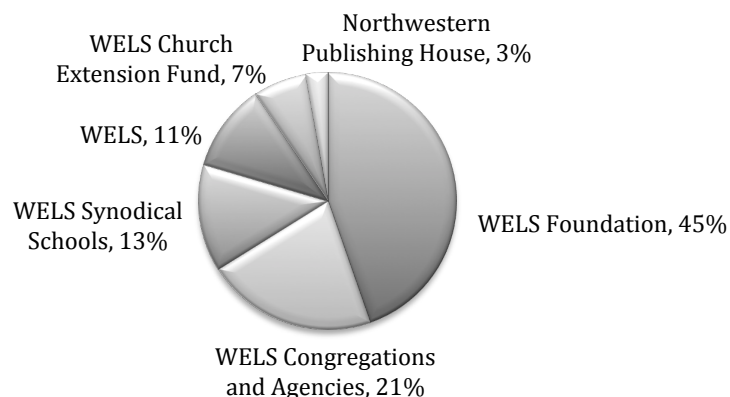
The WELS Equity Fund seeks long-term capital growth by investing in a portfolio of equity securities that is well diversified by industry and company size. The WELS Equity Fund may be appropriate for participating organizations who have a long investment horizon and are prepared to accept volatility associated with equity securities.

The WELS Income Fund seeks to provide current income by investing primarily in investment quality debt securities. The Income Fund may be appropriate for participating organizations having a desire for current income.

The WELS Balanced Allocation is not a WELS Fund but allows participating organizations to have their accounts automatically allocated, at the beginning of each calendar quarter, between the WELS Equity Fund (60 percent) and the WELS Income Fund (40 percent). As of June 30, 2013, approximately 90 percent of the total assets of the WELS Funds were allocated pursuant to the WELS Balanced Allocation.

Our current situation

Investors as a percentage of investments in WELS Funds

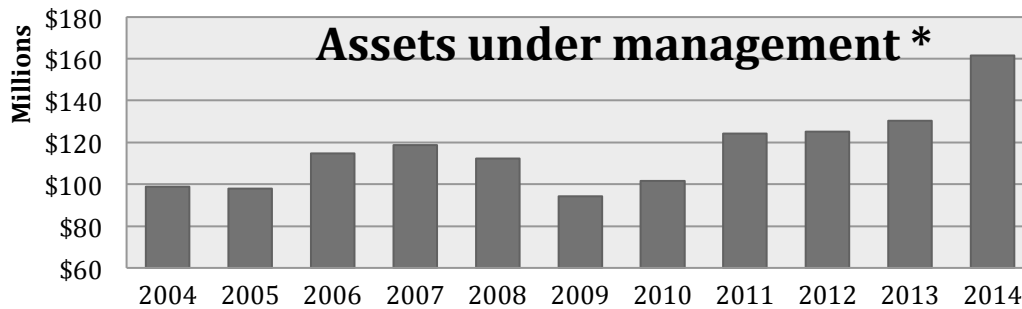


More than 180 WELS organizations invest in the WELS Funds. WIF has welcomed nine new participant members during the first six months of fiscal year 2014.

WELS ministries invested \$10.9 million in WIF within the first six months of fiscal year 2014. \$1.1 million of the investments received came from congregations, \$6.5 million came from WELS Church Extension Fund, \$1.4 million came from synodical schools, and \$1.9 million came from WELS Foundation, Inc.

In the first six months of fiscal year 2014, participant members utilized \$3.9 million.

As of Dec. 31, 2013, WIF's assets under management totaled \$161.5 million, an increase of \$22.0 million since June 30, 2013. Collectively, more than \$92.8 million has been invested by congregations and affiliates. The largest investor is WELS Foundation, Inc. WELS Foundation's \$68.7 million in charitable remainder trusts, charitable gift annuities, endowments, and donor advised funds represents approximately 45 percent of the total investment in the WELS Funds.



***2004-13 assets are June 30 Fiscal Year-end totals. 2014 assets are Fiscal Year 2014 through Dec. 31, 2013.**

Performance summary

AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN for the period ending Dec. 31, 2013					
	6 Months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years
WELS Balanced Allocation*	10.5%	16.2%	9.4%	13.2%	6.6%
WELS Equity Fund	16.8%	28.3%	12.2%	16.4%	7.4%
WELS Income Fund	1.5%	0.0%	4.8%	7.7%	4.9%

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Investment return and principal value will fluctuate so that fund units, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost.
 *Hypothetical returns that would have been received on an investment of 60% WELS Equity Fund and 40% in the WELS Income Fund for the period indicated.

A look ahead

Future activities include working with WELS Communication Services, WELS Technology, and the Ministry of Christian Giving to help promote WELS Investment Funds. We will also personally visit interested WELS and ELS congregations and their affiliated organizations informing them about the investment portfolios available through WELS Investment Funds.

If your congregation or school has an account with a long-term investment perspective, such as an endowment or scholarship fund, and you desire more information about WELS Investment Funds, refer to www.welsfunds.net. If you have further questions, please contact us at 1-877-888-8953 or by e-mailing WELSFunds@wels.net.

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. The performance data is current as of Dec. 31, 2013, and is subject to change at any time based on market and other conditions. Participating in a WELS Fund or the WELS Balanced Allocation is subject to investment risks, including possible loss of the principal amount invested. Withdrawals are payable by WELS Investment Funds exclusively from the net assets of the WELS Fund in which you participate. Accounts are not protected or insured by the FDIC or SIPC and are not guaranteed by WELS; WELS Foundation, Inc.; or any other person or entity. This is not an offer to sell or request to buy securities. The offering is made solely by the Offering Circular. At this time, the WELS Funds are NOT available to WELS-affiliated organizations located in Connecticut, Maryland, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, or Virginia.

Mr. Mark Arnold, reporter

Directors:

- Mr. Jon Bruss, chairman
- Mr. James Abitz, vice chairman
- Mr. Charles Cairns
- Mr. Joel Luehmann
- Mr. Dennis Walters
- Dr. Ronald White

Advisory:

- Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, director of WELS Ministry of Christian Giving
- Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer

Officers:

- Mr. Mark E. Arnold, president

WELS Benefit Plans

Our calling

The WELS Benefit Plans Office serves synodical workers and organizations through the administration of the WELS Voluntary Employee Benefits Association (VEBA) and the WELS Pension Plan. Oversight of each plan is the responsibility of separate commissions appointed by the Synodical Council. Each commission is composed of four laymen, a pastor, and a male teacher from the active worker roster. Contributions toward the cost of plan benefits and operations are held in separate trusts, each invested in diversified accounts with outside money managers overseen by an independent investment advisory firm. Both plans employ outside professionals providing benefit design, actuarial, consulting, banking, legal, and auditing services.

Our current situation

Benefit Plans has continued to monitor significant developments in implementation of the health care reform law (the Affordable Care Act or ACA). Americans are now able to purchase individual health insurance plans through public exchanges operated by federal and state government agencies. Although the VEBA Plan was largely unaffected by the initial rollout of these exchanges, the VEBA Commission and its advisors will carefully consider the long-term effects that public exchanges may have on WELS VEBA.

New regulations have provided certain religious employers with an exemption from the ACA mandate to cover contraceptives under their health plans. Because WELS objects to certain contraceptives for religious reasons, WELS VEBA is exempt from the contraceptive mandate. As required by the new regulations, WELS VEBA members have access to ACA-mandated contraceptives through separate programs administered and paid for by external pharmacy and medical claims administrators. Neither WELS VEBA nor the synod will providing or paying for coverage for contraceptive services. In this way, WELS VEBA can remain compliant with the law and in accord with God's Word.

Plan changes have been made to WELS VEBA as necessary to comply with all applicable provisions of the ACA since the law's inception. These changes provide enhanced benefits to members but also result in additional plan costs. To date, ACA-mandated benefits have added approximately 2.5 percent to ongoing WELS VEBA premium rates. The ACA also established two new federal programs to be funded by private employers and their health plans. WELS VEBA, on behalf of its sponsoring organizations, will pay the applicable fees for these programs. The federal program fees added 2 percent to WELS VEBA premium rates for 2014. Therefore, in total, approximately 4.5 percent of the premiums being charged by WELS VEBA in 2014 are directly related to ACA requirements.

For the first time in three years, WELS VEBA held an open enrollment period during November 2013 for new coverage to be effective Jan. 1, 2014. During this open enrollment, WELS VEBA gained more than 250 covered workers and dependents—an increase of approximately 2.5 percent to total membership. WELS VEBA now covers nearly 11,000 workers and dependents.

The Pension Plan, while funded to more than meet its benefit obligations to in-benefit participants, faces long-term funding challenges primarily caused by aging participant demographics, a reduced number of active participants, and volatile financial markets. These factors have caused the Plan's funding status (which compares the Plan's assets with the benefit payments earned by participants) to remain in the low- to mid-70 percent range since the economic downturn of 2008–09. In order to improve the Plan's funding status, the Pension Commission has taken several actions over the past year:

- Increased the Plan's normal retirement age to more closely align with Social Security.
- Increased contributions charged to sponsoring organizations by 9.9 percent and 11.0 percent for 2014 and 2013, respectively.

- Instituted a late payment penalty for contributions paid after the due date, which will recoup lost investment earnings to the Pension trust.
- Did not increase the benefit basis for new retirees for 2013–14 in order to slow the long-term growth rate of benefit liabilities.
- Took steps to reduce the overall volatility of the Plan trust portfolio to protect against future market downturns.

Both the VEBA and Pension trusts have realized investment performance gains in excess of 10 percent annually over the past two years. Final audited results from the 2012 plan years show net assets available for benefits in the VEBA and Pension trusts as \$22.6 million and \$124.7 million, respectively. In comparison, 2013 unaudited net asset values for the VEBA and Pension trusts, respectively, are estimated at \$27.5 million and \$148.1 million. Both commissions continue to evaluate investment funds that are expected to achieve target returns with reduced risk.

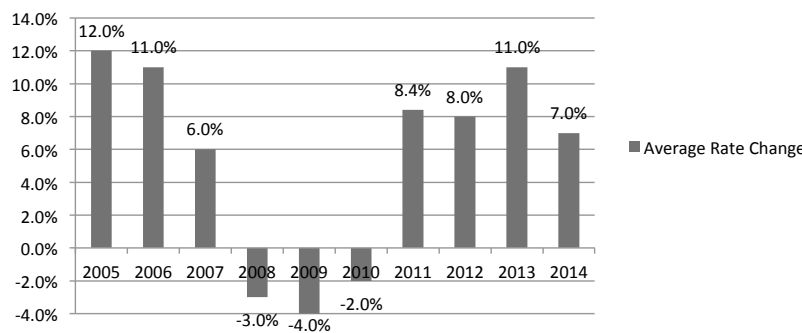
A look ahead

Health care reform presents both a challenge and an opportunity for WELS VEBA. Maintaining compliance with often-changing federal regulations and mitigating the impact of new costs imposed on the VEBA Plan will be necessary for the Plan’s continued operation. However, Benefit Plans expects the early years of the new health insurance exchanges to reinforce the VEBA Plan as the most effective and cost-efficient method of delivering health care benefits to workers while strengthening the Plan’s most important feature—providing health benefits to workers in a way that does not adversely affect the divine call process.

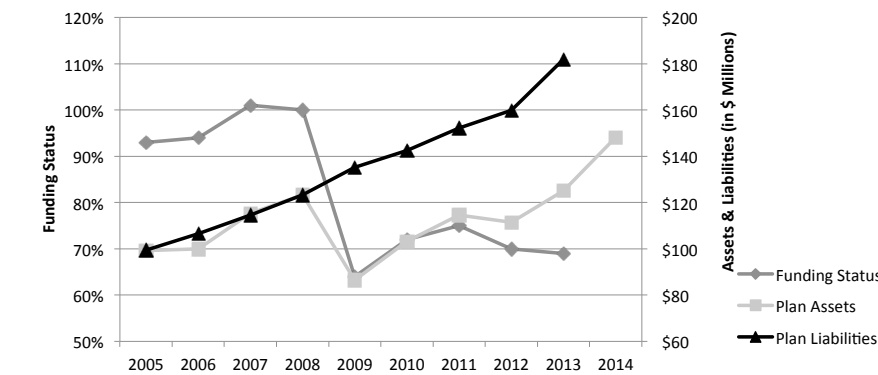
The Pension Commission is currently conducting a strategic review of the Pension Plan. This review is a prudent step to ensure the Plan’s long-term viability to continue providing benefits promised to participants and beneficiaries. The strategic review will consider potential improvements to the current plan design and the Plan’s role in the synod’s ministry efforts.

Benefit Plans, as well as the VEBA and Pension Commissions, are acutely aware of the need to keep benefit plan costs as low as possible to allow organizations to preserve valuable assets to fund ministry efforts. The primary goal for each Plan going forward is to strike the best balance between acceptable costs to organizations and meaningful benefits to participants.

**WELS VEBA Health Plan
Average Rate Change**



Comparison of Pension Plan Assets, Liabilities, and Funding Status



Mr. Joshua Peterman, reporter

WELS VEBA Commission:

Mr. Richard Hudock, chairman

Mr. Jeff Timm, secretary

Mr. Charles Adrian

Rev. Richard Agenten

Mr. Robert Bullens

Teacher Chris Fischer

Advisory:

Ms. Christine Hitter, membership manager

Mr. Joshua Peterman, director of Benefit Plans

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer

Ms. Lori Schrank, claims manager

WELS Pension Commission:

Mr. Gene Szaj, chairman

Rev. David Kolander, vice chairman

Teacher Scott Uecker, secretary

Mr. Robert Abramowski

Mr. Scott Heins

Mr. David McCulloch

Advisory:

Mr. Joshua Peterman, director of Benefit Plans

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer

Committee on Constitutional Matters

The Committee on Constitutional Matters (CCM) serves under the Conference of Presidents (COP) to interpret the constitution and bylaws for the synod and its constituency. It is responsible for maintaining and distributing accurate updates of these documents as changes are made by the synod in convention.

The current edition of the WELS Constitution and Bylaws and the Constitution for the Districts is available on the WELS Web site at www.wels.net/about-wels/synod-reports. You may also contact the President's office to request a printed copy.

Rev. Paul Naumann, reporter

Rev. Paul Naumann, chairman

Rev. Steven Korth

Judge Victor Manian

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
Consolidating Schedule of Financial Position
June 30, 2013

Assets	WELS	MLC	WLS	MLS	LPS	WELS CEF	WELS Foundation	WELS Funds	NPH	Eliminations	Consolidated
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 15,569,126	\$ 6,344,292	\$ 591,885	\$ 125,104	\$ 682,146	\$ 17,379,235	\$ 2,506,550	\$ -	\$ 991,207	\$ -	\$ 44,169,545
Cash restricted for gift annuities and trusts payable	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,920,356	-	-	-	1,920,356
Accounts receivable, net	337,802	75,110	70,733	29,032	4,827	-	-	-	361,462	-	878,966
Pledges receivable, net	2,064,988	57,517	-	-	94,340	760,004	2,445,678	-	-	-	5,422,527
Accrued interest receivable	31,125	-	-	-	-	763,277	409	95,581	1,430	(408)	891,414
Inventories	-	94,677	79,282	10,862	19,006	-	-	-	2,335,055	-	2,538,882
Mortgages and land contracts receivable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans to students	-	968,536	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,695	976,231
Investments	16,451,246	10,174,016	9,494,155	1,115,862	1,396,539	39,729,963	71,585,289	139,516,775	3,643,638	(110,224,259)	182,863,224
Certificates of Deposit	50,406	140,020	-	19,148	-	1,870,000	1,248,306	-	-	-	3,154,306
Property and real estate held for sale, net	-	-	-	-	-	117,880,783	-	-	-	(137,732)	117,743,051
Loans receivable from congregations, net	-	142,113	86,233	12,007	-	-	1,197,004	-	-	-	1,437,357
Cash surrender value on life insurance policies	-	1,282,355	73,782	18,981	69,918	74,794	-	-	-	-	1,847,239
Assets held in trust - outside WELS	416,308	365,489	49,513	18,981	14,832	-	-	-	82,413	-	1,096,911
Other assets	495,765	2,019,677	1,191,934	1,866,300	123,554	1,086,278	-	-	-	(16,968,656)	-
Contributions receivable - Foundation	10,680,913	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beneficial interest - assets held by WELS Foundation	12,217,924	1,827,165	1,735,042	256,510	348,258	-	-	-	-	(16,384,899)	-
Property, plant, and equipment, net	8,118,634	23,191,779	3,599,952	5,791,166	8,293,152	-	78,891	-	2,035,368	(18,456,658)	51,030,051
Investment in CEF certificates	14,385,779	1,022,721	1,575,837	610,711	-	-	-	-	782,719	(28,485)	-
Short term investments with WELS	-	-	28,485	-	-	(99,915)	(463,342)	-	-	(6,451,575)	-
Due from related party	1,663,591	5,327,695	23,546	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Collections and works of art	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total assets	\$ 82,519,607	\$ 53,033,162	\$ 18,526,597	\$ 9,318,754	\$ 11,622,451	\$ 179,459,251	\$ 80,519,141	\$ 139,612,356	\$ 10,233,292	\$ (168,644,977)	\$ 416,199,634
Liabilities and Net Assets											
Liabilities:											
Accounts payable	\$ 971,745	\$ 542,061	\$ 101,733	\$ 35,759	\$ 85,452	\$ 1,885	\$ 6,917	\$ -	\$ 172,487	\$ -	\$ 1,918,039
Accrued expenses and other liabilities	1,424,239	466,828	67,301	67,378	173,859	683,573	18,256	99,766	218,291	(406)	3,219,085
Deferred revenue	86,482	286,670	63,062	7,190	34,369	-	-	-	436,614	-	924,367
Retiree health benefits payable	2,219,398	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,219,398
Certificates payable	-	-	-	-	-	90,187,949	-	-	-	(18,456,658)	71,731,291
Liabilities to other beneficiaries	28,485	1,207,239	-	-	-	-	6,709,051	-	-	(28,486)	7,916,289
Deposits held in custody	-	16,587	-	70,186	80,803	1,463	-	-	-	-	174,628
Liabilities to outside agencies and organizations	2,313,134	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	31,601,208
Gift annuities and trusts payable	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,510,043	-	-	29,288,074	25,510,043
U.S. Government grants refundable	-	848,224	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	848,224
Bonds payable	5,320,000	5,320,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(5,320,000)	5,320,000
Due to related party	137,734	163,345	-	173,238	598,415	188,881	-	-	-	(1,261,613)	-
Total liabilities	12,511,217	8,850,954	237,685	353,751	972,898	91,063,751	32,244,267	99,766	827,392	4,220,911	151,382,592
Net assets:											
Unrestricted	26,265,078	6,482,306	5,675,070	13,512	1,112,651	62,151,553	13,805,453	139,512,590	9,375,900	(99,420,569)	164,973,544
Temporarily restricted	23,079,819	30,019,589	6,190,528	8,032,343	8,778,918	1,161,060	19,013,297	-	30,000	(58,056,501)	38,249,053
Permanently restricted	20,663,493	7,880,313	6,423,314	919,148	757,984	25,082,887	15,458,124	-	-	(15,388,818)	61,594,445
Total net assets	70,008,390	44,182,208	18,288,912	8,965,003	10,649,553	88,395,500	48,274,874	139,512,590	9,405,900	(172,865,888)	264,817,042
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 82,519,607	\$ 53,033,162	\$ 18,526,597	\$ 9,318,754	\$ 11,622,451	\$ 179,459,251	\$ 80,519,141	\$ 139,612,356	\$ 10,233,292	\$ (168,644,977)	\$ 416,199,634

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
 Consolidating Schedule of Activities
 Year Ended June 30, 2013

	Unrestricted										
	WELS	MLC	WLS	MLS	LPS	WELS CEF	WELS Foundation	WELS Funds	NPH	Eliminations	Consolidated
Member Support and Revenues											
Member support:											
Offerings from congregations	\$ 20,960,130	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,960,130
Gifts and memorials	5,593,854	381,975	273,086	156,691	223,611	186,915	2,986,384	-	-	(1,867,636)	7,914,880
Bequests	1,075,964	123,145	125,020	-	-	808,394	695,384	-	-	-	2,827,907
Total member support	27,629,948	505,120	398,106	156,691	223,611	995,309	3,681,768	-	-	(1,867,636)	31,702,917
Revenues:											
Student tuition and fees	-	9,643,180	806,865	1,348,988	3,125,226	-	-	-	-	-	14,924,269
Activity fees and retail sales	1,579,851	470,268	971,233	143,419	192,634	-	-	15,871,836	5,366,015	(16,567,690)	7,127,666
Interest and dividends	557,514	137,142	114,306	3,037	37,189	6,486,435	72,578	3,410,982	101,784	(3,095,611)	7,825,356
Net realized and unrealized gain on investments	11,255	122,356	383,879	-	45,175	710,000	260,170	11,870,170	321,826	(11,870,171)	1,854,660
Change in value of trust agreements below historical gift value	-	-	-	276	-	-	577,827	-	-	-	578,103
Other	609,254	2,524	92,793	-	83,813	357,970	7,110	-	-	-	102,427
Transfers from other funds	5,763,373	58,105	17,961	23,294	83,813	1,469,011	1,347,514	-	50,523	(13,079)	2,535,355
Total revenues	8,521,247	13,995,293	3,560,682	2,988,035	5,826,758	7,555,405	2,285,199	31,152,988	5,840,148	(46,758,019)	34,947,736
Donor redesignation	-	-	-	-	914	-	-	-	-	-	914
Net assets released from restrictions	6,593,845	3,550,096	1,287,568	415,513	496,375	16,240	1,536,128	-	30,500	(3,042,988)	10,883,277
Total member support and revenues	42,745,040	18,050,509	5,246,356	3,560,239	6,547,658	8,566,954	7,463,095	31,152,988	5,870,648	(51,668,643)	77,534,844
Expenses											
Program services:											
Ministerial education	8,319,634	17,460,429	4,859,985	3,613,412	7,218,719	-	-	-	-	(11,098,700)	30,373,479
World missions	8,861,512	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(225,273)	8,636,239
Home missions	6,972,291	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(617,443)	6,354,848
Congregational and district ministries	5,913,594	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(210,499)	5,703,095
Northwestern Publishing House	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,342,020	(48,885)	5,293,135
Total program services	30,067,031	17,460,429	4,859,985	3,613,412	7,218,719	-	-	-	5,342,020	(12,200,800)	56,360,796
Support services:											
Ministry support - subsidiaries	-	-	-	-	-	3,948,178	3,764,689	555,429	-	(212,878)	8,045,418
General and administrative	10,587,668	-	-	-	-	-	2,980,718	16,073,800	-	(6,150,989)	4,436,679
Transfers to other funds	-	-	-	-	-	3,948,178	6,715,407	16,629,229	-	(19,034,518)	12,482,097
Total support services	40,654,699	17,460,429	4,859,985	3,613,412	7,218,719	3,948,178	6,715,407	16,629,229	5,342,020	(25,398,385)	68,842,893
Total expenses	2,090,341	590,080	386,371	(53,173)	(671,061)	4,618,776	747,688	14,523,759	528,628	(14,069,458)	8,691,951
Net Assets (deficit) - Beginning of Year	24,174,737	5,892,226	5,288,689	66,685	1,783,712	57,532,777	13,057,785	124,988,831	8,847,272	(85,351,111)	156,281,593
Net Assets - End of year	\$ 26,265,078	\$ 6,482,306	\$ 5,675,070	\$ 13,512	\$ 1,112,651	\$ 62,151,553	\$ 13,805,453	\$ 139,512,590	\$ 9,375,900	\$ (99,420,569)	\$ 164,973,544

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
Consolidating Schedule of Activities
Year Ended June 30, 2013

	Temporarily Restricted										Consolidated	
	WELS	MLC	WLS	MLS	LPS	WELS CEF	WELS Foundation	WELS Funds	NPH	Eliminations		
Member Support and Revenues												
Member support:												
Gifts and memorials	\$ 4,534,898	\$ 1,933,050	\$ 700,493	\$ 114,246	\$ 246,996	\$ -	\$ 1,857,729	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,387,412
Bequests	1,286,060	14,684	14,000	-	-	-	692,193	-	-	-	-	2,006,937
Total member support	5,820,958	1,947,734	714,493	114,246	246,996	-	2,549,922	-	-	-	-	11,394,349
Revenues:												
Activity fees and retail sales	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Interest and dividends	312,193	322,144	101,514	37,487	18,318	-	1,244,434	-	-	-	-	2,036,090
Net realized and unrealized gain on on investments	1,366,613	554,485	457,569	95,658	74,580	-	5,075,580	-	-	-	-	7,624,485
Change in value of trust agreements	2,146,594	1,464,722	277,327	219,763	52,790	109,344	(2,988,831)	-	-	(5,178,531)	-	(3,906,822)
Redesignated fixed asset additions	-	1,833,268	299,017	-	404,579	-	-	-	-	(2,536,864)	-	-
Change in value - endowments below historical gift value	-	(2,524)	(92,793)	-	-	-	(7,110)	-	-	-	-	(102,427)
Other	19,523	(16)	3,752	-	-	-	(20,622)	-	-	-	-	(1,199)
Transfers from other funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,979	-	-	(5,731)	-	-
Total revenues	3,844,923	4,172,079	1,046,302	352,908	550,267	109,344	3,295,430	-	-	(7,721,126)	-	5,650,127
Donor redesignation	-	-	667	-	(3,043)	-	(303,041)	-	-	-	-	(305,417)
Net assets released from restrictions	(6,593,845)	(3,550,096)	(1,287,568)	(415,513)	(496,375)	(16,240)	(1,536,128)	-	(30,500)	3,042,665	-	(10,883,610)
Change in Net Assets	3,072,036	2,569,717	473,894	51,641	297,845	93,104	4,006,183	-	(30,500)	(4,678,471)	-	5,855,449
Net Assets (deficit) - Beginning of year	20,007,783	27,449,872	5,716,634	7,980,702	8,481,073	1,067,956	15,007,114	-	60,500	(53,378,030)	-	32,393,604
Net Assets - End of year	\$ 23,079,819	\$ 30,019,589	\$ 6,190,528	\$ 8,032,343	\$ 8,778,918	\$ 1,161,060	\$ 19,013,297	\$ -	\$ 30,000	\$ (58,056,501)	\$ -	\$ 38,249,053

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
 Consolidating Schedule of Activities
 Year Ended June 30, 2013

	Permanently Restricted											Consolidated
	WELS	MLC	WLS	MLS	LPS	WELS CEF	WELS Foundation	WELS Funds	NPH	Eliminations		
Member Support and Revenues												
Member support:												
Gifts and memorials	\$ 50,250	\$ 129,307	\$ 178,439	\$ -	\$ 1,625	\$ -	\$ 645,812	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,005,433
Bequests	-	650,653	-	-	-	-	(28,621)	-	-	-	-	622,032
Total member support	50,250	779,960	178,439	-	1,625	-	617,191	-	-	-	-	1,627,465
Revenues:												
Change in value of trust agreements	818,850	131,484	142,073	45,475	39,797	-	86,983	-	-	(221,577)	-	1,043,085
Other	-	(236)	4,352	-	-	-	(2,602)	-	-	-	-	1,514
Transfers from other funds	-	333	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(333)	-	-
Total revenues	818,850	131,581	146,425	45,475	39,797	-	84,381	-	-	(221,910)	-	1,044,599
Donor redesignation	-	-	(667)	-	2,129	-	303,040	-	-	-	-	304,502
Net assets released from restrictions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Change in Net Assets	869,100	911,541	324,197	45,475	43,551	-	1,004,612	-	-	333	-	2,976,899
Net Assets (deficit) - Beginning of year	19,794,393	6,768,772	6,099,117	873,673	714,433	25,082,887	14,451,512	-	-	(21,577)	(15,167,241)	58,617,546
Net Assets - End of year	\$ 20,663,493	\$ 7,680,313	\$ 6,423,314	\$ 919,148	\$ 757,984	\$ 25,082,887	\$ 15,456,124	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (15,388,818)	\$ -	\$ 61,594,445



WINNER



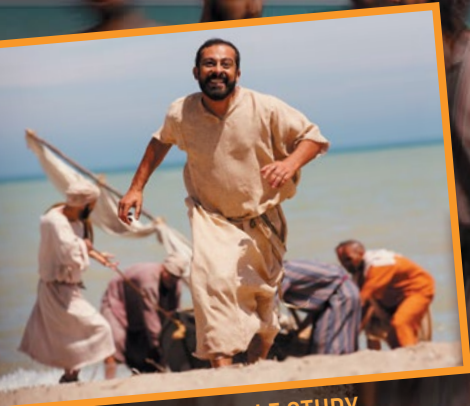
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