

Proceedings

October 2013

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
Waukesha, Wisconsin

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
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Notes

To learn more about the convention and to view convention photos and video reports, visit www.wels.net/2013convention.

Many references to the *Book of Reports and Memorials* (BORAM) are included within the convention resolutions. Unless otherwise noted, these are referencing the 2013 BORAM, which can be found at www.wels.net/about-wels/synod-reports.

Convention overview

More than 400 voting and advisory delegates met at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minn., from July 29–Aug. 1, 2013, for the 62nd Biennial Convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. In addition to experiencing the uplifting worship services and devotions and hearing an exceptional essay—all focused on the theme “In Christ alone”—the delegates spent a week reviewing the work of the synod during the past two years and making decisions on a number of issues.

The ministry financial plan (budget)

Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) continue to be the backbone of the ministry financial plan, which calls for a four percent increase in CMO for both 2014 and 2015. The plan includes support for a significant number of new home missions, the expansion of world mission efforts in Asia, and the staffing and resources needed for our ministerial education schools to prepare the next generation of called workers.

Continuing payments have helped reduce the synod’s capital debt to just under \$8 million from \$22.4 million in 2007. A resolution passed at this convention calls for a special offering in 2015 to eliminate the debt two years early, which would make \$1.6 million budgeted each year for debt retirement available for ministry.

Bible translation

Convention delegates made three decisions relating to the issue of Bible translations. Delegates chose not to adopt the NIV2011 for synodical publications, preferring instead to allow Northwestern Publishing House to use whatever translation it judges to be best for any given project. Delegates also decided that a new translation of the Bible would not be done as a synodical project. Finally, delegates approved the formation of a special standing committee that would provide input and suggestions for improvement to other existing translations as they are revised. See pp. 65–68 for all the resolutions relating to Bible translation.

A four-part Bible study is available to help members better understand the careful process that went into these decisions. The delegates voted to encourage every congregation to make use of that study, which is available at www.wels.net/translation.

Special celebrations

Delegates had the special joy of declaring fellowship with the Lutheran Confessional Church in Norway. In 2009, this church body peacefully separated from WELS’ sister church, the Lutheran Confessional Church in Sweden, for practical reasons. Therefore, delegates to this convention officially recognized WELS’ fellowship with the Lutheran Confessional Church in Norway and welcomed its president, Rev. Egil Edvardsen, to the convention.

“In Christ Alone” Long-Range Plan

The “In Christ Alone” Long-Range Plan was developed under the supervision of the Synodical Council and adopted by delegates to the 2011 convention. It was supported again by delegates to the 2013 convention. The plan intends to provide a broad road map of where, under God, we want to be as a synod in 2017. It is used to help establish ministry priorities and goals and then to guide the formation of the ministry financial plan. Each area of ministry has been developing and refining specific strategies and programs to implement the plan. The Synodical Council receives regular updates on the progress of the plan’s implementation.

Movie preview

Rev. Michael Hintz, director of the Commission on Evangelism, gave convention delegates a sneak peek of WELS’ new movie, *Come Follow Me*. Hintz showed the first six minutes of this outreach movie, which shows viewers how to be a

disciple of Jesus through the eyes of Peter. The movie is a follow-up to the successful *Road to Emmaus* film, of which more than a quarter million copies of the DVD have been distributed. The film has also been broadcast in 14 countries and is available in seven languages.

Delegates learned that the DVD for *Come Follow Me*, as well as a Bible study and discussion guide based on the movie, will be available in October. WELS is also using *Come Follow Me* as the focus of its 2013–14 Walking Together Sunday.

WELS Commissions on Evangelism and Adult Discipleship; Northwestern Publishing House; WELS Multi-Language Publications; and Boettcher+Trinklein Television, Inc., are collaborating on this series of outreach movies, which are made possible through individual donations and grants. The third and fourth films will focus on Jesus' birth and early life and on taking the gospel into the world.

Special guests

Rev. John Moldstad, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), brought greetings from his synod to WELS delegates on Wed., July 31.

Three observers from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) also attended the convention. The President's report explained that representatives from the LCMS, WELS, and the ELS met in December 2012 for three days for informal talks. A resolution from the Commission on Inter-Church Relations Floor Committee encourages further discussions with the LCMS (see p. 31). In part, the resolution says, "We encourage our leadership in conjunction with the Commission on Inter-Church Relations to continue discussions with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod to strive for true unity based on full agreement in doctrine and practice." The resolution adds, "Even if the restoration of fellowship is not possible in the near future, we believe it is our responsibility to each other and to our Lord to strive for true unity based on full agreement in doctrine and practice."

New ad hoc committee

A resolution from the President's report Floor Committee resolved to "establish a new ad hoc committee to look at all areas of the synod structure and programs" (see p. 25). The ad hoc committee, to be appointed by the synod president, will work to continue the evaluations of the ad hoc committee formed in 2007 and will focus on areas of the synod not addressed by the original committee, which presented at the 2009 synod convention.

The next synod convention will take place in July 2015 at Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw, Mich. For complete information on the 2013 convention, go to www.wels.net/2013convention.

Serving in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder

Voting delegates

Arizona-California District

Pastors

Steven Degner
W. Jeffrey Gunn
Curt Grube
William Kant
M. Scott Martz
James Proeber
Allen Schroeder
Jonathan Stern
Timothy Wempner

Teachers and staff ministers

Michael Bahn
David Peter
Paul Krause
Matthew Sonntag
Gregory Stam

Laymen

Donald Brock
David Bruckner
Steven Daugherty
Eugene Hammerson
Gary Jeffers
John Keibel
Don Meinert
Robert Pinckard

Lauris Plath
Mark Robino
James Sorgatz
Tony Steele
Jon Tucker
Jeff Weinstein
Randy Welch
John Wempner

Dakota-Montana District

Pastors

Gary Bode
Gerald Geiger
Paul Gunderson
D. Thomas Rawerts

Teachers and staff ministers

Peter Markgraf

Laymen

Jim Albright
Tony Bicek
Timothy Daub
Robert Feldhus
Lynn Frey
Larry Lutz

Dennis Rabel
John Rabenberg
Richard Schadler
John Seidl
Orville Taecker

Michigan District

Pastors

Mark Eckert
Daniel Garbow
Mark Gieschen
Dennis Himm
William Natsis
James Naumann
Glenn Rosenbaum
Matthew Schaewe
Paul Schmiede
Adam Seelow
Richard Starr
Kurt Uhlenbrauck
Russell Wilke

Teachers and staff ministers

John Lange
James Ott
Luke Scherschel
Steven Thies
Alan Treder
William Zeiger

Laymen

Harold Benecke
Dennis Buettner
Charles Burling
James Cutler
David Drzewiecki
R. Kem Fecho
Kenneth Forfinski
Jason Grove
Royce Hornbacher
Lowell Kraft
Arthur Laupichler

William Mashke
Robert McConnell
Charles McInturff
Curt McGill
John Meyer
Rich Miller
Barry Price
Patrick Rodgers
Alan Selbig
Ronald Sieggreen
Wayne Traub

Minnesota District

Pastors

Gregg Bitter
John Boeder
Jonathan Brohn
David Fleischmann
Michael Geiger
Mark Kom
Edwin Lehmann
Joel Luetke
Stephen Meyer
Rodney Pudell
Dennis Reichow
Dale Schlieve
Keith Schreiner
Thomas Smith
David Tiarks

Teachers and staff ministers

Paul Bases
Jason Hahn
Jason Jaspersen
Daniel Kell
Carl Lemke
Lawrence Lotito
Kenneth Rupnow
Richmond Scharf
Ronald Schmidt
James Unke

Laymen

Jeff Anderson
David Ballou
Donald Beguhl
Troy Benson
Jerry Bentz
Michael Boyd
Ernest Broekemeier
Greg Charlson
Charles Christianson
Delmar Christianson
Allan Duesterhoeft
Ken Ebert
Bruce Greiner

Daryl Hanneman
Duane Jonas
Jeff Olson
Monte Owens
Thomas Patterson
Terry Rosendahl
Terry Schardt
David Schulz
Jeremy Siers
Joseph Siers
Norris Voth
Gerald Woodley

Nebraska District

Pastors

Anthony Allard
Mark Birkholz
Justin Gosch
Phillip Sievert
Robert Smith
Philip Zarling

Teachers and staff ministers

Corey Pederson
Matthew Willems

Laymen

Larry Belz
G. Harvey Dunn
David Flood
Detlef Gartzke
Gregory Green
James Hohenstein
John Larson

Doug Leerssen
Chad Moyer
Greg Neitzke
Nathan Rooney
Clay Rouse
Gene Schmeling
Timothy Tobeck

North Atlantic District

Pastors

Timothy Ehlers
Roger Huffman
Mark Johnston

Teachers and staff ministers

None

Laymen

Russell Becker
James Kolva
Dwight Luedtke

John McKenna
Andrew Nitz
David Sills

Northern Wisconsin District

Pastors

Daniel Cole
Rodney Dietsche
Timothy Flunker
Joel Gaertner
Mark Gass
Robert Johannes
Timothy Johnson
Ryan Landwehr
Charles Learman
Tony McKenzie
John Moll
Randall Ott
Erich Schaser
Karl Schultz

Teachers and staff ministers

Joel Barthel
Seth Hahnke
Seth Jaeger
Daryl Johnson
Richard Muchka
Joel Plocher
Andrew Retzlaff
Michael Schulz
David Uhlhorn

Laymen

Eugene Anderson
Roger Damerow
Dennis Fabian
James Gauger
Ellery Gulbrand
Daniel Kemnitz
Randall Kreuzer
Jerome Krueger
Carl Landwehr
Timothy Lemke
Robert Manteufel

Jeff Naser
Alan Pleuss
Alvin Rabe
John Sankey
Dale Sternhagen
David Stuewer
James Vandenberg
Leonard Welling
Steve Wesenberg
Donn Yunke
Thomas Zamzow

Pacific Northwest District

Pastors

Thad Bitter
Robbin Robbert
James Turriff

Teachers and staff ministers

Philip Adickes
Bryan Schneck

Laymen

Donald Abinante
Dean Dawson
Jonathan Hood
Lowell Norris

Richard Qualey
Peter Stauffer
Mark Ziesmer

South Atlantic District

Pastors

Mark Gabb
Benjamin Golisch
Jonathan Hein
Michael Kober
James Pankow
Roger Schultz
Thomas Spiegelberg III

Teachers and staff ministers

Erik Landwehr
Alan Meihack

Laymen

Robert Barnard
Robert Clarke
David De La Paz
Philip Geistfeld
Keith Hartmann
Peter Larson

Paul Lapse
Lawrence Povinelli
Joel Pussehl

South Central District

Pastors

Nathan Buege
Caleb Schoeneck
Andrew Schroer

Teachers and staff ministers

Steven Vasold

Laymen

Tony Davis
Bruce Drake
Robin Warnke
Roger Wilkins

Nathan Williams
Nathanael Winrod
Adam Zuleger

Southeastern Wisconsin District

Pastors

Kenneth Cherney Jr.
Daniel Falck
Michael Feuerstahler
Kenneth Fisher
John Gawrisch
Stephen Geiger
Michael Hintz
Curtis Jahn
Mark Jeske
Thomas Knickelbein
Steven Lange
Paul Learman
Daniel Leyrer
Robert Meiselwitz
Gerald Meyer
Larry Mose
David Pagel
David Pries
David Waterstradt
Michael Zarling

Teachers and staff ministers

Steven Carlovsky
Leonard Epple
Timothy Gustafson
James Haferman
Mark Heckendorf
Nathan Hinz
James Holman
Gerald Hosbach
Mark Kjenstad
John Marten
Matthew Moeller
Douglas Nass
Joel Nelson
David Neujahr
James Rademan
Joshua Schoeneck
Scott Sievert
Kevin Sonntag
Jeffrey Spiaser
Douglas Stellick
Jonathan Stern
Timothy Treder
William Vilski
Craig Weide
Travis Wendt

Laymen

Edward Anderson
Daniel Baker
Daniel Bolha
David Fons
Dale Garman
James Gaugert Sr.
Kevin Graper
Timothy Knautz
John Landenberger
Kenneth Liesener
Ken Malsack
Paul Mattek
Mark Meissner
Bruce Meyer
Elmer Meyer
Donald Noline
Daniel Ody
Donald Radke
Arthur Rasmussen
Dean Schroeder
Steven Steiner
William Strutz
Glenn Volkmann
William Whitney

Western Wisconsin District

Pastors

Kenneth Arndt
James Bolda
Brett Brauer
Steven Ehlke
Paul Heiderich
Bill Limmer
Michael Lindemann
Thomas Lindloff
Kevin Lisk
Daniel Schmidt
Carl Schroeder
Daniel Schumann
Jeffrey Seelow
John Warmuth
Douglas Westenberg

Teachers and staff ministers

Brent Archer
Joel Babinec
Philip Dretske
David Fulton
Chad Grambsch
Scott Huebner
Matthew Kanzenbach
Kenneth Lehman
Darik Mischke
Joshua Nelson
Kyle Raymond
Robert Wiegman

Laymen

Ivan Ball
Ethan Bolstad
Royce Cox
Tyler Danke
Richard Dorn
Steven Ernst
Ronald Fredrickson
Elroy Gaedy
Brian Guntz
James Heth
William Huss
Ronald Klinski
Joe Knepper
Carl Lange
John Nass

Pete Petersen
Kevin Pfaff
William Schmidt
David Schrimpf
Christopher Schutz
John Schwark
William Seekamp
Sean Stake
Glen Wiesmueller
Darrell Will
Donn Yahnke

World missionaries

David Beckman
Benjamin Foxen
Michael Hartman
Steven Witte

Advisory delegates

Officers

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president
Rev. James Huebner, first vice president
Rev. Joel Voss, second vice president
Rev. Robert Pasbrig, recording secretary

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Rev. Peter Naumann, Dakota-Montana
Rev. John Seifert, Michigan
Rev. Charles Degner, Minnesota
Rev. Earle Treptow, Nebraska
Rev. Donald Tollefson, North Atlantic

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Rev. Theodore Lambert, Pacific Northwest
Rev. John Guse, South Atlantic
Rev. Donald Patterson, South Central
Rev. David Rutschow, Southeastern Wisconsin
Rev. Herbert Prahl, Western Wisconsin

Synodical Council

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Mr. Philip Hempel, Michigan
Mr. Paul Holzhueter, Minnesota
Mr. Dale Pohlman, Nebraska
Mr. Thomas Schermerhorn, Northern Wisconsin
Mr. Warren Ehlke, Pacific Northwest

Mr. Mark Massmann, South Atlantic
Mr. Timothy Snyder, Southeastern Wisconsin
Mr. Art Tessmann, Western Wisconsin
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Rev. Joel Jenswold, pastor-at-large
Rev. Jonathan Schroeder, pastor-at-large

Board for Ministerial Education

Rev. Philip Hirsch, chairman, Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator, Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Paul Wendland, president, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
Rev. Mark Zarling, president, Martin Luther College
Rev. Matthew Crass, president, Luther Preparatory School
Rev. Joel Petermann, president, Michigan Lutheran Seminary

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Rev. Charles Westra, chairman, Board for Home Missions
Rev. Keith Free, administrator, Board for Home Missions
Rev. Larry M. Schlomer, administrator, Board for World Missions
Rev. Dan Koelpin, former administrator, Board for World Missions
Mr. Sean Young, director, Missions Operations

Other

Prof. Thomas Nass, chairman, Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Rev. Paul Naumann, chairman, Committee on Constitutional Matters

Mr. Todd Poppe, chief financial officer

Mr. Martin Spriggs, chief technology officer

Mr. Lee Hitter, director, Communication Services

Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, director, Ministry of Christian Giving

Mr. Todd Scott, director, Human Resources

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, coordinator, Congregation and Ministry Support Group/director, Commission on Worship

Rev. Michael Hintz*, director, Commission on Evangelism

Rev. James Behringer, director, Commission on Special Ministries

Rev. Jonathan Hein*, director, Commission on Congregational Counseling

Teacher Greg Schmill, director, Commission on Lutheran Schools

Teacher James Rademan*, associate director, Commission on Lutheran Schools

Teacher Cindi Holman, national coordinator of early childhood ministries, Commission on Lutheran Schools

Rev. John Braun, vice president, Northwestern Publishing House

Mr. Joshua Peterman, director, Benefit Plans

* Also served as a voting delegate

Floor committees

Committee #1: Conference of Presidents

Rev. Philip Zarling, chairman
Prof. Brent Archer, secretary
Prof. Paul Bases
Mr. Larry Belz
Mr. Ethan Bolstad
Rev. Nathan Buege
Prof. Steven Ehlke
Mr. Gary Jeffers
Mr. Carl Lange

Rev. Paul Learman
Rev. Edwin Lehmann
Mr. John McKenna
Mr. Gene Schmeling
Mr. Ronald Sieggreen
Mr. Orville Taecker
Teacher David Uhlhorn
Mr. Gerald Woodley
Mr. Mark Ziesmer

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Mr. Donald Beguhl
Prof. Kenneth Cherney Jr.
Mr. Tyler Danke
Mr. David Drzewiecki
Rev. Mark Gass
Mr. Greg Green

Rev. Paul Heiderich
Mr. Jonathan Hood
Rev. Mark Kom
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Mr. Dennis Rabel
Mr. Arthur Rasmussen
Teacher Luke Scherschel
Rev. David Schultz

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Mr. Daniel Kemnitz
Teacher Paul Krause

Mr. Arthur Laupichler
Rev. Stephen Meyer
Teacher Douglas Nass
Mr. Daniel Ody
Mr. John Seidl
Mr. Jeff Weinstein
Mr. John Wempner

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Mr. James Gauger
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Rev. Ryan Landwehr

Teacher Corey Pederson
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Mr. John Schwark
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Mr. David Flood
Rev. Gerald Geiger

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Prof. Daniel Leyrer
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Mr. Kevin Pfaff
Mr. William Seekamp
Teacher Kevin Sonntag
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Mr. Philip Geistfeld
Teacher Daryl Johnson
Mr. Duane Jonas
Mr. Timothy Lemke

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Mr. Curt McGill
Teacher David Neujahr
Mr. Donald Nicoline
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Mr. Tony Steele

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Rev. Thad Bitter
Mr. R. Kem Fecho
Teacher Mark Heckendorf

Mr. James Hohenstein
Rev. Bill Limmer
Mr. Larry Lutz
Teacher Joel Plocher
Mr. Joel Pussehl
Mr. Alvin Rabe
Mr. Bill Schmidt

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Mr. David Bruckner
Mr. Royce Cox
Rev. Charles Learman
Prof. Thomas Lindloff

Mr. Charles McInturff
Rev. Robert Meiselwitz
Mr. Elmer Meyer
Teacher James Ott
Mr. Richard Qualey
Mr. Terry Rosendahl
Teacher Douglas Stellick

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Rev. Justin Gosch, secretary
Rev. David Fleischmann
Mr. Kenneth Forfinski
Mr. Kenneth Malsack
Mr. Donald Meinert
Rev. Gerald Meyer
Teacher Matthew Moeller

Mr. Thomas Patterson
Mr. Clay Rouse
Mr. John Sankey
Rev. Karl Schultz
Teacher Michael Schulz
Teacher Matthew Sonntag
Mr. Darrell Will

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Rev. Dennis Reichow, secretary
Teacher Joel Barthel
Mr. Tony Davis
Mr. Darrell Hanneman
Mr. John Keibel
Mr. Doug Leerssen
Mr. Robert McConnell

Rev. John Moll
Mr. Allen Pleuss
Staff Minister Ronald Schmidt
Rev. Allen Schroeder
Rev. Carl Schroeder
Teacher Gregory Stam
Mr. Dale Sternhagen
Teacher Timothy Treder

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Mr. Lynn Frey
Rev. Mark Gieschen
Rev. Michael Hintz
Rev. Michael Kober
Mr. William Huss
Mr. Randal Kreuzscher
Staff Minister Erik Landwehr

Teacher John Lange
Mr. Chad Moyer
Mr. Robert Pinckard
Teacher Richmond Scharf
Rev. Dale Schlieve
Mr. David Stuewer
Mr. Nathan Williams
Mr. Thomas Zamzow

Committee #12: Congregation and Ministry Support Group A (Worship, Evangelism, Congregational Counseling)

Rev. Joel Luetke, chairman
Rev. Benjamin Golisch, secretary
Rev. Kenneth Arndt
Mr. Roger Damerow
Mr. Kenneth Ebert
Mr. Robert Feldhus
Rev. Benjamin Foxen
Rev. Tony McKenzie

Mr. Laurence Povinelli
Mr. Donald Radtke
Mr. Peter Stauffer
Teacher Steven Thies
Teacher William Vilski
Teacher Matthew Willems
Mr. Donald Yunke

Committee #13: Congregation and Ministry Support Group B (Special Ministries, Adult Discipleship, Youth and Family)

Rev. Keith Schreiner, chairman
Teacher Kenneth Lehman, secretary
Teacher Michael Bahn
Rev. Gary Bode
Mr. Michael Boyd
Mr. Ernest Broekemeier
Mr. Steven Ernst
Mr. Bruce Meyer

Mr. John Meyer
Rev. Larry Mose
Mr. Greg Neitzke
Mr. Nathan Rooney
Mr. Sean Stake
Mr. Leonard Welling
Rev. Douglas Westenberg
Rev. Steven Witte

Committee #14: Congregation and Ministry Support Group C (Lutheran Schools, Task Force on Lutheran Schools)

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Teacher Craig Weide, secretary
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Mr. Allen Duesterhoeft
Rev. Michael Hartman
Mr. Jerome Krueger
Mr. Mark Meissner
Teacher Darik Mischke

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Rev. James Proeber
Mr. John Rabenberg
Rev. Daniel Schumann
Mr. Allen Selbig
Mr. Timothy Tobeck
Mr. Norris Voth

Committee #15: Northwestern Publishing House and Publication Coordinating Commission

Rev. Timothy Wempner, chairman
Teacher Steven Carlovsky, secretary
Mr. Richard Dorn
Mr. Ellery Gulbrand
Mr. Paul Mattek
Mr. John Nass
Rev. Randall Ott

Mr. Patrick Rodgers
Rev. Glenn Rosenbaum
Mr. Richard Schadler
Mr. David Schulz
Mr. Joseph Siers
Rev. David Tiarcks

Committee #16: WELS Historical Institute and WELS Archives

Mr. Dean Dawson, chairman
Rev. Michael Geiger, secretary
Mr. Eugene Anderson
Teacher Leonard Epple
Rev. W. Jeffrey Gunn
Rev. Mark Jeske

Teacher Mark Kjenstad
Rev. Robbin Robbert
Mr. Terry Schardt
Teacher Alan Treder
Mr. James Vandenberg
Mr. Glenn Volkmann

Committee #17: Church Extension Fund

Rev. David Waterstradt, chairman
Teacher James Rademan, secretary
Mr. Dennis Buettner
Mr. Dennis Fabian
Mr. Detlef Gartzke
Mr. Bruce Greiner
Teacher Timothy Gustafson

Rev. William Kant
Mr. John Landenberger
Mr. Dwight Luedtke
Mr. Jeff Olson
Rev. David Pries
Teacher Kyle Raymond
Rev. Adam Seelow

Committee #18: WELS Foundation and WELS Investment Funds

Mr. William Mashke, chairman
Rev. Kenneth Fisher, secretary
Teacher Philip Adickes
Mr. Russell Becker
Rev. Paul Gunderson
Rev. Dennis Himm
Teacher Matthew Kanzenbach

Mr. Kenneth Liesener
Rev. Michael Lindemann
Dr. Joel Nelson
Mr. Monte Owens
Mr. Jeremy Siers
Mr. Robin Warnke
Mr. Glen Wiesmueller

Committee #19: Benefit Plans Office (VEBA and Pension)

Mr. Jim Albright, chairman
Rev. John Warmuth, secretary
Mr. Delmar Christianson
Mr. Steven Daugherty
Mr. Joe Fraser
Rev. John Gawrisch
Teacher Seth Jaeger

Mr. Timothy Knautz
Mr. Lowell Kraft
Teacher Carl Lemke
Teacher Joshua Nelson
Rev. D. Thomas Rawerts
Rev. Paul Schmiede
Mr. Donald Yahnke

Committee #20: Christian Aid and Relief

Rev. Caleb Schoeneck, chairman
Teacher Joshua Schoeneck, secretary
Mr. Charles Christianson
Mr. James Gaugert Sr.
Teacher James Haferman

Mr. Joseph Knepper
Mr. James Kolva
Prof. Lawrence Lotito
Rev. Roger Schultz
Rev. Richard Starr

Committee #21: Translation Evaluation Committee

Rev. Joel Gaertner, chairman
Rev. Mark Gabb, secretary
Rev. Daniel Cole
Mr. James Cutler
Mr. Bruce Drake
Rev. Michael Feuerstahler
Teacher Chad Grambsch
Mr. Kevin Graper
Mr. Eugene Hammerson

Mr. James Heth
Teacher Daniel Kell
Rev. James Naumann
Mr. Erick Richard
Teacher Scott Sievert
Mr. William Strutz
Mr. Wayne Traub
Mr. Kristopher Smith
Mr. Denis Unterholzner

Committee #22: Translation Feasibility Committee

Rev. Phillip Sievert, chairman
Mr. G. Harvey Dunn, secretary
Mr. Ivan Ball
Mr. Tony Bicek
Rev. Daniel Garbow
Teacher Jason Hahn
Mr. Barry Price

Rev. Daniel Schmidt
Rev. Andrew Schroer
Teacher Jeffrey Spiaser
Mr. Steven Steiner
Mr. Randy Welch
Mr. Nathanael Winrod

Committee #23: Continuing Education for Called Workers

Rev. Jonathan Stern, chairman
Teacher Alan Meihak, secretary
Mr. Dale Garman
Mr. Brian Gumtz
Mr. Royce Hornbacher
Teacher Gerald Hosbach
Rev. Robert Johannes

Mr. Ronald Klinski
Rev. Thomas Knickelbein
Mr. Carl Lindquist
Rev. James Turriff
Teacher Travis Wendt
Mr. Roger Wilkens

Committee #24: Miscellaneous memorials

Prof. John Boeder, chairman
Rev. James Pankow, secretary
Rev. James Bolda
Mr. Donald Brock
Mr. Greg Charlson
Mr. David Fons
Mr. Ronald Fredrickson

Mr. John Larson
Mr. Paul Lapse
Teacher David Noack
Teacher Bryan Schneck
Teacher Jonathan Stern
Rev. Kurt Uhlenbrauck
Mr. Steve Wesenberg

Committee #25: Constitutional matters

Teacher James Holman, chairman
Rev. Timothy Ehlers, secretary
Mr. Harold Benecke
Mr. Daniel Bolha
Mr. David De La Paz
Teacher David Fulton
Mr. Elroy Gaedy

Mr. Keith Hartmann
Rev. William Natsis
Rev. Rodney Pudell
Mr. Mark Robino
Prof. Kenneth Rupnow
Mr. Christopher Schutz

Committee #26: Elections

Teacher Joel Babinec, chairman
Rev. Russell Wilke, secretary
Mr. Daniel Baker
Rev. Rodney Dietsche
Teacher Nathan Hinz
Mr. Peter Larson
Mr. Robert Manteufel
Mr. Richard Miller

Mr. Andrew Nitz
Mr. Lauris Plath
Mr. David Schrimpf
Mr. William Whitney
Teacher Robert Wiegman
Rev. Michael Zarling
Mr. Adam Zuleger

Committee #27: Membership

Rev. Timothy Flunker, chairman
Rev. Anthony Allard, secretary
Mr. Edward Anderson

Teacher Philip Dretske
Teacher John Marten
Mr. James Sortgatz

Committee #28: Steering

Rev. John Guse, chairman, South Atlantic District President
Rev. Donald Tollefson, secretary, North Atlantic District President
Rev. Donald Patterson, South Central District President

Committee #1: Conference of Presidents

Subject: Synodwide offering for debt elimination

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 7

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) five years ago a special offering resulted in our synod's capital indebtedness being reduced by \$4.2 million from \$22.4 million to \$18.2 million; and
- WHEREAS 2) since then the synod has made payments against the debt, and donors have contributed an additional \$800,000 towards debt elimination, so that the debt now stands at [approximately] \$7.9 million and is projected to be about \$5 million by the 2015 convention; and
- WHEREAS 3) the complete elimination of WELS capital debt would impact our budget by a positive \$1.6 million per year; and
- WHEREAS 4) the Conference of Presidents, which is charged with overseeing the various ways in which congregations and members of the synod provide financial support for the work of the synod, has recommended that a synodwide offering for debt elimination be launched at the 2015 synod convention; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that at the 2015 convention a special synodwide offering for debt elimination be launched; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that all WELS congregations be encouraged to participate in this offering; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that we pray that God bless this offering so that it will be successful in eliminating all synodical debt; and be it finally
- Resolved. d) that this special offering and observance come to a conclusion at the 2016 district conventions.

Pastor Philip Zarling, chairman
Teacher Brent Archer, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Expressions of gratitude

Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) the accomplishment of the convention's work requires the effort of many people; and
- WHEREAS 2) the work of the synod depends on the consecrated labor of many people within its membership; therefore be it
- Resolved. that the synod in convention express its gratitude to:
1. The faculty and staff of Martin Luther College for hosting this convention, especially Ms. Michelle Gartner and Rev. Jeffrey Schone.
 2. The support staff and officers of the synod for arranging and conducting the business of this convention, especially Ms. Kathy Kolander and Ms. Carla Martin.
 3. Those who delivered the sermons, devotions, and essays; conducted the services; served as organists and instrumentalists; sang in the choirs; and in other ways led us in worship.

4. Mr. Timothy Snyder, who served as the convention videographer, and Mr. William Pekrul as the convention photographer.
5. The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society for the presentation of the flags.
6. The delegates and floor committees of the convention and for their concentrated efforts, all who served on boards, commissions, and committees of the synod.
7. The school staff, kitchen staff, audio/visual services, technology services, pages, and volunteers who have contributed their time and talent to make the convention flow smoothly to a successful completion.
8. Northwestern Publishing House; WELS Foundation, Inc.; Lutheran Association for Church Extension (LACE); WELS Church Extension Fund (CEF); Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services; Hahn Financial Group; Sky High Marketing; and others who provided materials for the convention.
9. All other WELS agencies who provided time, materials, and representatives to inform delegates of synod work.

Pastor Philip Zarling, chairman
Teacher Brent Archer, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Expressions of gratitude

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 9
Resolution No. 03

WHEREAS 1) Rev. Vilas Glaeske has served faithfully as district president of the South Central District; and

WHEREAS 2) Rev. Joel Petermann has served faithfully as district president of the North Atlantic District; therefore be it

Resolved, that our synod in convention thank the Lord for Rev. Glaeske and Rev. Petermann for their years of faithful service.

Pastor Philip Zarling, chairman
Teacher Brent Archer, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Convention offerings

Resolution No. 04

WHEREAS a thank offering was gathered at both the opening and closing services; therefore be it

Resolved, that the 2013 WELS convention designate both offerings to the Early Childhood Learning Center building project.

Pastor Philip Zarling, chairman
Teacher Brent Archer, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Location of the 2015 synod convention

Resolution No. 05

WHEREAS Michigan Lutheran Seminary has extended an invitation to host the 2015 synod convention in Saginaw, Mich.; therefore be it

Resolved. that we accept the invitation of Michigan Lutheran Seminary with thanks.

Pastor Philip Zarling, chairman
Teacher Brent Archer, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #2: Synodical Council

Subject: Synodical Council

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 91

Report No. 01

Our committee notes with gratitude the work of those who serve on WELS Synodical Council (SC). Among the many ways this group has served our church, we would like to highlight the sense of financial stability they have established.

The Financial Stabilization Fund (FSF) enables us to plan ministry boldly, with a high degree of accuracy as to what levels of funding will be available. We encourage the SC to maintain a cap on the FSF and that monies that exceed that cap be directed by the SC into our core ministries.

In addition to establishing the FSF, the SC has taken aggressive steps to reduce our debt, freeing up that portion of the budget for ministry. They are directing the ministerial education schools to formulate plans to meet the needs of facility improvement and maintenance. We feel all these things enable us to encourage our congregations to give generously to our joint work as a synod in full confidence that their gifts will be managed and maximized carefully.

Our committee expresses our sincere thankfulness for all the work that went into the WELS long-range plan. It is our observation that some might debate whether it is a plan or a vision statement. It is called "WELS long-range plan," and yet it is described as "a broad 'road map' not intended to be a detailed strategic plan" (BORAM, p. 92). But that is semantics. What our committee appreciates is that it places before us extremely lofty goals to strive for in Christ (for he deserves no less), and yet leaves the specifics of how to achieve those goals up to those areas of ministry (for they deserve no less). Our committee would encourage all our areas of ministry to work towards those goals, as lofty as they might be, with the confidence that Christ "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20). Our committee would similarly encourage all WELS members to understand that if, after faithful service, not all those goals are met, it doesn't mean the plan has failed. Rather, it has still succeeded by focusing us on the privileged role we play in gathering the elect, chosen before time in Christ alone.

Our committee notes with joy the total compliance with the 2011 synod convention resolutions.

Finally, our committee thanks our heavenly Father for providing at just the right time the blessing of the new WELS Center for Mission and Ministry.

Pastor Jonathan Hein, chairman

Teacher Jason Jaspersen, secretary

Committee #3: President's report

Subject: Membership—called workers

Reference: Report from the President's Office

Resolution No. 01

WHEREAS the following pastors, professors, graduate tutors, male teachers, and staff ministers are recommended by their respective district presidents for voting membership in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod; therefore be it

Resolved, that the following be graciously welcomed into the voting membership of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

ARIZONA-CALIFORNIA DISTRICT

Rev. Gregory W. Hein, mission establishment, South Gilbert, Ariz., from WLS
Rev. Joon Ho Chung, Prince of Peace, Thousand Oaks, Calif., via colloquy
Rev. Patrick C. Freese, California Lutheran High School, Wildomar, Calif., from WLS
Rev. Joshua J. Hanson, Grace, Casa Grande, Ariz., from WLS
Rev. Taesang "John" Kim, Water of Life, Las Vegas, Nev., via colloquy
Rev. Stephen P. Koelpin, Crown of Life, Corona, Calif., from WLS
Rev. Daniel Thao, St. Peter, Clovis, Calif., from WLS
Rev. Tong Xing Yang, Hmong Outreach, Fresno, Calif., from WLS
Teacher Thomas C. Stelter, Emmanuel Lutheran School, Tempe, Ariz., from MLC
Teacher Jacob J. Unke, California Lutheran High School, Wildomar, Calif., from MLC
Teacher Darren J. Vogt, East Fork Lutheran School, Whiteriver, Ariz., from MLC

DAKOTA-MONTANA DISTRICT

Rev. Samuel L. Biebert, Immanuel, Elgin/Trinity, Carson/St. John, Paradise, N.D., from WLS
Rev. Nathan G. Zastrow, Peace, Milbank/St. John, Summit, S.D., from WLS
Teacher Stephen S. Gurgel, St. Paul Lutheran School, Rapid City, S.D., from MLC

MICHIGAN DISTRICT

Rev. Andrew G. Ewald, St. John, Clare/Faith, Harrison, Mich., from WLS
Rev. Walter Joseph Gawel IV, Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich., from WLS
Rev. Jeffrey O. Grundmeier, Immanuel, Sault Sainte Marie/Our Saviour's, Cedarville, Mich., from WLS
Rev. Ismael Sialer, Palabra de Vida, Detroit, Mich., from WLS
Teacher Steven P. Strong, Trinity Lutheran School, Jenera, Ohio, from MLC
Teacher Justin T. Wasser, Crown of Life Lutheran School, Warren, Mich., from MLC

MINNESOTA DISTRICT

Rev. Nathan C. Nass, associate and assistant to the district president of the Minnesota District, St. Peter, St. Peter, Minn., from WLS
Rev. Zachary J. Pudlo, Crown of Life, Eagan, Minn., from WLS
Rev. Matthew W. Scharf, Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., from WLS
Rev. Michael W. Schneider, St. Andrew, St. Paul Park, Minn., from WLS
Rev. Brian A. Semrow, Ascension, Rochester, Minn., from WLS
Rev. Josiah N. Vang, Hmong Outreach, Minneapolis, Minn., from WLS
Teacher Zachary P. Belter, Resurrection Lutheran School, Rochester, Minn., from MLC

Teacher Colton D. Berger, Salem Lutheran School, Loretto, Minn., from MLC
Teacher Joshua M. Danell, Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., from MLC
Teacher Eric O. Duve, St. John Lutheran School, Caledonia, Minn., from MLC
Teacher Michael J. Marsh, St. Croix Lutheran High School, West St. Paul, Minn., from MLC
Teacher David M. Wendland, MLC Early Childhood Learning Center, New Ulm, Minn., from MLC

NEBRASKA DISTRICT

Rev. Mark D. Reichert, St. Paul, Norfolk, Neb., from WLS
Rev. Seth A. Scheuerlein, Nebraska Evangelical Lutheran High School, Waco, Neb., from WLS
Teacher Mishaal K. Al-Eisa, Rocky Mountain Lutheran High School, Federal Heights, Colo., from MLC

NORTH ATLANTIC DISTRICT

Rev. Keegan J. Dowling, Abiding Word, Orleans, Ontario, Canada, from WLS
Rev. Jacob M. Hoff, Christ Our Savior, Sterling, Va., from WLS
Rev. Luke G. Thompson, St. Paul, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, from WLS
Rev. Mark A. Westra, Prince of Peace, Fairport, N.Y., from WLS

NORTHERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Rev. Ethan C. Cherney, St. Paul, Green Bay, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Bradley J. Snyder, Mt. Olive, Green Bay, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Peter J. Walther, St. Paul, Appleton, Wis., from WLS
Teacher Kaleb R. Buch, St. Luke Lutheran School, Oakfield, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Justin P. Liepert, Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Jacob L. Steinmetz, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran School, Menasha, Wis., from MLC

PACIFIC NORTHWEST DISTRICT

Rev. Joel Hoff, Divine Peace, Renton, Wash., from WLS
Rev. Matthew Kimmel, St. Matthew, Spokane, Wash., from WLS

SOUTH ATLANTIC DISTRICT

Rev. Caleb K. Free, mission establishment, Dothan, Ala., from WLS
Rev. Lucas F. Bitter, associate and assistant to the district president of the South Atlantic District, Beautiful Savior, Marietta, Ga., from WLS
Rev. Kyle L. Burmeister, Beautiful Savior, Summerville, S.C., from WLS
Rev. Jonathan J. Kehl, Crown of Life, New Orleans, La., from WLS
Rev. Kent A. Reeder, mission establishment, Rock Hill, S.C., from WLS
Teacher Christopher H. Haring, Northdale Lutheran School, Tampa, Fla., from MLC

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Rev. Luis A. Acosta, Risen Savior, Milwaukee, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Daniel R. Babinec, St. John, Woodland/Zum Kripplein Christi, Iron Ridge, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Joshua P. Bishop, Peace, Kokomo, Ind., from WLS
Rev. Rodrigo S. M. Concha, St. Andrew, Milwaukee, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Ian E. Headrick, Christ, Big Bend, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Peter S. A. Metzger, First, Lake Geneva, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Joshua M. Zarling, Lighthouse Youth Center, Milwaukee, Wis., from WLS
Teacher Joseph P. Blum, Garden Homes Lutheran School, Milwaukee, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Evan M. Eisenmann, St. Andrew Lutheran School, Chicago, Ill., from MLC
Teacher Bradley D. Essig, Resurrection Lutheran School, Aurora, Ill., from MLC
Teacher Shawn D. Scherer, Friedens Lutheran School, Kenosha, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Bryan P. Sriver, Good Shepherd Lutheran School, Downers Grove, Ill., from MLC
Teacher Tyler J. Weinrich, St. John Lutheran School, Libertyville, Ill., from MLC

WESTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Rev. Joshua P. Janke, Risen Savior, McFarland, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Daniel J. Johnston, Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis., from WLS
Rev. Andrew D. Meyer, St. Paul, North Freedom, Wis., from WLS

Rev. Jacob V. Scott, Zion, Arlington, Wis., from WLS
Teacher Michael J. Allard, St. John Lutheran School, Neillsville, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Christian D. Birsching, St. John Lutheran School, Watertown, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Justin J. Danell, Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Levi P. Dunsmoor, Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Joseph J. Janke, St. Paul Lutheran School, Menomonie, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Nathan D. Koerber, Lakeside Lutheran High School, Lake Mills, Wis., from MLC
Teacher Eric M. Wolf, Westside Christian School, Middleton, Wis., from MLC

Pastor Mark Johnston, chairman
Pastor Curtis Jahn, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Membership—congregations

Reference: Report from the President's Office
Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) the following congregations are recommended by their respective district presidents for membership in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod; and
- WHEREAS 2) their constitutions have been examined and approved by their respective district constitution and legislation committees; therefore be it

Resolved. that these congregations be graciously welcomed into the voting membership of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

ARIZONA-CALIFORNIA DISTRICT

Crown of Life Lutheran Church (third campus), Corona, Calif.

NORTHERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

Trinity Hmong Lutheran Church, Manitowoc, Wis.

SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT

Christ the Lord Lutheran Church, Sienna Plantation/Missouri City, Texas

Pastor Mark Johnston, chairman
Pastor Curtis Jahn, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Ad hoc committee

Reference: President's report
Resolution No. 03

- WHEREAS 1) in 2007 a special committee (the "Ad Hoc Commission") was formed to evaluate a wide range of synodical programs, policies, and structures and to bring improvements to the 2009 convention; and
- WHEREAS 2) more than 80 of the committee's recommendations were approved and implemented, and our synod has benefited from those changes in many ways; and
- WHEREAS 3) such evaluation of our synod's work should not be a one-time effort; therefore be it

Resolved. a) that our synod in convention establish a new ad hoc committee to look at all areas of the synod structure and programs, especially in areas not addressed by the previous commission; and be it further

Resolved. b) that the president of the synod appoint the members to such a committee; and be it finally

Resolved, c) that this committee bring its suggestions and recommendations to the 2015 synod convention for consideration and action.

Pastor Mark Johnston, chairman

Pastor Curtis Jahn, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Appointments and installations 2011–2013

Report No. 01

Installations:

Rev. James Behringer, director, Commission on Special Ministries

Ms. Cynthia Holman, national coordinator of early childhood ministries, Commission on Lutheran Schools

Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, director, Ministry of Christian Giving

Rev. Michael Schultz, hymnal project director

Rev. Jonathan Hein, director, Commission on Congregational Counseling

Appointments:

To Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Rev. Bart Brauer

Prof. Bill Tackmier

Rev. Benjamin Tomczak

Pres. Paul Wendland (advisory)

To Ministry of Christian Giving Commission

Mr. Mark Handeland

Mr. Robert Tupper

To Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee

Rev. Lawrence Olson

Dr. John E. Meyer

To Task Force on Lutheran Schools

Ms. Dawn Aswege

Mr. Stephen Granberg

Rev. Philip Huebner

Dr. Robert Klindworth

Ms. Linda Martens

Mr. Timothy Mueller

Mr. Scott Schmudlach

Rev. Phillip Sievert

To Christian Aid and Relief Committee

Mr. Steve Wright

To Support Committee

Rev. Mark Johnston, chairman

Rev. Joel Zank

To Synodical Council

Mr. Charles Fiedler

Rev. Joel Jenswold

Mr. Thomas Schermerhorn

To Translation Feasibility Committee

Prof. John Brug

Rev. Philip Hirsch
Rev. Curtis Jahn
Rev. Paul Janke
Rev. John Koelpin
Rev. Jonathan Schroeder
Rev. Mark Schroeder

To Board for World Missions
Mr. Mark Schulz

To Commission on Evangelism
Rev. Joseph Fricke
Rev. Michael Geiger
Rev. John Huebner
Rev. Douglas Tomhave

To Commission on Adult Discipleship
Rev. Aaron Boehm
Rev. David Wenzel

To Commission on Special Ministries
Mr. LeRoy Robbert

To Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Committee
Mr. Dean Weigand

To Committee on Mental Health Needs
Prof. John Schuetze

To Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry
Rev. Joel Gaertner

To Commission on Lutheran Schools
Rev. Matthew Brown
Mr. James Sexton

To Commission on Worship
Mr. Kevin Bode
Rev. Jason Hacker
Mr. Brian Heinitz
Rev. Michael Schultz, advisor

To Commission on Youth and Family Ministry
Rev. Benjamin Berger
Rev. John Boggs
Rev. Snowden Sims

To NPH Board of Directors
Rev. Luke Werre

To Forward in Christ, contributing writers
Rev. Samuel Degner
Rev. Joel Heckendorf
Rev. Thomas Kock
Prof. James Pope
Rev. Earle Treptow

Pastor Mark Johnston, chairman
Pastor Curtis Jahn, secretary

Subject: President's report

Reference: President's report

Report No. 02

We appreciate with joy President Schroeder's reminder of the two-fold mission of the church, namely to hold faithfully to the Word of God and his teaching without compromise and to proclaim the message entrusted to us with the world.

We join our president in the prayer that our discussion on the matter of Bible translations be done in a brotherly, respectful, and loving way (as it has been) and that God lead us to decisions that will honor his Word and benefit his people now and in the future. We pray that whatever decisions are made, that we unite around and support them wholeheartedly.

We also join President Schroeder in recognizing the need to redouble our efforts to retain the youth of the church both for their own sake and for the sake of the church.

We pray that the Lord of the church would protect and preserve our Wisconsin Synod as we work to carry out his gospel mission.

Pastor Mark Johnston, chairman

Pastor Curtis Jahn, secretary

Committee #4: Finance and budget

Subject: Ministry financial plan

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 119-132

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) the Synodical Council's (SC) proposed ministry financial plan for the 2013–15 biennium not only maintains ministry but also provides for careful growth; and
- WHEREAS 2) the SC's proposed ministry financial plan includes a projected need for Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) to increase 4 percent in each of the calendar years 2014 and 2015; and
- WHEREAS 3) there are still unfunded ministry programs that could be carried out if funding becomes available; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we adopt the SC's ministry financial plan for the 2013–15 biennium; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that we adopt the SC's prioritized list of unfunded programs; and be it finally
- Resolved. c) that we pray that the Lord bless his people with generous hearts and bless the gospel ministry the ministry financial plan envisions.

Pastor Jeffrey Seelow, chairman
Prof. Stephen Geiger, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Congregation Mission Offering (CMO) increase

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 119-132

Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) the ministry financial plan for the 2013–15 biennium sets our synod on a course of careful expansion as we partner in our worldwide mission; and
- WHEREAS 2) the 2013–15 ministry financial plan, among other things, seeks to maintain current ministry, fund the opening of ten new home missions in each year of the biennium, and support our synodical workers with an annual 1.75 percent average wage increase; and
- WHEREAS 3) the ministry plan's goals are based on a 4 percent increase in Congregation Mission Offerings in each of the calendar years 2014 and 2015; and
- WHEREAS 4) we marvel that the Lord gives us the privilege of using our earthly treasure to pursue his eternal mission; and
- WHEREAS 5) we are all eager to encourage one another in love and good deeds; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we thank the Lord for the work that the Conference of Presidents does in encouraging us to support our synod's ministry plan; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that we encourage the congregations of our synod prayerfully to consider the ministry opportunities that lie before us, offering thanks to the Lord for the privilege to serve; and be it finally

Resolved, c) that we encourage the congregations of our synod prayerfully to consider increasing their support of our synodical mission in order to achieve the goals of the ministry plan.

Pastor Jeffrey Seelow, chairman
Prof. Stephen Geiger, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Capital Projects Fund

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 119-132

Resolution No. 03

WHEREAS 1) the Financial Stabilization Fund was established to provide greater continuity of funding for ongoing ministry; and

WHEREAS 2) while the Financial Stabilization Fund can be used for certain capital projects, this is not its primary function; and

WHEREAS 3) there will always be significant capital projects to be undertaken that can help sustain and expand the synod's ministry; and

WHEREAS 4) capital projects have customarily been funded through special offerings; and

WHEREAS 5) a specific ongoing Capital Projects Fund could alert the synod to this ongoing giving opportunity and provide a destination for such designated gifts; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that the president of the synod appoint a committee to develop a plan for a Capital Projects Fund; and be it finally

Resolved, b) that this committee present its report and offer its recommendation to the 2015 synod convention.

Pastor Jeffrey Seelow, chairman
Prof. Stephen Geiger, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #5: Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Subject: Formalize fellowship with the Lutheran Confessional Church of Norway (LBK-Norway)

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 205,206

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) the congregations of the Lutheran Confessional Church in Norway (*Den Lutherske Bekjennelseskirke* or LBK-Norway) have been in fellowship with WELS ever since they left the state church in 1978 and joined the Lutheran Confessional Church centered in Sweden; and
- WHEREAS 2) the congregations of the LBK-Norway have been practicing fellowship with WELS in the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) ever since the CELC began in 1993; and
- WHEREAS 3) unity in faith between the LBK-Norway and WELS has been evidenced by a common commitment to the Holy Scriptures, to the Lutheran Confessions, and to the doctrinal position of the CELC; and
- WHEREAS 4) the LBK-Norway became an independent church body in July 2009 when it peacefully separated from the LBK-Sweden for practical reasons in order to carry out its church life on its own in Norway; and
- WHEREAS 5) the LBK-Norway was officially received as a new member of the CELC at the CELC convention in 2011; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we thank God for allowing the LBK-Norway to be formed as an independent confessional Lutheran church with whom we enjoy unity in faith; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that WELS officially recognize fellowship with the LBK-Norway as an independent sister church; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that we ask the Lord to bless this fellowship with continuing benefits and joy for both church bodies; and be it finally
- Resolved. d) that we look for opportunities to strengthen our fellowship with the LBK-Norway.

Pastor Steven Degner, chairman

Teacher Pete Markgraf, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Continuing discussions with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 13,14; President's report, p. 5

Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) when WELS suspended fellowship with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) in 1961, the synod convention resolved, in part, to continue discussions to heal the breach that occurred; and
- WHEREAS 2) the Lord opened doors to informal discussions with the LCMS in December 2012; and

WHEREAS 3) even if the restoration of fellowship is not possible in the near future, we believe it is our responsibility to each other and to our Lord to strive for true unity based on full agreement in doctrine and practice; and

WHEREAS 4) a second meeting is planned for December 2013; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that we encourage our leadership in conjunction with the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) to continue discussions with the LCMS to strive for true unity based on full agreement in doctrine and practice; and be it finally

Resolved, b) that we pray for the Holy Spirit to guide and bless these efforts to God's glory and for the benefit of his church.

Pastor Steven Degner, chairman
Teacher Pete Markgraf, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #6: Ministry of Christian Giving

Subject: Ministry of Christian Giving

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 15,16

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) Scripture encourages us to excel in the grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7); and
- WHEREAS 2) God uses the means of grace to do this; and
- WHEREAS 3) the Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) serves the Conference of Presidents (COP) in reminding WELS members to “excel in the grace of giving” primarily via Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) and direct gifts; and
- WHEREAS 4) a high priority of the MCG is to increase the CMO and to build up endowment funds; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we thank God for his blessing upon the work of the MCG and pray for God’s continued blessings upon it and upon Pastor Kurt Lueneburg as the new director of the MCG; and be it finally
- Resolved. b) that we encourage all synod members to rejoice in the gospel, examine their stewardship in light of God’s Word, and make use of the materials and services of the MCG as the opportunity arises.

Pastor Robert Smith, chairman
Pastor M. Scott Martz, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Expression of gratitude

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 15

Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) Pastor Dave Liggett has served faithfully as director of Christian Giving for the last seven years; and
- WHEREAS 2) Pastor Dave Liggett is now semi-retired as a planned giving counselor and no longer the director of Christian Giving; therefore be it
- Resolved. that our synod in convention thank the Lord for Pastor Liggett for his years of faithful service.

Pastor Robert Smith, chairman
Pastor M. Scott Martz, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #7: Communications

Subject: Commendation

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 16-18

Report No. 01

Communication is vital for any community, especially the church, called to communicate God's Word to all who will listen, read, or study it. Our Lord has showered us with a vast array of ever-changing resources for communications. *Soli Deo Gloria!* We commend WELS Communication Services for its amazing work of utilizing so many of the cutting edge tools of communication—the dynamic WELS Web site, the WELS app, *WELS Connection*, *Forward in Christ* digital, and all the other items listed in its report. Grateful for Communication Services' work, we encourage staff members to stay on the cutting edge of communication for people of all age groups, levels of education and knowledge of Christ, and major language groups—so the hurting are reached and the saints are built up. We pray that WELS Communication Services will not lack the resources it needs to use newly developed technologies to go fishing with God's Word into all the world. Noting how many of Communication's resources reflect an excellent understanding of communicating to a target audience (2014 International Youth Rally communication resources, for example), we encourage staff members to use training, field tests, or think tanks needed to stay on top of what best communicates to each targeted audience. Increased visibility for our branch of the visible church (BORAM, p. 19) would be a blessing to our working and walking together. Committee #7 commends our fellow servants in Communication Services and encourages them to keep up the excellent work.

Teacher James Unke, chairman

Pastor Roger Huffman, secretary

Committee #8: Support Services

Subject: Support Services review

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 107-113

Report No. 01

Technology

We commend WELS Technology for its continuing efforts to meet the needs of our synod in an ever-changing digital world. We would especially like to highlight its work on upgrading the synod's operating systems, mobile apps, WELSource, and the multi-language Web sites. We give thanks for WELS Technology's work in these areas. We also commend staff members for seeking to streamline their work and carry it out in as efficient a manner as possible. We encourage them to continue to seek avenues of information dissemination to all WELS congregations concerning available technology resources for their use. We also encourage them to continue to look for ways to improve the usability of WELS Web sites and search engines.

Financial Services

We commend Financial Services for its continued hard work with current manpower. We also commend staff members for their dedication to efficiency within their department which has also realized significant cost savings. We are thankful to see that they completed all audits within five months of year's end. We encourage them to look to the future by implementing a strategic planning structure.

Human Resources/Human Resources Advisory Committee

We commend Human Resources (HR) for its dedication to efficiency, especially in the creation of one handbook for use by all synod entities. We encourage the HR Advisory Committee to continue its important work of evaluating and suggesting improvements to the HR department.

Teacher Steven Vasold, chairman

Pastor Timothy Johnson, secretary

Committee #9: World Missions

Subject: Board for World Missions report

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 133-137

Resolution No. 01

Background: WELS World Missions currently serves more than 80,000 souls. The Holy Spirit has blessed our work in Nepal, Pakistan, and countries that historically have been closed to mission work, through the distribution of WELS literature and theological training. Creative approaches and new technological developments have greatly enhanced WELS' ability to reach out with the gospel and train national pastors, lay leaders, and theological professors. The Multi-Language Publications Committee has been developing successful and cost-effective evangelism and training tools for use in diverse and remote areas of the world, both in print and in digital formats.

- WHEREAS 1) we have been reminded of how the Lord has blessed our gospel outreach and continues to provide limitless opportunities; and
- WHEREAS 2) as an increasing number of national churches are approaching independent, sister-church status, positioning for the future will require a plan for maintaining a healthy ongoing fellowship and partnership with them; and
- WHEREAS 3) each individual mission field is unique and at a different level of maturity and development; and
- WHEREAS 4) Pastor Dan Koelpin has served faithfully for many years as administrator of the Board for World Missions; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we thank the Lord for the fruits the gospel has produced throughout the world; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that we pray that the Lord continue to bless the proclamation of the gospel and continue to open doors for gospel proclamation around the world; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that we encourage our WELS administration and WELS brothers and sisters to continue to pray for these efforts, volunteer their time, and give generously of their talents and treasure for the purpose of reaching out with the gospel; and be it further
- Resolved. d) that we encourage the Board for World Missions (BWM) and the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) to continue to review and fine-tune their guidelines for working relationships with these emerging national churches; and be it further
- Resolved. e) that we encourage the BWM to continue to seek out creative approaches to reaching the lost; and be it further
- Resolved. f) that we express our thanks to the Board for World Missions and the Multi-Language Publications Committee for their faithful work; and be it finally
- Resolved. g) that we express our gratitude to Pastor Dan Koelpin for his faithful service.

Pastor Erich Schaser, chairman

Pastor Justin Gosch, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #10: Home Missions

Subject: Formation of a Canadian Mission District

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 206,207; Unpublished Memorial 2013-28

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) since its founding in 1994, WELS-Canada has been continually encouraged by synod officials to develop a home-grown solution to its ministry challenges within Canada; and
- WHEREAS 2) WELS-Canada has, after extensive consideration of the issues over many years and in consultation with advisors from the synod, determined that Canadian input, authority, and control is essential in order to address the unique nature of conducting gospel ministry in Canada (mission funding and locations, clergy, immigration, salaries, pension); and
- WHEREAS 3) empowered by the gospel, a Canadian Mission District equips Canadians for active involvement in the priesthood of all believers and encourages Canadians to reach out to Canadians with the message of life; and
- WHEREAS 4) the Canadian government mandates that only registered Canadian charities may issue tax receipts for gifts and therefore all Canadian mission congregations must be formed as part of an existing church body until such time as the mission can obtain its own charitable status; and
- WHEREAS 5) Canadian congregations are currently administered by three different districts and their associated mission boards, which creates difficulties in coordinating outreach efforts within Canada; and
- WHEREAS 6) the Hallmark Foundation has agreed to pay any additional administrative costs required to manage a Canadian Mission District, resulting in a revenue-neutral impact on WELS or district budgets; and
- WHEREAS 7) one centralized Canadian Mission District would more effectively coordinate gospel ministry within Canada and more efficiently administer WELS funding and other revenue, including gifts from the Hallmark Foundation; and
- WHEREAS 8) the Board for Home Missions Executive Committee approved the concept of a Canadian Mission District in its March 22–24, 2012, meeting; and
- WHEREAS 9) the Dakota-Montana, Michigan, and North Atlantic Districts in convention have approved the concept of a Canadian Mission District; and
- WHEREAS 10) any new endeavor is a work in progress; therefore be it
- Resolved, that WELS in convention form a Canadian Mission District as a fourteenth mission district operating under the guidelines and jurisdiction of the Board for Home Missions.

Pastor Steven Lange, chairman
Pastor Dennis Reichow, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #11: Ministerial Education

Subject: Orthodox seminary for 150 years

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 163

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) Christ alone has blessed us with a seminary to train messengers of the gospel; and
- WHEREAS 2) Christ alone has preserved our seminary for 150 years; and
- WHEREAS 3) Christ alone has kept Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary orthodox through its 150 year history; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we keep humbling ourselves before Christ and disavowing any reason in ourselves for Christ's gift of an orthodox seminary; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that we keep praising and thanking Christ alone for our orthodox seminary; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that we keep supporting Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary with our prayers and offerings; and be it further
- Resolved. d) that we keep encouraging our sons and grandsons to consider service in pastoral ministry; and be it finally
- Resolved. e) that we keep asking Christ's blessing on the 150th anniversary celebrations at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Pastor Brett Brauer, chairman

Teacher Andrew Retzlaff, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #12: Congregation and Ministry Support Group A— Worship, Evangelism, Congregational Counseling

Subject: Worship

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 24-27

Report No. 01

We commend the WELS Commission on Worship for its leadership and efforts in putting together the National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts. What a treasure this triennial event has been for our synod and those who have participated in it. To learn more about this event or to acquire resources from past conferences, visit www.wels.net/worship.

We commend the WELS Commission on Worship for its forward thinking in spearheading a new hymnal project to be completed in 2024. We recognize the unique challenges facing hymnal project director, Pastor Michael Schultz, in producing a hymnal that will once again meet the needs of our church body.

Pastor Joel Luetke, chairman
Pastor Ben Golisch, secretary

Subject: Evangelism

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 27-29

Report No. 02

We commend the WELS Commission on Evangelism for its continued production of devotions and other resources on our WhatAboutJesus.com outreach Web site. What a blessing that approximately 100 additional people subscribe to the daily devotional each month!

Evangelism Day at Martin Luther College continues to be a blessing to our synod. Presenters encourage our future called workers to learn about and participate in gospel outreach in various ways.

We look forward to the release of *Come Follow Me*, the sequel to *Road to Emmaus*, and its accompanying study guide. May the Lord richly bless these resources as an outreach and witnessing tool across the country and worldwide.

Pastor Joel Luetke, chairman
Pastor Ben Golisch, secretary

Subject: Commission on Congregational Counseling

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 29

Report No. 03

Pastor Jonathan Hein is serving as the director of the Commission on Congregational Counseling. While we recognize that this program is under development, we are pleased that the desire is to train counselors in each district to help guide local parishes.

Pastor Joel Luetke, chairman
Pastor Ben Golisch, secretary

Committee #13: Congregation and Ministry Support Group B— Special Ministries, Adult Discipleship, Youth and Family Ministry

Subject: Thanks for years of service

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 30-34

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) Rev. Carl Ziemer has served us for many years as head of the Commission on Special Ministries and has recently retired; and
- WHEREAS 2) Rev. Jim Behringer has taken his place as the head of the Commission on Special Ministries; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we give our thanks to our God for the blessing bestowed to our synod through the work of Rev. Carl Ziemer; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that we give thanks to Rev. Ziemer for the work he has done; and be it finally
- Resolved. c) that we ask God to continue to bless the work done for our synod through this commission and to guide and bless the work of Rev. Behringer as he fulfills the duties as director of this commission.

Pastor Keith Schreiner, chairman
Teacher Ken Lehman, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Use of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 30-37

Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) the Commissions on Special Ministries, Adult Discipleship, and Youth and Family Ministry have provided a wealth of information for congregations to use with limited resources; and
- WHEREAS 2) the workers have diligently worked to update and supply these needs to the calling bodies in our synod; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we thank the commissions for their diligent and faithful service; and be it finally
- Resolved. b) that we encourage all congregations to make use of these services and materials.

Pastor Keith Schreiner, chairman
Teacher Ken Lehman, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Care Committee for Called Workers

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 33

Resolution No. 03

- WHEREAS 1) the Care Committee for Called Workers exists to assist WELS calling bodies in the spiritual, physical, intellectual, and emotional care of their called workers; and
- WHEREAS 2) the committee functions by providing congregations and other organizations having called workers with resources and guidance for supporting called workers and their families, encouraging workers in their ministries, and enhancing their quality of life; and
- WHEREAS 3) the committee provides free resources regarding the implementation and operation of local care committees for called workers; and
- WHEREAS 4) the benefits of this service to called workers and the calling entities they serve far outweigh the cost and effort involved; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that the circuit pastors disseminate this information to the calling bodies; and be it finally
- Resolved, b) that these calling bodies be encouraged to utilize the information provided for them.

Pastor Keith Schreiner, chairman
Teacher Ken Lehman, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #14: Congregation and Ministry Support Group C— Lutheran Schools, Task Force on Lutheran Schools

Subject: Improvement planning in WELS schools

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 209,210

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) our Lord teaches us that parents are to train their children in the way they should go; and
- WHEREAS 2) the model of local autonomy can lead to ministry complacency, which can result in an environment and culture that lacks coordinated improvement in planning; and
- WHEREAS 3) motivated and empowered by the gospel, leaders and servants connected with every area of ministry will want to strive for continual improvement; and
- WHEREAS 4) built on the foundation of God's Word, the efforts for creating a culture and environment of continual improvement begin with ministry self-assessment; and
- WHEREAS 5) ongoing improvement efforts, flowing from the school's Scripture-based statements of mission and vision, can go forward in a planned and orderly manner after challenges and opportunities have been identified; and
- WHEREAS 6) our synod provides several tools to assist in promoting a culture and environment of continual improvement, such as the Task Force on Lutheran School's Foundational Principles and Guiding Statements for WELS Schools, *Foundations*, and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation (WELSSA) process; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we thank the Lord for his blessings on the ministries of our WELS schools; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that our circuit pastors, district school coordinators, and school counselors encourage all schools and early childhood education programs in their circuits and districts to strive for a culture of planned continual improvement; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that we commend accredited schools and encourage them to maintain their accreditation status; and be it further
- Resolved. d) that we urge all non-accredited schools to achieve school accreditation within the next ten years; and be it finally
- Resolved. e) that if a school chooses not to seek or maintain accreditation, the Commission on Lutheran Schools will encourage the school's leaders to use the appropriate tools to create a culture of continual improvement.

Teacher William Zeiger, chairman
Teacher Craig Weide, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Additional associate director for the Commission on Lutheran Schools—Forward with Lutheran Schools/Second Wind/School Leadership Candidate Training Program (formerly Administrative Candidate Training)

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 208,209

Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) WELS has 500 educational units—early childhood ministries, Lutheran elementary schools, schools that provide early childhood through junior high education, and Lutheran schools of secondary education—in which 2,700 teachers serve more than 40,000 students; and
- WHEREAS 2) our growing ministries of early childhood education provide tremendous potential to share the gospel of Jesus Christ; and
- WHEREAS 3) early childhood ministries may expand into Lutheran elementary schools; and
- WHEREAS 4) Lutheran elementary schools may grow as church and school leaders work to enroll a greater percentage of their member children and work to utilize their school for outreach opportunities; and
- WHEREAS 5) since July 2011, more than 30 congregations have asked the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) for assistance in determining the feasibility of opening new early childhood ministries, ranging from exploratory inquiries to requests for formal onsite analyses and long-term follow-up support; and
- WHEREAS 6) since July 2011, more than 25 congregations have asked the CLS for assistance with their labors to expand or revitalize their early childhood ministry and/or Lutheran elementary school; and
- WHEREAS 7) during the years 1998 to 2009, Forward with Lutheran Schools (FWLS) was funded and staffed to provide onsite ministerial support for congregations that were starting new or expanding existing full-time Lutheran school ministries; and
- WHEREAS 8) realizing the Lord will bless our efforts as he sees fit, school growth also comes in the form of improvement and strengthening, regardless of enrollment statistics; and
- WHEREAS 9) Second Wind (SW), a school revitalization effort funded and staffed from 2007–09, had served and supported many schools facing significant challenges; and
- WHEREAS 10) the CLS has identified a critical need for training qualified school leadership; and
- WHEREAS 11) the CLS formerly had a successful program called Administrative Candidate Training (ACT), which identified and began to train potential school leadership; and
- WHEREAS 12) due to the 2009 defunding of FWLS, SW, and ACT, the Commission on Lutheran Schools is not staffed to the level necessary to assist these congregations and schools proactively and systematically; and
- WHEREAS 13) efforts to maintain the services of FWLS, SW, and ACT with full-time called workers who are serving in local settings have not been adequate to meet the requests from congregations; and
- WHEREAS 14) the WELS Task Force on Lutheran Schools (TFLS), established by the 2011 synod convention, has identified many critical issues facing our Lutheran schools; and
- WHEREAS 15) the TFLS, the CLS, and the district school coordinators recognize that the current significant responsibilities of CLS personnel prevent them from carrying out the vital work of FWLS, SW, and ACT; and
- WHEREAS 16) the mission of the CLS is to guide and assist WELS congregations in advancing the gospel of Jesus by providing resources, training, and personal assistance for starting and strengthening Lutheran schools; therefore be it

Resolved. a) that subject to funding the Conference of Presidents extend a full-time call to begin no later than July 1, 2015—sooner, if funding allows—for a CLS associate director who would lead Forward with Lutheran Schools, Second Wind, and the School Leadership Candidate Training program (formerly ACT); and be it further

Resolved. b) that sufficient support staff be provided for Forward with Lutheran Schools, Second Wind, and the School Leadership Candidate Training Program; and be it finally

Resolved. c) that we ask the Lord of the Church to bless the gospel ministries being carried out by all of our schools and that he bless the work of our synod's Commission on Lutheran Schools.

Teacher William Zeiger, chairman
Teacher Craig Weide, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Lutheran school leadership

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 38-68

Resolution No. 03

- WHEREAS 1) the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) and the Task Force on Lutheran Schools (TFLS) have demonstrated the importance of having strong and well-trained school leaders for the success of our Lutheran elementary schools (LES) and early childhood education programs (ECE); and
- WHEREAS 2) the CLS has identified a great and growing need for LES principals and ECE directors both now and especially in the coming years; and
- WHEREAS 3) the CLS and TFLS have demonstrated that the role of school leaders is more demanding today than in former years; and
- WHEREAS 4) Martin Luther College, for good and acceptable reasons, cannot provide a thorough training program for school administrators on the undergraduate level; and
- WHEREAS 6) in most American school systems school leaders develop from the corps of teachers after they have had a number of years of successful classroom teaching; and
- WHEREAS 7) it has been the practice in our synod to assign new graduates from MLC to leadership positions when congregations have requested such a candidate; and
- WHEREAS 8) the CLS and TFLS have demonstrated that many of the men serving as LES principals in the synod lack confidence in their roles; and
- WHEREAS 9) the CLS has developed and put into place the Principal Apprenticeship Mentoring program; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that MLC expand its new graduate leadership program to train more LES principals and ECE directors for our congregations and their schools; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that the CLS implement the School Leadership Candidate Training program to identify, encourage, and begin the training of potential school leaders; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that our districts' leadership (district presidents, circuit pastors, district school coordinators) and the CLS administrators consult with congregations during the calling process for LES principals and ECE directors as is done for pastoral calls; and be it further
- Resolved. d) that the synod's Assignment Committee reduce the number of graduates assigned to school leadership positions; and be it finally
- Resolved. e) that the CLS continue to make use of the Principal Apprenticeship Mentoring program to help new leaders in our schools be successful in their important leadership roles.

Teacher William Zeiger, chairman
Teacher Craig Weide, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Voluntary Supplemental Contribution Program

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 40,61,62

Resolution No. 04

- WHEREAS 1) the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) serves all of our Lutheran elementary schools, early childhood education programs, and Lutheran high schools with important leadership, programs, services, and products; and
- WHEREAS 2) the financial challenges of 2003–2010 resulted in the cutting of personnel and programs of the CLS; and
- WHEREAS 3) to replace some of the funding lost to the CLS, the Voluntary Supplemental Contribution Program (VSCP) was developed and implemented in 2008 after consultation with the synod’s districts; and
- WHEREAS 4) the VSCP supports the salaries of the CLS office staff and basic office programs; and
- WHEREAS 5) the schools participating in the VSCP receive discounts on the services and products of the CLS; and
- WHEREAS 6) the number of WELS schools participating in the VSCP each year has ranged from 48.4 percent (2008–09) to 38.5 percent (2012–13); therefore be it
- Resolved, that we encourage every WELS school to participate in the Voluntary Supplemental Contribution Program.

Teacher William Zeiger, chairman

Teacher Craig Weide, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #15: Northwestern Publishing House and Publication Coordinating Commission

Subject: Publication Coordinating Commission

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 104

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) the Publication Coordinating Commission (PCC) coordinates and prioritizes the publishing and media production for the synod; and
- WHEREAS 2) Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) relies on the PCC for funding some continuing education projects for called workers; and
- WHEREAS 3) the PCC is currently not funded in the synod's ministry financial plan; and
- WHEREAS 4) the 2011 synod convention (Resolution 13-01) encouraged replenishing \$300,000 for funding the PCC; and
- WHEREAS 5) the funding as encouraged by the 2011 synod convention was unavailable; therefore be it Resolved, that the synod make an effort to keep the PCC in its financial plans.

Pastor Tim Wempner, chairman
Teacher Steven Carlovsky, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Importance of Northwestern Publishing House

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 189-191

Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) for more than 120 years Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) has prepared materials consistent with Lutheran doctrine and practice; and
- WHEREAS 2) NPH continues to produce materials important to WELS congregations and others; and
- WHEREAS 3) NPH has limited marketing funds available; therefore be it Resolved, that congregations of the synod be encouraged to promote NPH and its products.

Pastor Tim Wempner, chairman
Teacher Steven Carlovsky, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Thankfulness for service

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 189-191

Resolution No. 03

WHEREAS 1) the sainted Pastor Wayne Schulz faithfully served on the Publication Coordinating Commission (PCC); and

WHEREAS 2) Teacher Jeff Inniger has faithfully served on the Publication Coordinating Commission; and

WHEREAS 3) Mr. Jerry Loeffel has faithfully served as president of NPH until December 2012; therefore be it

Resolved, that we thank God for the dedication of these men.

Pastor Tim Wempner, chairman

Teacher Steven Carlovsky, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #16: WELS Historical Institute and WELS Archives

Subject: WELS archivist and archives

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 105; Unprinted Memorial 2013-25
Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) the need for ongoing preservation and organization of more than 160 years of fragile synodical records is vital for recognizing God's hand at work in our heritage, understanding our current context, walking together into the future, and protecting our legal interests; and
- WHEREAS 2) the electronic age has created an exponential increase in records and information that needs to be collected, categorized, and preserved before it is lost; and
- WHEREAS 3) our synod's financial picture has stabilized, removing a key reason¹ why a resolution adopted by WELS in convention in 1995 and revisited in 2010 to hire a full-time archivist was not acted upon; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that, subject to funding, the synod hire a full-time archivist; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that, subject to funding, the archivist devise and implement a plan for an appropriate home for the WELS archives; and be it finally
- Resolved. c) that the archivist would provide assistance to the WELS Historical Institute and associated efforts².

¹Note: Following the resolution adopted in 1995, in 1998 the Synodical Council recommended a goal of \$1.25 million from the Forward in Christ offering be designated for an archives project and in 2010 an archive study committee recommended to the Synodical Council that \$75,000/year be allocated to hire a full-time archivist in the 2011-13 biennium. This was not acted on due to the negative impression hiring this staff member could leave in the midst of bringing home missionaries and laying off teaching staff.

²Salem Landmark Church, Landmark Church Museum, Historical Institute Journal, www.welshistory.org, and related volunteers.

Mr. Dean Dawson, chairman
Pastor Michael Geiger, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: WELS Historical Institute

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 191,192
Report No. 01

We thank WELS Historical Institute and all those who volunteer to "preserve and present the story of God's grace to WELS." We encourage them to continue their work with the Salem Landmark Church, the Landmark Church Museum, the publication of the *Historical Institute Journal*, and the maintenance of www.welshistory.org.

Mr. Dean Dawson, chairman
Pastor Michael Geiger, secretary

Committee #17: Church Extension Fund

Subject: Approval of report

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 192-194

Report No. 01

We praise the Lord for the work of the Church Extension Fund (CEF) and for the investments of more than \$90 million from better than 4,100 WELS members. These gifts have provided substantial grants and loans to congregations as they seek to further the work of God's kingdom.

We encourage delegates to help build awareness of the CEF in their local congregations.

Our committee unanimously supports Amendment #5 of the proposed bylaw changes, which provides the CEF increased flexibility in its efforts to provide grants through the Board for Home Missions.

Pastor David Waterstradt, chairman

Teacher James Rademan, secretary

Committee #18: WELS Foundation and WELS Investment Funds

Subject: Promoting the ministry of WELS Foundation/WELS Investment Funds

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 194-198

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) WELS Foundation, Inc., and WELS Investment Funds, Inc., exist to help God's people support, strengthen, and enhance the gospel ministry—locally, nationally, and around the world—of WELS and WELS-affiliated organizations; and
- WHEREAS 2) legal complexities, changes in tax law, and accounting and administrative challenges can make it difficult for individuals or congregations to make informed choices for the administration and investment of resources that God's people desire to give in response to God's grace; and
- WHEREAS 3) the Board of Directors of WELS Investment Funds, Inc., has more than 150 combined years of professional experience; and
- WHEREAS 4) the Board of Directors of WELS Foundation, Inc., is composed of individuals with legal, accounting, and financial service sector backgrounds; and
- WHEREAS 5) WELS Foundation, Inc., faithfully manages more than \$78.6 million in assets for WELS ministries as of June 30, 2013; and
- WHEREAS 6) WELS Investment Funds, Inc., faithfully manages more than \$139.5 million in assets for WELS ministries as of June 30, 2013; and
- WHEREAS 7) WELS Foundation, Inc., distributed \$5.8 million in gifts for ministry in the last calendar year; and
- WHEREAS 8) WELS Investment Funds, Inc., received \$1.96 million from congregations, synodical schools, and WELS Foundation, Inc., in gifts to invest for future ministry in the first six months of 2013; and
- WHEREAS 9) WELS Foundation, Inc., offers new services such as endowment services for WELS ministries and legacy charitable remainder trusts for individuals; and
- WHEREAS 10) the opportunity exists for many more WELS congregations and individual donors to take advantage of the ministry of WELS Foundation, Inc.; and
- WHEREAS 11) the opportunity exists for many more WELS congregations who do not currently use the ministry of WELS Investment Funds, Inc., to take advantage of its services; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that all the delegates at the synod convention be encouraged to take the information about the opportunity to use WELS Foundation, Inc., and WELS Investment Funds, Inc., to their congregations, circuits, and districts; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that the members of WELS are encouraged to consider the potential benefit of promoting the use and blessings of WELS Foundation, Inc., and WELS Investment Funds, Inc.; and be it finally
- Resolved. c) that the synod in convention thank the administrators and boards of directors of both WELS Foundation, Inc., and WELS Investment Funds, Inc., for their faithful service to the church.

Mr. William Mashke, chairman
Pastor Kenneth Fisher, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #19: Benefit Plans Office

Subject: Affordable Care Act

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 198-200

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) the WELS VEBA Commission continues to be faithful in its administration of the WELS Voluntary Employee Benefits Association (VEBA); and
- WHEREAS 2) the Affordable Care Act may lead to laws and regulations that conflict with scriptural teachings (e.g., VEBA paying for abortions); therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we as a synod thank the WELS VEBA Commission for its faithful work; and be it finally
- Resolved. b) that we encourage all members of the synod to pray that God guides and gives wisdom to our nation's leaders to draft and implement healthcare laws and regulations that will not conflict with Scripture.

Mr. Jim Albright, chairman

Pastor John Warmuth, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Pension Plan

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 198-200

Report No. 01

Floor Committee #19 wishes to thank the Pension Commission for its faithful work and for making it a key objective over the next few years to improve the Plan's funding status through continued prudent management of its assets and liabilities while striking a balance between maintaining acceptable costs for organizations and meaningful benefits to participants.

Mr. Jim Albright, chairman

Pastor John Warmuth, secretary

Committee #20: Christian Aid and Relief

Subject: Christian Aid and Relief report

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 105,106

Report No. 01

Floor Committee #20 has reviewed the report submitted by WELS Christian Aid and Relief, the synod's "ministry of compassion." The mission of Christian Aid and Relief is to reflect Christ's love and compassion to souls suffering from disasters and hardships. It accomplishes this work by partnering with local congregations to build bridges for gospel ministry through humanitarian aid, disaster relief, and assistance to families with catastrophic personal and medical difficulties.

We thank our gracious and compassionate God for moving the hearts of individuals to generously give regular financial support to Christian Aid and Relief as well as special gifts at times of disaster and for great humanitarian need. It should be noted that Christian Aid and Relief receives no funding from the WELS ministry financial plan but relies completely on individual and congregational donors.

We thank Christian Aid and Relief for faithfully and efficiently managing these precious gifts with a servant-heart and using them to meet the needs of hurting souls.

We rejoice in the fact that the aid is distributed through partnerships with local WELS congregations. In this way it not only provides for the needs of those who are hurting but also provides opportunities for Christians to build bridges and share the good news of Jesus, who provides for our greatest need, the forgiveness of our sins.

We rejoice in the coordinated efforts that Christian Aid and Relief has made with WELS Missions, both Home and World, as well as Kingdom Workers and other WELS agencies. Through these partnerships, the impact of Christian Aid and Relief is greatly multiplied. We look forward to watching these ministries as they continue to work together and as they identify new opportunities to do good to all people.

We see great benefit when congregations and individuals are familiar with and make the greatest possible use of the Christian Aid and Relief promotional materials and information. To this end we see that the pastor and other key individuals in the local congregation play a significant role in the visibility and awareness of Christian Aid and Relief. Resources and more details are available at www.wels.net/relief.

We see great benefit when WELS Communication Services makes every effort to get the word out about Christian Aid and Relief and its ability to assist those in need. It is especially beneficial when Christian Aid and Relief can partner with WELS Communication Services to quickly inform the members of the synod about opportunities to help when unexpected disasters strike.

Finally, we notice that it is a special blessing when congregations share stories about their partnerships with Christian Aid and Relief in doing good to all people and building bridges in their communities. These stories allow Christian Aid and Relief to get the word out concerning how they are able to both show compassion and share the gospel in the wake of tragic disasters and great personal needs.

Pastor Caleb Schoeneck, chairman

Teacher Joshua J. Schoeneck, secretary

Committee #21: Translation Evaluation Committee

Subject: Option 2

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 69-78,211-215 (Memorials 2013-9, 2013-11, 2013-12, 2013-13, 2013-14, 2013-29, 2013-30)

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) we strive to follow the direction found in Ephesians 4:2,3, “Be completely humble and gentle; be patient bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” and in Philippians 1:27, “Stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel”; and
- WHEREAS 2) the Translation Evaluation Committee (TEC) evaluation of the “Review of the 102” noted that each of the three translations (NIV2011, ESV, HCSB) “has some generally recognized strengths” but also “some generally recognized weaknesses” (BORAM, p. 73); and
- WHEREAS 3) the TEC concluded that “As a committee we are convinced that all the precious truths of our faith are clearly taught in all the translations we have considered” (BORAM, p. 77); and
- WHEREAS 4) the TEC has produced a four-part Bible study for congregational use to help laypeople become more familiar with translational issues; and
- WHEREAS 5) it is apparent that no consensus has developed in the synod for the use of a single translation, as is evident from the memorials submitted to the synod from a broad sampling of the districts that dealt with the translation issue; and
- WHEREAS 6) Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) will be able to use NIV84 for current published products and may be able to continue to use it for some future products; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that the synod in convention adopt the second option of the TEC report, that WELS does not adopt a single Bible translation for use in its publications at this time but use an eclectic approach; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that we encourage NPH to choose whichever translation it deems best for a particular publication; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that all the congregations in WELS be encouraged to use the four-part Bible study that the TEC produced; and be it finally
- Resolved. d) that we, as members of WELS standing firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel, fix our hearts on this one unshakable truth: the Word of our God endures forever.

Pastor Joel Gaertner, chairman
Pastor Mark Gabb, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Thanks to the members of the TEC

Resolution No. 03

WHEREAS 1) the Conference of Presidents (COP) saw the need to establish the Translation Evaluation Committee (TEC) to review a number of other currently available Bible translations; and

WHEREAS 2) the TEC and numerous others have dedicated themselves to diligent study and review of several Bible translations; and

WHEREAS 3) the TEC and numerous others have used countless hours of personal time to read, react to, and report their results to the 12 districts of WELS; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that we thank the Lord of the church for the talents and abilities of these men; and be it finally

Resolved, b) that we heartily thank the members of the TEC and the others that assisted them for their diligent efforts and service to WELS in leading us through this study of Bible translations.

Pastor Joel Gaertner, chairman

Pastor Mark Gabb, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #22: Translation Feasibility Committee

Subject: Translation feasibility

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 79-82

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) we as a synod stand firmly on the foundation of Scripture alone; and
- WHEREAS 2) we support the findings of the Translation Feasibility Committee (TFC); and
- WHEREAS 3) some within our synod have called for the production of a quality, confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible; and
- WHEREAS 4) the TFC report identifies many questions and unknowns concerning the production of a quality, Lutheran translation of the Bible, including legal, technical, economic, and practical questions; and
- WHEREAS 5) concerns have been expressed about the impact that a Bible translation project would have on the current and future mission and ministry of our synod; and
- WHEREAS 6) support for and interest in helping our synod produce a quality, confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible have been expressed by bodies outside of our synod (e.g., Concordia Publishing House and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod); therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we thank the TFC for its faithful work; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that the synod praesidium appoint a committee to explore further the preparation of a quality, confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that this committee:
1. establish a unified philosophy and purpose for such a translation;
 2. develop a clear and comprehensive plan and time frame for carrying out such a translation;
 3. formulate a clear funding plan for the work;
 4. assess what, if any, impact such a project would have on our synod's ongoing ministry (e.g., home and world missions, the involvement of faculty from our worker training schools, etc.);
 5. determine the proper organizational structure for the project (e.g., parasynodical or synodical);
 6. specify what, if any, involvement there will be of extra-synodical entities that may express interest in participating in the production of a confessional Lutheran translation; and
 7. offer representative portions of Old and New Testament Scriptures (including some of the more difficult sections of Scripture) in order to allow the evaluation of the cost, time, and manpower required for such a translation; and be it further
- Resolved. d) that any such translation be produced without the use of synodical operating funds; and be it finally
- Resolved. e) that the committee report its findings and conclusions to the next synod convention.

Pastor Phillip Sievert, chairman
Mr. Harvey Dunn, secretary

DEFEATED

Subject: Standing translation committee

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 79-82

Resolution No. 02

WHEREAS 1) our God calls us to hold to his teaching (John 8:31) and to confess the truth of God's Word in love to the world (Romans 10:10); and

WHEREAS 2) we desire to confess the truth of God's Word to the church at large; and

WHEREAS 3) the constituency of WELS depends largely on English translations of the Bible; and

WHEREAS 4) the number of English translations of the Bible has grown exponentially in recent years; and

WHEREAS 5) every translation of the Bible can be improved; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that a standing committee be established 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; and be it finally

Resolved, b) that the committee be appointed by the Conference of Presidents.

Pastor Phillip Sievert, chairman
Mr. Harvey Dunn, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #23: Continuing education for called workers

Subject: Congregation and school budgeting for called worker continuing education

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 215,216

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) the Sixtieth Biennial Convention of WELS adopted a resolution “that all called workers be encouraged to participate in current and future programs of continuing education, and that all WELS congregations be encouraged to support their called workers in these endeavors” (*Proceedings* 2009, p. 70); and
- WHEREAS 2) the Sixty-first Biennial Convention of WELS affirmed the previous resolution by resolving “that calling bodies be expected to provide the necessary resources of time and money so that teachers may maintain appropriate continuing education status” and “that our WELS congregations encourage and support their pastors in developing a spiritual and professional growth plan” (*Proceedings* 2011, p. 60); and
- WHEREAS 3) the Sixty-first Biennial Convention of WELS further affirmed such support by adopting the WELS long-range plan (*Proceedings* 2011, p. 55), encouraging congregations to “support formal and informal programs for the spiritual, personal, and professional growth of called workers” (BORAM 2011, p. 61); and
- WHEREAS 4) a 2012 MLC survey revealed that 49 percent of K-12 teachers and 52 percent of early childhood teachers receive \$500 or less school support annually for continuing education, with 16 percent and 18 percent, respectively, reporting \$0 in support; and
- WHEREAS 5) a common practice in our congregations is to budget an amount for continuing education that is used on a first-come, first-served basis, resulting in some called workers not receiving funds; and
- WHEREAS 6) continuing education budgets are often one of the first to be reduced or cut in hard economic times, discouraging called worker continuing education; and
- WHEREAS 7) the cost per credit at Martin Luther College is \$270 per undergraduate and \$280 per graduate credit (considerably lower than all other colleges/universities) thus costing called workers between \$810 to \$840 for a three-credit course; and
- WHEREAS 8) the cost per credit at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is a very reasonable \$180 with room and board for Summer Quarter being \$260 per week, bringing the cost of a two-credit on-campus course to \$880; and
- WHEREAS 9) called workers incur additional costs to attend required conferences; and
- WHEREAS 10) the expense to a congregation for mentoring a new teacher or pastor is \$1,000 annually; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that each congregation or school be encouraged to support financially the ongoing growth of experienced called workers by budgeting at least as much annually per worker as the cost of new teacher induction and new pastor mentoring initiatives; and be it finally

Resolved. b) that each congregation or school be encouraged to consider its continuing education budget an investment in gospel ministry as essential as what we as a synod invest in pre-ministerial training.

Pastor Jonathan Stern, chairman

Teacher Alan Meihak, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Support for school leaders (principals and directors)

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 216,217

Resolution No. 02

WHEREAS 1) the Task Force on Lutheran Schools has identified the principal as a key to strong and healthy WELS schools; and

WHEREAS 2) the role of the principal and the skills needed to serve as an educational leader today have greatly increased over the last thirty years (Shipman et al., 2007; Clifford et al., 2012); and

WHEREAS 3) states (i.e. Minnesota and Wisconsin) require experience as a classroom teacher and a master's degree or higher in educational administration as qualifications for being a principal in the public schools; and

WHEREAS 4) WELS principals are underprepared when compared to their counterparts in other school systems [master's degree or higher: Public = 98 percent; Catholic = 94 percent; LCMS = 69 percent; WELS = 27 percent (SASS 2003-04)]; and

WHEREAS 5) the WELSSA and other accreditors' standards require that a school principal have at least a master's degree; and

WHEREAS 6) the WELSSA accreditation standard for administrative release time is 1 hour per week for every 7.5 students in the school; and

WHEREAS 7) only 63 percent of WELSSA accredited schools meet the standard for administrative release time (Schmill, 2009); and

WHEREAS 8) 45 percent of WELS principals are dissatisfied with the amount of their administrative release time, and of those, 69 percent report having a negative attitude about their work and 48 percent prefer to be teachers only (Schmill, 2009); and

WHEREAS 9) 84 percent of principals list the lack of necessary funding as the major obstacle to providing the WELS recommended administrative release time; therefore be it

Resolved. a) that congregations be encouraged to supply the necessary funding to provide administrative release time for principals that meets or exceeds the recommended WELSSA standard of 1 hour for every 7.5 students in the school; and be it further

Resolved. b) that district presidents encourage congregations and schools toward the amount of administrative release time, with encouragement to meet or exceed the standard if they are below the standard, whenever a request is made for a teacher call list; and be it finally

Resolved. c) that congregations be encouraged to call experienced principals, currently uncalled principals, or veteran teachers rather than assigning novice teachers as principal apprentices so that young men can train for the principal position before being called into it.

Pastor Jonathan Stern, chairman

Teacher Alan Meihak, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Task force to develop a synodwide process for acknowledging the importance of ongoing professional growth for pastors and staff ministers

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 217,218

Resolution No. 03

- WHEREAS 1) out of love for both the sheep inside and outside the flock the Lord of the church has established the public ministry; and
- WHEREAS 2) the Lord of the church has established qualifications for those who would serve in the public ministry; and
- WHEREAS 3) individuals possessing those qualifications are divinely called into the public ministry; and
- WHEREAS 4) those who have been given such a trust must prove faithful; and
- WHEREAS 5) proving faithful includes “fanning into flame” both faith and the unique gifts for ministry that have been entrusted to each worker; and
- WHEREAS 6) the devil is ever changing his tactics to most effectively destroy the faith of the children of God, providing an additional reason to encourage the ongoing spiritual and professional growth of our pastors and staff ministers; and
- WHEREAS 7) the Sixtieth Biennial Convention of WELS adopted resolutions that the Continuing Education for Called Workers (CECW) Committee “develop a coordinated and comprehensive program of continuing education for called workers that meets real ministry needs and that understands the 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” (2009 BORAM, p. 186); and
- WHEREAS 8) the Sixty-first Biennial Convention of WELS adopted a resolution relating to WELS teachers that included these details (among others):
- a) “that WELS expect ongoing continuing education by its called teachers”;
 - b) “that WELS develop standards for continuing education that include creating, following, updating, and reporting a plan of continuing education to be called a Ministry Development Plan (MDP)”;
 - c) “that a distinction be made between synod certification and continuing education status”;
 - d) “that a called teacher’s continuing education status be reported on documents that are supplied to a calling body when it considers candidates at a call meeting”;
 - e) “that the ongoing status of continuing education be maintained by an ongoing process of creating, following, updating, and reporting MDPs at regularly established intervals”;
 - f) “that MDPs include goals for spiritual and professional growth through formal and informal activities” (*Proceedings* 2011, p. 59); and
- WHEREAS 9) there is enough that is unique about the calls of staff ministers and pastors compared to the calls of teachers to make a similar yet distinct initiative necessary; and
- WHEREAS 10) progress has been made in continuing education for pastors through the work of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary’s (WLS) Grow in Grace institute and for staff ministers through the continuing education office of Martin Luther College (MLC); and
- WHEREAS 11) learning is often strengthened when it is done in partnership with ministry peers and lay leaders; and
- WHEREAS 12) as with any such synodwide initiative there will be costs involved that impact the synodical budget; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that our synod president appoint a task force that would include, but not be limited to, representatives from the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee as well as active pastors and staff ministers; and be it further

- Resolved. b) that this task force would develop a process for pastors and staff ministers that is similar to what has been developed for WELS teachers so that progress toward professional growth for pastors and staff ministers can be more formally encouraged and reported; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that this task force also keep in mind what is unique about the divine calls of teachers, pastors, and staff minister so that the design of the plan fits the unique ministries in which our pastors and staff ministers serve; and be it further
- Resolved. d) that this task force consider how partnerships and encouragement for learning can best be fostered between ministry peers as well as between called workers and their lay leaders; and be it further
- Resolved. e) that this task force work with MLC's continuing education office as well as with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's Grow in Grace institute to make sure that what is developed works in concert with what MLC and WLS have begun to initiate; and be it further
- Resolved. f) that this task force bring a preliminary report to the 2014 district conventions with the goal of having a final report ready for the 2015 synod convention; and be it finally
- Resolved. g) that the Synodical Council make preparations to include in the synodical budget for the 2015-17 biennium whatever reasonable costs this initiative will need to be implemented successfully under God's blessing.

Pastor Jonathan Stern, chairman
Teacher Alan Meihak, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #24: Miscellaneous memorials

Subject: Response to “Toward a more thorough study of the doctrine of the divine call”

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 219-221

Resolution No. 01

- WHEREAS 1) at the direction of the synod in convention in 2009 the Conference of Presidents (COP) appointed an ad hoc committee that conducted a careful exegetical and historical study of the doctrine of the divine call; and
- WHEREAS 2) based on that study, the COP produced the document “The doctrine of the divine call: with special consideration of the elimination of called positions in our synod due to finances or changing ministerial need;” and
- WHEREAS 3) this document was received and adopted by the synod in convention in 2011; and
- WHEREAS 4) a series of articles was produced about the divine call entitled “Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs.” by Pastor Earle Treptow and made accessible to the synod by its publication in *Forward in Christ* June 2012 to January 2013; and
- WHEREAS 5) the Conference of Presidents produced an additional document “When a calling body is considering the elimination of a called position for financial reasons: some guiding principles” (April 4, 2013); and
- WHEREAS 6) study of the divine call will continue; and
- WHEREAS 7) a thorough study of the doctrine of the divine call when called positions are eliminated has been done by the Conference of Presidents and their recommendations have been communicated through these documents; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we encourage the Conference of Presidents to communicate the guiding principles set forth in these three documents through whatever means are practical to the calling bodies of the synod to promote uniformity of practice; and be it finally
- Resolved. b) that we encourage districts, conferences, circuits, and congregations in the synod to continue to review what Scripture teaches about the doctrine of the divine call through these and other documents, confident that a continuing study of the Scriptures will help God’s people appreciate the blessings of the public ministry and deal with called workers in a loving manner.

Pastor John C. Boeder, chairman

Pastor Jim Pankow, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Salary considerations for experienced pastors

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 219 (Memorial 2013-20)

Resolution No. 02

- WHEREAS 1) a pastor with many years of experience may still have many gifts for full-time parish ministry but not the strength and stamina to serve a congregation with more demanding ministry needs; and

- WHEREAS 2) a congregation with less demanding ministry needs may not have the financial ability to pay the synod code salary and benefits for a pastor with many years of experience; and
- WHEREAS 3) a pastor with many years of experience may be willing to serve a congregation with less demanding ministry at less than the synod code salary and benefits for his years of experience; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that the Conference of Presidents develop and implement a procedure for utilizing such pastors on call lists where appropriate; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that district presidents identify pastors with many years of experience who may be willing to serve congregations with less demanding ministries at salaries less than synod code; and be it finally
- Resolved. c) that district presidents counsel congregations to consider calling pastors with many years of experience at a salary that reflects the scope of the ministry included in the call rather than the synod code for salary and benefits.

Pastor John C. Boeder, chairman
Pastor Jim Pankow, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #25: Constitutional matters

Subject: Amendment #1: District council and district nominating committees

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 201,202

Resolution No. 01

WHEREAS 1) the Conference of Presidents recommends that district councils become optional; and

WHEREAS 2) providing this flexibility with regard to district councils involves wording adjustments to the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011); therefore be it

Resolved. a) that Article XIII of the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011) be amended as follows:

Section 1: The districts ~~shall~~ may have a district council. The council shall be composed of the president, the vice presidents, the secretary, synodical council lay member, the circuit pastors, the chairman of the district boards, commissions and committees and coordinators.

Section 2: The council shall meet at least once a year to counsel together in matters pertaining to the welfare of the district. At the discretion of the president, it may meet more often.

Section 3: The council shall nominate a slate of candidates for election to the nominating committee of the district composed of at least two nominees for each position. The slate of candidates shall be sent to the convention delegates at least 30 days prior to the convention.

Section 4: The council shall submit a written report of its activities to the regular district conventions.

Section 5: In districts with no district council, the nomination of a slate of candidates for election to the nominating committee shall be done by the circuit pastors of the district in consultation with the district praesidium;

and be it finally

Resolved. b) that Article XVIII of the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011) be amended as follows:

Section 1. There shall be a nominating committee composed of two members from each of its conferences. Members of the committee shall be elected by ballot by the district from a slate of candidates nominated by the district council. In districts with no district council, the slate of candidates shall be nominated by the circuit pastors of the district in consultation with the district praesidium. The slate of candidates shall first be ratified by the convention before proceeding to the election. The convention may add to the slate of candidates. A majority vote shall be necessary for election. The term of office shall be four years with one conference representative elected at each regular convention of the district. Members may succeed themselves twice.

Teacher James Holman, chairman

Pastor Timothy Ehlers, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Amendment #2: District legislation committees

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 202

Resolution No. 02

WHEREAS 1) the Conference of Presidents recommends that district legislation committees become optional; and
WHEREAS 2) providing this flexibility with regard to district legislation committees involves wording adjustments to the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011); therefore be it

Resolved, that Article XVII of the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011) be amended as follows:

Section 1: The president and vice presidents ~~shall~~ may appoint a district legislation committee from each state or province in the district as the synod's interests may require or designate another standing district committee (e.g., the district constitution committee) as the district legislation committee.

Section 2: The committee ~~from each state~~ shall take note of bills introduced into ~~their respective~~ the state legislatures and provincial assemblies in their district which may affect the interests of the synod. In cases where the interest of the synod may be affected, the committee shall inform the district president and the synod president. The district president and the synod president shall take such action as they deem necessary.

Teacher James Holman, chairman
Pastor Timothy Ehlers, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Amendment #3: Mission districts

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 202

Resolution No. 03

WHEREAS 1) the synod in the 62nd biennial convention has approved a WELS-Canada mission district comprised of congregations from more than one district; and

WHEREAS 2) for WELS-Canada to establish its own mission district the Bylaws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (revision 2011) and the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011) need to be amended to allow for the establishment of mission districts that include portions of more than one district; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that the Bylaws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (revision 2011), Section 6.04, be amended as follows:

(b) A synodical district may recommend to the synod the establishment of more than one mission district within that district for better administration of missions within the district. The establishment of a mission district that includes portions of more than one district may also be recommended to the synod by the respective districts.

and be it finally

Resolved, b) that Article XIV of the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011) be amended as follows:

Section 2: The district may recommend to the synod the establishment of more than one mission district within the district for better administration of missions within the district. The establishment of a mission district that includes portions of more than one district may also be recommended to the synod by the respective districts.

Teacher James Holman, chairman
Pastor Timothy Ehlers, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Amendment #4: Board for Ministerial Education

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 202

Resolution No. 04

- WHEREAS 1) the Board for Ministerial Education recommends changes to the Bylaws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (revision 2011); and
- WHEREAS 2) its report in BORAM (pp. 152,153) provides the rationale for these changes; therefore be it
- Resolved, that the Bylaws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (revision 2011) be changed to read as follows:

Section 6.32

Board for Ministerial Education

(a) There shall be a Board for Ministerial Education that shall be responsible for establishing overall policy, for long-range planning and for supervising the educational programs of the schools so that they individually and collectively ~~make the maximum contribution to the synod's objectives~~ fulfill the mission given to them by the synod. As such the board shall:

1. provide for the efficient and effective administration of Ministerial Education and its units;
2. coordinate recruitment and retention of students who will serve in the public ministry of the synod;
3. cooperate with the governing boards in the calling and maintaining of qualified teaching staffs for the ministerial schools, with the local boards issuing calls;
4. coordinate all the curricula of the schools primarily for the thorough and effective lifelong education of future pastors, ~~and teachers, and staff ministers~~ and pastors, ~~and teachers, and staff ministers~~ now in service.
5. cooperate with the governing boards, the Synodical Council, and the Conference of Presidents to coordinate, plan, and implement approved programs for the construction and/or acquisition as well as maintenance of adequate physical facilities and property of the schools;
6. cooperate with the governing boards, the Synodical Council, and the Conference of Presidents in providing competent, non-called ~~auxiliary~~ staffs for the efficient operation of the schools;
7. correlate the fiscal needs of Ministerial Education and of its respective units with the overall program of the synod;
8. establish, coordinate, and clarify policies by which the units of Ministerial Education will be guided in their program, with local boards establishing local policies that are not in conflict with the Board for Ministerial Education policies;
9. review at least every four years the mission, objectives, and vision statement, or equivalent, of the board and each unit to determine whether each is operating within its assignment; and ~~assist in and help coordinate the area Lutheran high schools' ministerial education programs~~.
10. assist in and help coordinate the area Lutheran high schools' ministerial education programs.

[And]

(e) The advisory members of the Board for Ministerial Education shall consist of the president of the synod, the presidents of the ministerial education schools, ~~the administrator of the Commission on Parish Schools, the president of Wisconsin Lutheran College, and~~ the administrator of the Board for Ministerial Education, and the synod's Chief Financial Officer.

Teacher James Holman, chairman

Pastor Timothy Ehlers, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Amendment #5: WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc.

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 203

Resolution No. 05

WHEREAS the board of directors of the WELS Church Extension Fund and the Synodical Council recommend that the Bylaws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (revision 2011) be amended to allow the Church Extension Fund the flexibility to allocate assets to the Board for Home Missions for operational purposes; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Bylaws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (revision 2011) be changed to read as follows:

Section 7.10

WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc.

(a) There shall be a subsidiary corporation named WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. organized for religious, charitable, and educational purposes, consistent with the principles of the synod. The corporation shall serve the Synodical Council ~~by raising funds through the sale of investments loans and receipt of gifts from members and loans from organizations, as necessary~~; to provide loans and grants to mission congregations for parsonages, land, and other necessary facilities and grants to Home Missions. Loans made to mission congregations require the recommendation of the Board for Home Missions. Subject to any conditions contained in its bylaws, the corporation may also make loans to non-mission congregations.

Teacher James Holman, chairman

Pastor Timothy Ehlers, secretary

ADOPTED

Subject: Amendment #6: Remove requirement for signed credentials for lay delegates at district convention

Reference: Memorial 2013-22

Resolution No. 06

WHEREAS 1) Article VIII, Section 2, of the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011) stipulates: "Each congregation of the district shall be represented by a lay delegate, who shall be certified to the secretary of the district by credentials signed by the president and secretary of his congregation;" and

WHEREAS 2) the requirements of signed credentials makes online or electronic convention registration cumbersome, if not impossible; and

WHEREAS 3) neither the Bylaws of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (revision 2011) nor current registration practice stipulate any requirement for credentials signed by the congregation's president and secretary for lay delegates attending synodical conventions; therefore be it

Resolved, that the WELS 62nd biennial convention amend Article VIII, Section 2, of the Constitution for the Districts (revision 2011) by striking the words "credentials signed by the president and secretary of" allowing for options in the certification process that best fit the needs and circumstances of each district.

Teacher James Holman, chairman

Pastor Timothy Ehlers, secretary

ADOPTED

Committee #26: Elections

Subject: Election results at Synod Convention 2013

Report No. 01

WELS first vice president

Rev. James Huebner, Milwaukee, Wis.

WELS recording secretary

Rev. Robert Pasbrig, Hartford, Wis.

Synodical Council

Pastor-at-large, 2-year term

Rev. Joel Jenswold, Hortonville, Wis.

Pastor-at-large, 4-year term

Rev. Jonathan Schroeder, Sharpsburg, Ga.

Teacher-at-large

Mr. James Moeller, Watertown, Wis.

Board of Appeals

Chairman (pastor)

Rev. Kenneth Cherney Jr., Mequon, Wis.

Pastor

Rev. Thomas Jeske, Omaha, Neb.

Teacher

Mr. Nathan Kieselhorst, Watertown, Wis.

Layman

Mr. Mark Maurer, Aurora, Colo.

Board for World Missions

Chairman

Rev. Howard Mohlke, Nampa, Idaho

Pastor

Rev. Glen Hieb, Cleveland, Ohio

Teacher

Dr. Robert Anderson, Lannon, Wis.

Layman

Mr. Mark Schulz, Milton, Wis.

Board for Ministerial Education

Chairman (parish pastor)

Rev. Phil Hirsch, Manhattan, Kan.

Teacher

Mr. Richard Gibson, West Saint Paul, Minn.

Layman

Mr. Brian Scheele, Plymouth, Neb.

Luther Preparatory School

Chairman (parish pastor)

Rev. Kenneth Brokmeier, Brookings, S.D.

Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Chairman (parish pastor)

Rev. Gregory Gibbons, Redford, Mich.

Commission on Evangelism

Chairman (pastor, teacher, or layman)

Rev. Donn Dobberstein, Port Orange, Fla.

Commission on Lutheran Schools

Chairman (pastor, teacher, or layman)

Mr. James Sievert, West Bend, Wis.

Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors

Pastor

Rev. Luke Werre, Sun Prairie, Wis.

Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors

MLC professor

Prof. Keith Wessel, New Ulm, Minn.

Layman

Mr. Michael McCormick, Rocky River, Ohio

Teacher Joel Babinec, chairman

Pastor Chip Wilke, secretary

Committee #27: Membership and attendance

Subject: Attendance

Report No. 01

Three hundred seventy-six voting delegates attended the 62nd Biennial Convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, comprised of 111 pastors and 4 missionaries (30 percent), 75 teachers and staff ministers (20 percent), and 186 laymen (50 percent). Fifty advisory delegates (11.5 percent) and 8 special guests were in attendance, contributing to a total of 434 attendees. Fourteen delegates were absent, either excused or unexcused.

Pastor Tim Flunker, chairman

Pastor Anthony Allard, secretary

Financials

The financial information listed on the following pages summarizes the ministry financial plan (budget) approved for the 2013–15 biennium by the 2013 convention delegates, outlined in Resolution No. 01 from Committee #4, Finance and budget (see p. 29).

Ministry financial plan highlights

The synod remains financially sound due primarily to a \$3.2 million bequest in 2012, and the approved plan is balanced. In FY 2013–14 there is a 4.7 percent increase in expenses. In FY 2014–15 there is a 0.4 percent decrease in expenses. Both the increase and decrease are the result of the Early Childhood Learning Center being constructed at Martin Luther College during FY 2013–14. Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) continue to be the primary source of synod support.

Assumptions

The approved ministry financial plan was put together with the following assumptions:

- Congregation Mission Offerings will increase 4 percent in calendar years 2014 and 2015.
- The synod will receive \$1.5 million annually in bequests. Other sources of support will remain flat.
- Expenses will increase for wages (+1.75 percent), health care (+9.00 percent), and pension (+8.00 percent).
- The synod will draw down the Financial Stabilization Fund by \$4.1 million during the biennium. The Financial Stabilization Fund holds all non-CMO sources of support until the year after receipt.

Support allocations

Home Missions

The approved ministry financial plan provides funding for 10 new mission starts and a number of enhancements to current missions.

World Missions

Work is being expanded in East Asia and Hong Kong, and multi-language publication efforts are also being increased. The approved plan provides funding for work recently begun in Haiti and maintains work in existing fields with appropriate adjustments.

Ministerial education schools

All ministerial schools are able to maintain operations at existing levels and can accommodate increased enrollment. The approved plan provides some assistance to schools in programmed maintenance and maintains or increases the level of financial assistance to students.

Congregation and district ministry

The ministry financial plan for the next biennium provides adequate funding for all district ministries, including assistance for district presidents. It also provides funding for Ministry of Christian Giving at current staffing levels. Within the Congregation and Ministry Support Group, administrative staffing is provided for Worship, Evangelism, Special Ministries, Lutheran Schools, and Congregational Counseling, but no administrative staffing is funded in this biennium for Adult Discipleship or Youth and Family Ministry. The hymnal project is being funded by Northwestern Publishing House with oversight by the Conference of Presidents and the Commission on Worship.

Synodical capital debt

At the 2007 synod convention, all synodical debt was combined into a single debt of \$22.4 million. A special offering, known as the Year of Jubilee, was then held in 2008–2009. More than \$5 million was received during the Year of Jubilee offering, significantly reducing the synod's debt total. Meanwhile, from 2007–2013, annual debt amortization

payments of \$1.6 million have been made from the Operating Fund. The result is that the debt balance is now under \$8 million. The 2013 synod convention approved a request from the Conference of Presidents to gather a special offering in 2015 to completely retire the debt two years early so that an additional \$1.6 million will be available for ministry in the future. Even if no special offerings are received, the debt is scheduled to be fully retired by 2018.

Going forward, we see the need for the development of a process for planning for and funding significant capital projects so that all such projects do not need to be funded through special offerings. Resolution 04-03 passed at this convention calls for the development of a committee to develop a plan for a Capital Projects Fund, which “could alert the synod to this ongoing giving opportunity and provide a destination for such designated gifts” (see p. 30). This new committee, which is currently being formed, will present its report and offer recommendations to the 2015 synod convention.

APPENDIX

Prioritized list of unfunded programs for the 2013–15 biennium

At its February 2013 meeting, the Synodical Council approved the following prioritized list of unfunded programs:

Priority	Amount	Area	Item
1	\$ 82,000	BWM	Restore Zambia missionary funding for FY 2014–15
2	\$125,000	BHM	New home mission opening
3	\$ 50,000	BME	WLS Grow in Grace—pastor continuing education
4	\$100,000	BME	Programmed maintenance
5	\$125,000	BHM	New home mission opening
6	\$125,000	BME	Student financial assistance
7	\$100,000	CICR	Aid to confessional Lutheran churches
8	\$ 50,000	Technology	Digital electronic forms project acceleration

The 2013 convention also added these items to the list, should funding become available:

1. Additional associate director for Commission on Lutheran Schools
2. Full-time archivist

Ministry Financial Plan Summary																
2011-12 Actual				2012-13 Plan				2013-14 Plan				2014-15 Plan				
Synod Support & Ministry Transition		Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Synod Support		Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Synod Support		Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE		
SUMMARY																
Home Missions	5,400,200	1,669,515	7,069,715	9.40	5,533,700	2,383,300	7,917,000	10.90	5,743,600	1,382,900	7,126,500	10.50	5,860,900	1,288,200	7,149,100	10.50
World Missions	5,146,400	3,387,321	8,533,721	50.66	5,240,100	4,175,809	9,415,909	51.65	5,377,700	3,030,000	8,407,700	51.60	5,731,300	3,032,000	8,763,300	50.60
Ministerial Education	8,360,894	24,292,456	32,653,350	305.40	8,178,600	24,479,744	32,658,344	304.99	8,336,500	28,375,500	36,712,000	314.13	8,474,300	27,697,600	36,171,900	313.13
Congregation & District Ministry	4,318,453	2,074,653	6,393,106	35.90	4,554,800	1,768,800	6,323,600	38.90	4,733,800	2,319,400	7,053,200	37.70	4,857,800	1,972,800	6,830,600	37.70
Ministry Support	2,937,420	1,693,687	4,631,107	28.30	3,362,800	1,418,200	4,781,000	30.45	3,270,500	1,471,200	4,741,700	29.80	3,413,500	1,457,800	4,871,300	29.80
Debt Retirement	1,600,000	-	1,600,000		1,600,000	-	1,600,000		1,600,000	-	1,600,000		1,600,000	-	1,600,000	
TOTAL	27,763,367	33,117,632	60,880,999	429.66	28,470,000	34,225,853	62,695,853	436.89	29,062,100	36,579,000	65,641,100	443.73	29,937,800	35,448,400	65,386,200	441.73

2011-12		% of total	
Synod Support	5,400,200	19.5%	
Home Missions	5,146,400	18.5%	
World Missions	8,360,894	30.1%	
Ministerial Education	4,318,453	15.6%	
Congregation & District Ministry	2,937,420	10.6%	
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.8%	
Debt Retirement	27,763,367		
TOTAL	27,763,367		

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Congregation & District Ministry	2,937,420	10.6%	
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.8%	
Debt Retirement	27,763,367		
TOTAL	27,763,367		

2012-13		% of total		% change	
Synod Support	5,533,700	19.4%	2.5%		
Home Missions	5,240,100	18.4%	1.8%		
World Missions	8,178,600	28.7%	-2.2%		
Ministerial Education	4,554,800	16.0%	5.5%		
Congregation & District Ministry	3,362,800	11.8%	14.5%		
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.6%	0.0%		
Debt Retirement	28,470,000		2.5%		
TOTAL	28,470,000				

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Synod Support	5,533,700	19.4%	2.5%		
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Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.6%	0.0%		
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TOTAL	28,470,000				

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Ministerial Education	4,554,800	16.0%	5.5%		
Congregation & District Ministry	3,362,800	11.8%	14.5%		
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.6%	0.0%		
Debt Retirement	28,470,000		2.5%		
TOTAL	28,470,000				

2013-14		% of total		% change	
Synod Support	5,743,600	19.8%	3.8%		
Home Missions	5,377,700	18.5%	2.6%		
World Missions	8,336,500	28.7%	1.9%		
Ministerial Education	4,733,800	16.3%	3.9%		
Congregation & District Ministry	3,270,500	11.3%	-2.7%		
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.5%	0.0%		
Debt Retirement	29,062,100		2.1%		
TOTAL	29,062,100				

2013-14		% of total		% change	
Synod Support	5,743,600	19.8%	3.8%		
Home Missions	5,377,700	18.5%	2.6%		
World Missions	8,336,500	28.7%	1.9%		
Ministerial Education	4,733,800	16.3%	3.9%		
Congregation & District Ministry	3,270,500	11.3%	-2.7%		
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.5%	0.0%		
Debt Retirement	29,062,100		2.1%		
TOTAL	29,062,100				

2013-14		% of total		% change	
Synod Support	5,743,600	19.8%	3.8%		
Home Missions	5,377,700	18.5%	2.6%		
World Missions	8,336,500	28.7%	1.9%		
Ministerial Education	4,733,800	16.3%	3.9%		
Congregation & District Ministry	3,270,500	11.3%	-2.7%		
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.5%	0.0%		
Debt Retirement	29,062,100		2.1%		
TOTAL	29,062,100				

2013-14		% of total		% change	
Synod Support	5,743,600	19.8%	3.8%		
Home Missions	5,377,700	18.5%	2.6%		
World Missions	8,336,500	28.7%	1.9%		
Ministerial Education	4,733,800	16.3%	3.9%		
Congregation & District Ministry	3,270,500	11.3%	-2.7%		
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.5%	0.0%		
Debt Retirement	29,062,100		2.1%		
TOTAL	29,062,100				

2014-15		% of total		% change	
Synod Support	5,860,900	19.6%	2.0%		
Home Missions	5,731,300	19.1%	6.6%		
World Missions	8,474,300	28.3%	1.7%		
Ministerial Education	4,857,800	16.2%	2.6%		
Congregation & District Ministry	3,413,500	11.4%	4.4%		
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.3%	0.0%		
Debt Retirement	29,937,800		3.0%		
TOTAL	29,937,800				

2014-15		% of total		% change	
Synod Support	5,860,900	19.6%	2.0%		
Home Missions	5,731,300	19.1%	6.6%		
World Missions	8,474,300	28.3%	1.7%		
Ministerial Education	4,857,800	16.2%	2.6%		
Congregation & District Ministry	3,413,500	11.4%	4.4%		
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.3%	0.0%		
Debt Retirement	29,937,800		3.0%		
TOTAL	29,937,800				

Ministry Financial Plan Summary

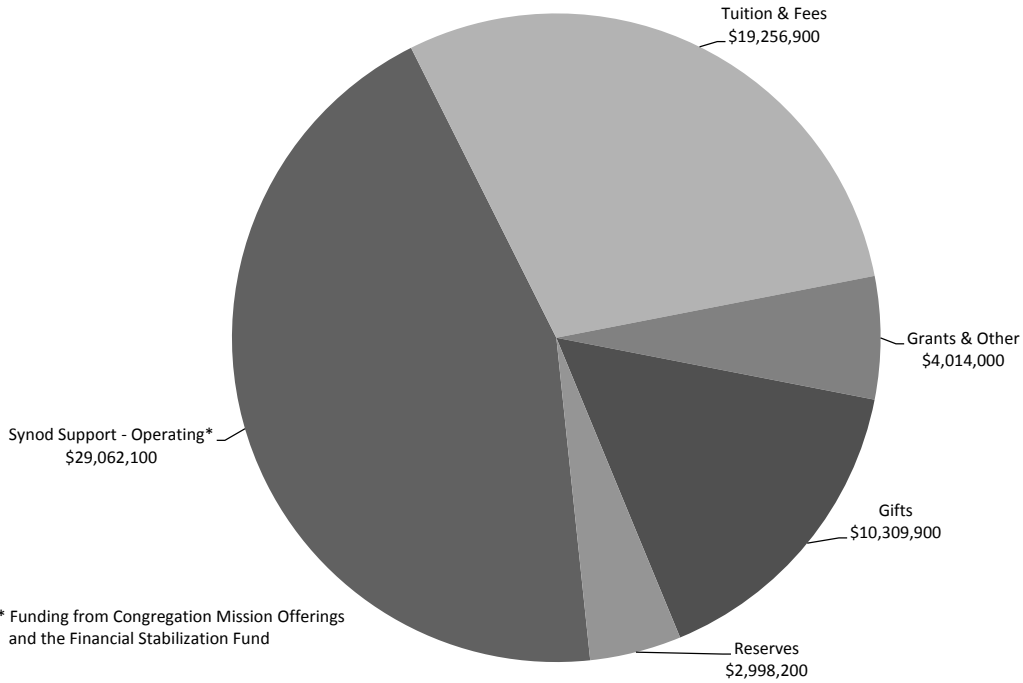
	2011-12 Actual				2012-13 Plan				2013-14 Plan				2014-15 Plan			
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Home Missions																
Board and Administration	297,803	739,501	1,037,304	4.40	590,760	22,000	612,760	3.90	607,100	474,300	1,081,400	5.00	624,600	405,700	1,030,300	5.00
Multi-Cultural Ministry	1,871,057	324,711	2,195,768	1.00	1,945,606	533,600	2,479,206	2.00	1,768,500	224,700	1,993,200	1.00	1,751,100	196,700	1,947,800	1.00
Campus Ministry	368,781	23,583	392,364	1.00	381,958	81,000	462,958	1.00	406,800	23,800	430,600	1.00	407,600	36,800	444,400	1.00
Outreach Ministry	2,859,660	535,013	3,394,673	3.00	2,610,376	1,414,700	4,025,076	3.00	2,957,900	555,300	3,513,200	3.00	3,074,300	544,200	3,618,500	3.00
Joint Mission Council Ministry	2,899	46,707	2,899	0.00	5,000	332,000	5,001	1.00	3,300	104,800	3,301	0.50	3,300	104,800	3,301	0.50
TOTAL	5,400,200	1,669,515	7,069,715	9.40	5,533,700	2,383,300	7,917,000	10.90	5,743,600	1,382,900	7,126,500	10.50	5,860,900	1,288,200	7,149,100	10.50

World Missions																
Board and Administration	(863,087)	1,502,871	639,784	4.90	428,383	978,600	1,406,983	4.90	417,800	971,100	1,388,900	4.35	430,800	981,100	1,411,900	4.35
Africa	1,565,888	429,757	1,995,645	13.00	1,317,132	423,200	1,740,332	13.00	1,212,600	548,100	1,760,700	13.00	1,204,000	544,200	1,748,200	12.00
Europe	64,1618	95,857	737,475	2.50	475,951	156,000	631,951	2.50	516,000	112,900	628,900	3.00	539,400	119,000	658,400	3.00
Latin America	763,635	250,960	1,014,595	7.25	565,396	170,200	735,596	7.25	487,200	182,700	669,900	6.75	455,400	189,200	644,600	6.25
Native America	212,799	87,678	300,477	1.00	195,089	50,000	245,089	1.00	226,500	68,500	295,000	1.00	242,100	68,500	310,600	1.00
East Asia	1,053,572	359,620	1,413,192	9.00	717,231	567,252	1,284,483	9.00	830,600	304,300	1,134,900	9.50	830,900	464,300	1,295,200	10.50
South Asia	446,056	215,339	661,395	4.00	373,864	259,296	633,160	4.00	281,600	364,900	646,500	3.50	350,700	288,900	639,600	3.00
Asia-Pacific Rim	650,741	275,886	926,627	5.00	554,972	440,161	995,133	6.00	611,400	74,700	686,100	4.00	629,700	68,000	697,700	4.00
Joint Mission Council Ministry	-	-	-	0.00	-	-	-	0.00	-	-	65,000	0.50	-	-	65,000	0.50
Other	568,150	38,734	606,884	3.00	491,230	25,100	516,330	3.00	683,900	241,000	924,900	5.00	933,600	167,000	1,100,600	5.00
TOTAL	5,146,400	3,387,321	8,533,721	50.65	5,240,100	4,175,809	9,415,909	51.65	5,377,700	3,030,000	8,407,700	51.60	5,731,300	3,032,000	8,763,300	50.60

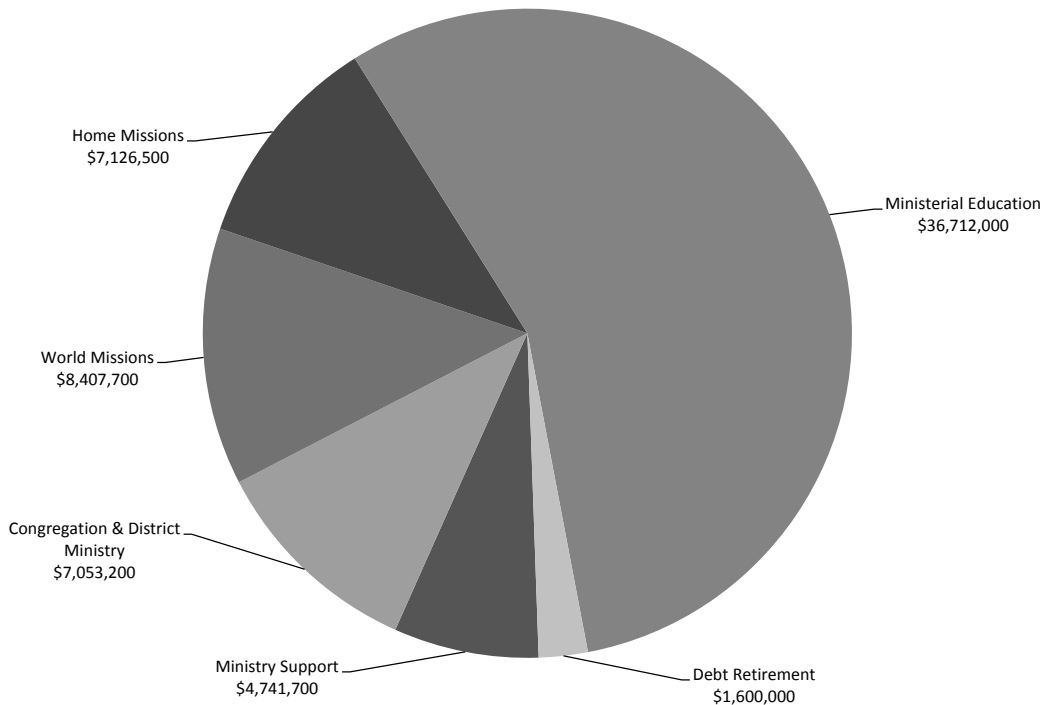
Ministerial Education																
Board and Administration	622,746	774,001	1,396,747	1.35	653,356	165,800	819,156	1.45	409,800	813,800	1,223,600	1.00	416,200	813,800	1,230,000	1.00
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary	1,178,218	4,087,067	5,265,285	38.50	1,280,724	4,047,610	5,328,334	39.76	1,185,900	4,698,600	5,884,500	38.45	1,198,600	4,768,700	5,967,300	38.45
Marlin Luther College	3,188,133	12,927,438	16,115,571	164.00	3,016,053	13,306,537	16,322,590	163.22	3,193,500	15,772,800	18,966,300	167.10	3,274,300	14,841,000	18,115,300	166.10
Luther Preparatory School	2,009,248	4,341,623	6,350,871	60.25	2,078,602	4,218,562	6,297,164	58.25	2,340,800	4,533,100	6,873,900	64.25	2,365,800	4,682,200	7,058,000	64.25
Michigan Lutheran Seminary	1,362,549	2,162,327	3,524,876	41.30	1,149,865	2,741,235	3,891,100	42.31	1,206,500	2,557,200	3,763,700	43.33	1,219,400	2,581,900	3,801,300	43.33
TOTAL	8,360,894	24,292,456	32,653,350	305.40	8,178,600	24,479,744	32,658,344	304.99	8,336,500	28,375,500	36,712,000	314.13	8,474,300	27,697,600	36,171,900	313.13

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	2011-12 Actual				2012-13 Plan				2013-14 Plan				2014-15 Plan			
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Congregation & District Ministry	880,855	1,527,321	2,408,176	15.30	893,800	1,226,500	2,120,300	15.80	1,003,900	1,703,400	2,707,300	14.80	1,063,600	1,474,000	2,537,600	14.80
Congregation & Ministry Support	82,221	199,452	281,673		65,600	250,000	315,600		136,800	25,000	161,800		138,700	25,000	163,700	
Conference of Presidents	1,549,188	77,704	1,626,892	16.45	1,734,500	100,800	1,835,300	18.50	1,623,500	261,300	1,884,800	17.50	1,685,300	261,300	1,946,600	17.50
Christian Giving	406,866	78,055	484,921	4.15	480,300	141,500	621,800	4.60	486,000	222,700	708,700	5.40	540,900	185,500	726,400	5.40
Communication Services	901,967	-	901,967	0.00	931,800	-	931,800	0.00	977,000	-	977,000	0.00	1,013,200	-	1,013,200	0.00
District Ministries	88,843	75,943	164,786	0.00	-	-	-	0.00	95,800	80,000	175,800	0.00	-	-	-	0.00
Convention	46,941	115,922	162,863	0.00	58,800	50,000	108,800	0.00	49,800	17,000	66,800	0.00	50,100	17,000	67,100	0.00
Commission on Inter-Church Relations	103,446	256	103,702	0.00	140,000	-	140,000	0.00	111,000	10,000	121,000	0.00	116,000	10,000	126,000	0.00
Special Support	258,126	-	258,126	0.00	250,000	-	250,000	0.00	250,000	-	250,000	0.00	250,000	-	250,000	0.00
TOTAL	4,318,453	2,074,653	6,393,106	35.90	4,554,800	1,768,800	6,323,600	38.90	4,733,800	2,319,400	7,053,200	37.70	4,857,800	1,972,800	6,830,600	37.70
Ministry Support																
Facilities	131,200	434,220	565,420	0.50	152,900	491,600	644,500	0.50	171,100	409,500	580,600	0.50	177,700	412,900	590,600	0.50
Synodical Council	150,179	404,909	555,088	0.00	161,200	10,000	171,200	0.00	115,300	67,000	182,300	0.00	119,300	67,000	186,300	0.00
Synod Praesidium	312,012	16,798	328,810	2.00	297,400	18,000	315,400	2.00	301,400	50,000	351,400	2.00	307,500	50,000	357,500	2.00
Special Task Forces	-	-	-	0.00	-	-	-	0.00	27,900	-	27,900	0.00	55,000	-	55,000	0.00
Technology	1,197,195	114,515	1,311,710	10.90	1,294,300	108,600	1,402,900	11.50	1,355,800	73,200	1,429,000	12.75	1,424,900	55,200	1,480,100	12.75
Financial Services	981,124	557	981,681	11.90	1,233,600	-	1,233,600	13.45	1,048,200	-	1,048,200	11.55	1,071,300	-	1,071,300	11.55
Human Resources	165,710	1,257	166,967	2.00	223,400	-	223,400	2.00	250,800	-	250,800	2.00	257,800	-	257,800	2.00
Christian Aid and Relief	-	721,431	721,431	1.00	-	790,000	790,000	1.00	3,270,500	1,471,200	4,741,700	29.80	3,413,500	872,700	4,286,200	29.80
TOTAL	2,937,420	1,693,687	4,631,107	28.30	3,362,800	1,418,200	4,781,000	30.45	3,270,500	1,471,200	4,741,700	29.80	3,413,500	1,457,800	4,871,300	29.80
Debt Retirement	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-
TOTAL	4,537,420	1,693,687	6,231,107	28.30	4,962,800	1,418,200	6,381,000	30.45	4,870,500	1,471,200	6,341,700	29.80	5,013,500	1,457,800	6,471,300	29.80

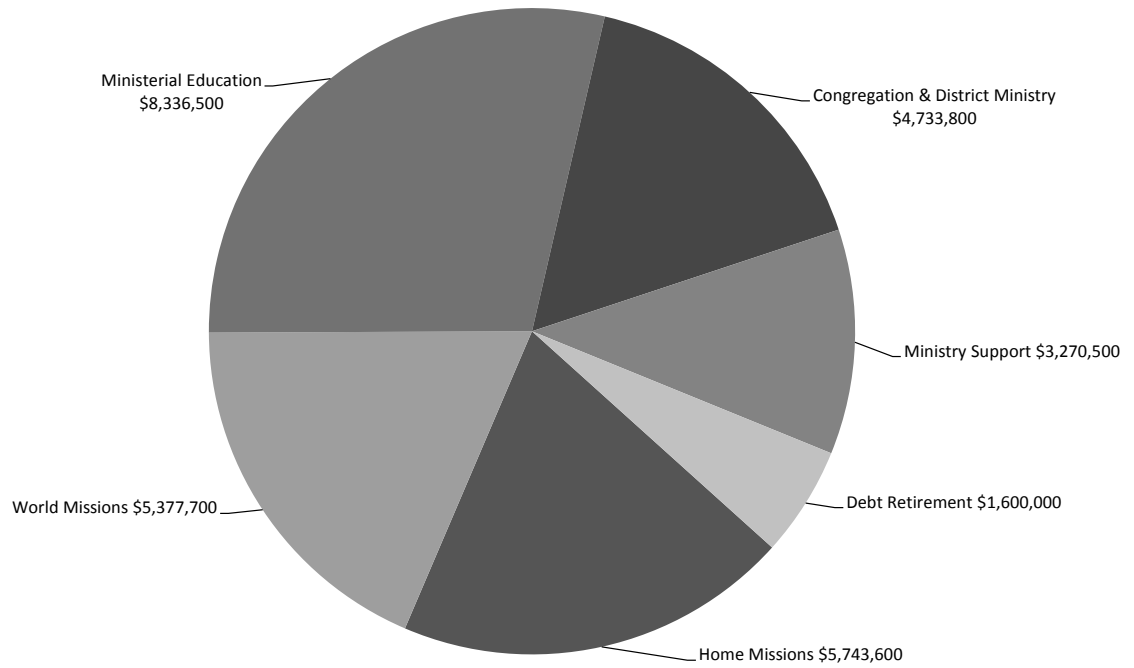
**FY 2013–14 Total Ministry Plan Support
\$65,641,100**



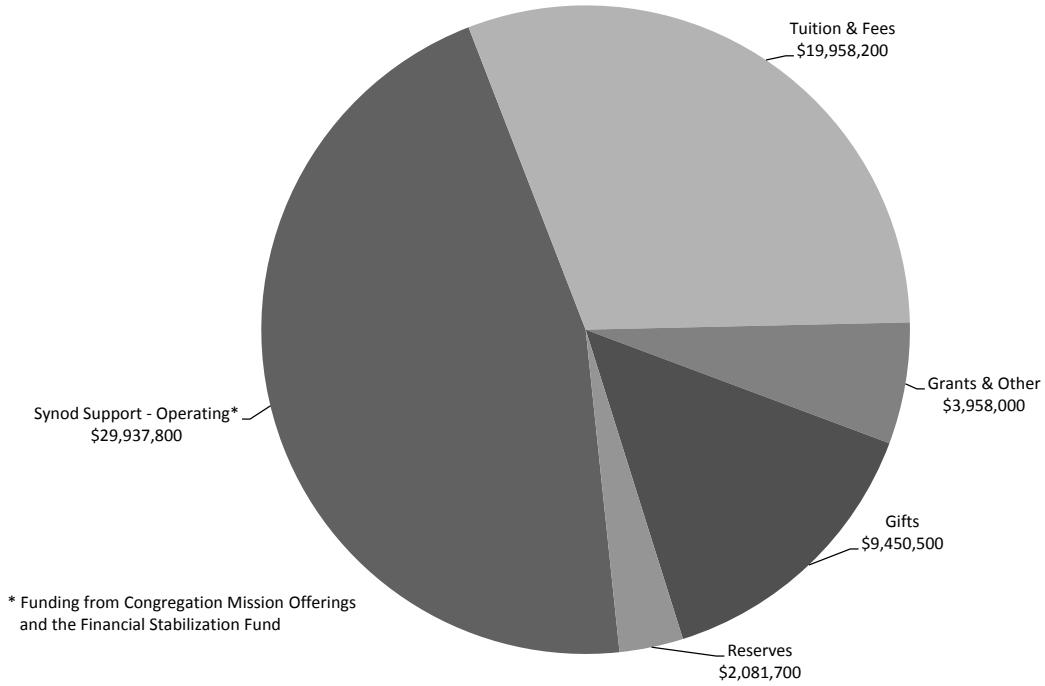
**FY 2013–14 Total Ministry Plan Expenses
\$65,641,100**



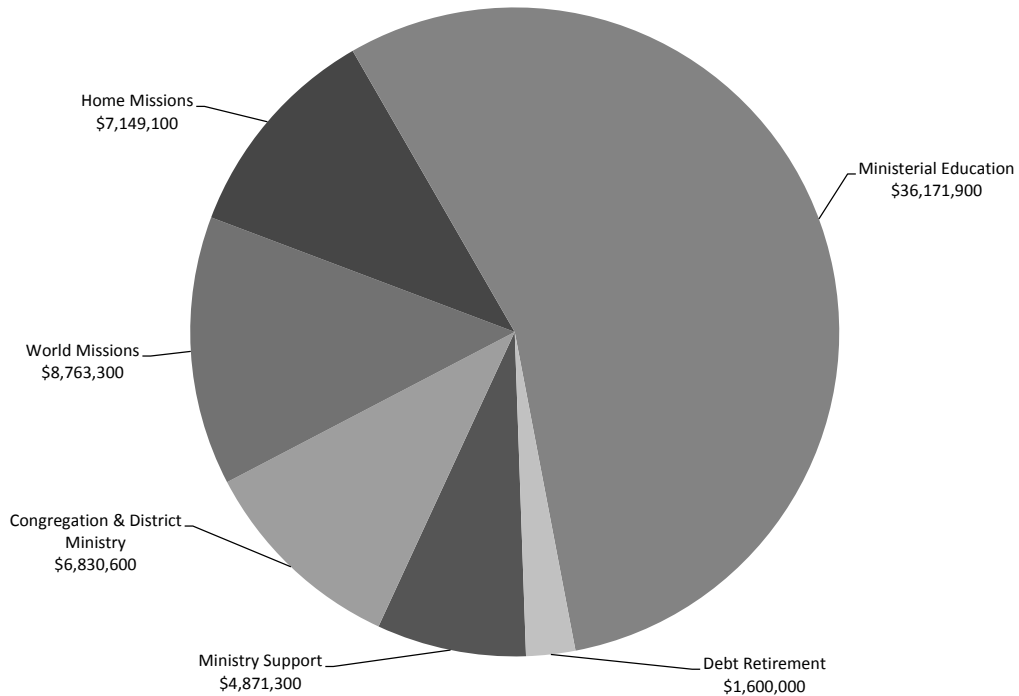
FY 2013–14 Synod Operating Support Allocation
\$29,062,100



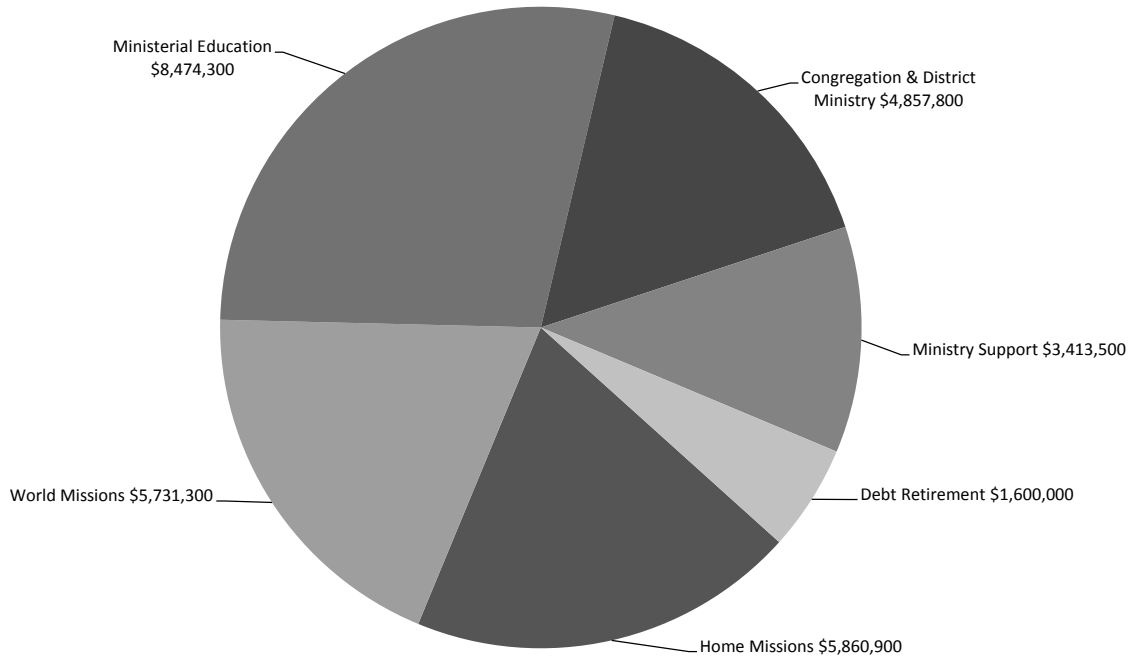
**FY 2014–15 Total Ministry Plan Support
\$65,386,200**



**FY 2014–15 Total Ministry Plan Expenses
\$65,386,200**



FY 2014–15 Synod Operating Support Allocation
\$29,937,800



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. 94 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. 94 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/human resources>, 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 proposed budget for the next 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/human resources>, under "compensation."

Minutes

Mon., July 29, 2013

The convention opened with a 6:00 p.m. communion worship service held in the Chapel of the Christ at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn. The preacher was Rev. Michael Schultz, hymnal project director. Revelation 7:9-17 served as the text for the sermon. Rev. Mark Schroeder, president of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, served as the presiding minister. Dr. John Nolte served as organist and Dr. Kermit Moldenhauer as choir director. An area choir, soloists, and instrumentalists also assisted in beautifying the service to the glory of God.

Ms. Lanita Nolte led the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS) presentation of the flags. She introduced Ms. Jeanne Martin, president of the LWMS, and Ms. Becky Foxen, wife of Missionary Benjamin Foxen, who serves in Russia. Members of the Minnesota Valley Circuit of the LWMS carried the flags representing the countries in which WELS does mission work or is in fellowship with a confessional church body headquartered in that country. The evening concluded with committee meetings.

Tues., July 30, 2013

President Mark Schroeder called the morning session to order in the name of the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—at 8:00 a.m. Rev. Nathan Buege, pastor of Victory of the Lamb, Katy, Texas, led the opening devotion based on Ephesians 2:8,9, using the theme “By grace alone.” The assembly joined in singing *Christian Worship* hymn 582, “Awake My Soul.” He was thanked for his devotion.

President Schroeder presented Rev. Mark Zarling, the president of Martin Luther College. Zarling welcomed the delegates to the college and thanked all for their partnership in the education carried out by the college. He invited all to view the new early childhood learning center that is currently being built. He was thanked for his presentation.

Rev. Joel Voss, WELS second vice president, was invited to the podium to provide orientation to the convention. He explained the work of floor committees and discussed key rules of Robert's Rules of Order. He asked for God's blessings on the delegates and the synod.

Teacher Joel Babinec, chairman of the Elections Floor Committee, was introduced. He directed the delegates to the biographies printed in the convention folder. He read the job description for the position of first vice president of WELS. The nominating ballot for this position was conducted. After all ballots were collected, the nominating ballot for the position of first vice president was declared closed.

First Vice President James Huebner took the chair. Schroeder presented the President's report. (A written copy was distributed after the report was read.) The report included the introduction of three observers from The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod who were in attendance by invitation of WELS. They were Rev. Larry Vogel, Rev. Albert Collver III, and Rev. Jon Vieker. The men were welcomed with a round of applause.

President Schroeder resumed the chair. He introduced Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education. Prange began the presentation of the convention essay, “In Christ alone: The foundation and focus of our mission and ministry.”

Teacher Joel Babinec returned to the podium. He announced the five nominees for the position of first vice president: Rev. James Huebner, Rev. Joel Jenswold, Rev. Jonathan Schroeder, Rev. Jonathan Stern, and Rev. Joel Voss. After the ballots were cast, the election was declared closed.

At 10:01 a.m., a recess was declared. After the recess, Rev. Prange completed his presentation of the convention essay. Discussion followed. It was moved and supported to thank the essayist. The motion carried.

President Schroeder announced the re-election of Rev. James Huebner as the first vice president.

Teacher Joel Babinec, chairman of the Elections Floor Committee, read the responsibilities of and then opened the nominations for the position of recording secretary. After all nominations were collected, he declared the nominating election closed.

Mr. Todd Poppe, WELS chief financial officer, presented the proposed ministry financial plan for 2013–15. He was thanked for his presentation.

Rev. James Huebner accepted the decision of the convention in re-electing him to the office of first vice president. There were other announcements.

The morning session closed with prayer led by Rev. Nathan Buege at 11:45 a.m.

President Schroeder called the afternoon session to order at 1:30 p.m.

Teacher Joel Babinec reported the results of the nominating ballot for the office of recording secretary. Nominated were Rev. Joel Jenswold, Teacher Ryan Hill, and Rev. Robert Pasbrig. After the ballots for the election for this office were collected, the election was declared closed.

Rev. Larry M. Schlomer, administrator of the Board for World Missions, was welcomed to the podium to present the report of World Missions. The retiring administrator, Rev. Dan Koelpin, also addressed the convention. The men were thanked for their presentations, and Koelpin was thanked for his faithful service.

Teacher Joel Babinec, chairman of the Elections Floor Committee, reported that Rev. Robert Pasbrig was re-elected to the office of recording secretary. Babinec presented information on the elections for Synodical Council, pastor-at-large, 2-year term; Synodical Council, pastor-at-large, 4-year term; Synodical Council, teacher-at-large; Board of Appeals, chairman (pastor); Board of Appeals, pastor; Board of Appeals, teacher; Board of Appeals, layman; and Board for World Missions, chairman. After the ballots were cast, the election was declared closed.

Rev. Richard Gurgel, professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and director of Grow in Grace—the institute for continuing education at the seminary, spoke on behalf of the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee. He was thanked for his presentation.

After announcements, Rev. Nathan Buege closed the afternoon session with prayer at 2:55 p.m.

Following the evening meal, an open hearing regarding Bible translation was held in the convention hall.

Wed., July 31, 2013

President Mark Schroeder called the morning session to order at 8:00 a.m., in the name of the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Rev. Stephen Geiger, professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., led the opening devotion based on Romans 9:30-33, using the theme “By faith alone.” The assembly joined in singing *Christian Worship* hymns 389, “Rock of Ages,” and 404, “Faith is a Living Power.” The devotion included a reading from the Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article III. Prof. Geiger was thanked for his devotion.

Teacher Joel Babinec announced four elections and led a run-off ballot for four positions: Board of Appeals, chairman (pastor); Board of Appeals, pastor; Board of Appeals, teacher; and Board for World Missions, chairman. Additional ballots were cast after no new nominations were made from the floor: Board for World Missions, teacher; Board for World Missions, layman; Board for Ministerial Education, chairman (parish pastor); Board for Ministerial Education, teacher; Board for Ministerial Education, layman; Luther Preparatory School, chairman (parish pastor); Michigan Lutheran Seminary, chairman (parish pastor); Commission on Evangelism, chairman (pastor, teacher, or layman); Commission on Lutheran Schools, chairman (pastor, teacher, or layman); Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors, pastor; Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors, MLC professor; and Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors, layman. After all ballots were collected, the balloting was declared closed.

Rev. Charles Westra, chairman of the Board for Home Missions, and Home Missions administrator, Rev. Keith Free, presented information about new home missions, as well as information about the Joint Mission Council. Financial support from those who have made gifts into the WELS Foundation was noted as well as a \$1,000,000 grant from the WELS Church Extension Fund (CEF) given in 2011. The CEF, with matching grants, has supported home missions with approximately \$25,000,000 over the past 20 years. Use of the Web site, www.wels.net/missions was encouraged. The men were thanked for their presentations.

Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, director of the Ministry of Christian Giving, shared the work of the ministry as it encourages the use of treasures in support of the Lord's work. Use of the Web site, www.wels.net/give, was encouraged. He was thanked for his presentation.

Rev. Robert Hein, chairman of WELS Christian Aid and Relief, and Mr. Mark Vance, director of operations for WELS Christian Aid and Relief, spoke of the compassion Christian Aid and Relief is able to demonstrate in times of special physical and spiritual needs. Partnership with Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service for counseling aid was noted. Use of the Web site, www.wels.net/relief, was encouraged. The men were thanked for their presentations.

After announcements, a break was declared at 10:01 a.m. The morning session resumed at 10:30 a.m.

Representatives of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group were introduced. Rev. Bryan Gerlach, coordinator, spoke about his work and also the work of the Commission on Worship, for which he is the director. Rev. Michael Schultz, director of the hymnal project, addressed the convention regarding initial work on this major project. The project Web site is www.welshymnal.com. The Web site, www.worshipandoutreach.org, was also mentioned. Rev. Michael Hintz, director of the Commission on Evangelism, presented the commission's report. Segments of a new movie, *Come Follow Me*, were shown. Producer and director Mr. Steve Boettcher, who was present at the convention, was thanked. Mr. Greg Schmill, director of the Commission on Lutheran Schools, spoke. He introduced Ms. Cindi Holman, national coordinator of early childhood ministries, and Mr. James Rademan, associate director of the Commission on Lutheran Schools. Rademan described his work with school accreditation and new teacher mentoring. Holman spoke of the many children who have entered WELS early childhood ministries. Rev. James Behringer, administrator of the Commission on Special Ministries, offered a report. Rev. David Sellnow, professor at Martin Luther College, shared information about Adult Discipleship. He mentioned the availability of marriage relationship seminars and the work of the Women's Ministry Committee. A new Web site is available: www.wels.net/women. Rev. Jonathan Hein presented for the Commission on Youth and Family Ministry and the Commission on Congregational Counseling (CCC), of which he is the new director (while remaining in the parish). All were thanked for their presentations.

Rev. John Moldstad, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), was welcomed. He brought greetings from the ELS and mentioned the fellowship between the two synods that has endured since 1872. In the 96th annual convention of the ELS held in June 2013 the ELS Doctrine Committee did not recommend the use of the NIV2011, and Moldstad explained the reasons. He thanked the WELS pastors in Texas who have assisted with new ELS mission starts in that state. He noted that the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) convention will be hosted in Peru next year. WELS and the ELS together rejoice in the Great Physician we have "in Christ alone." He was thanked for his presentation.

After announcements, Prof. Geiger closed the morning session with prayer at 12:08 p.m.

President Schroeder called the afternoon session to order at 1:30 p.m. The session was opened with prayer led by Prof. Geiger.

Rev. Robert Pasbrig announced his acceptance of the call extended by the Holy Spirit through the convention for re-election to the position of recording secretary.

It was moved and supported to approve the minutes of Monday evening, July 29, and Tuesday, July 30, as corrected. The motion carried.

Teacher Joel Babinec announced several election results and then led the run-off election for four positions and the election ballot for Board for World Missions, pastor. There were no nominations from the floor. After all ballots were cast and collected, the balloting was declared closed.

Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of the Board for Ministerial Education, presented a report regarding the blessing of educating future called workers. He introduced Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary president, Rev. Paul Wendland. Wendland made special mention of the 150th anniversary of the seminary. For that blessing and for many others, Wendland led the convention in giving thanks to God "for he is good for his mercy endures forever." Martin Luther College (MLC) president, Rev. Mark Zarling, spoke of a Christian school being all about Christ. He noted the joy of seeing Christ impacting students at MLC. A video was shown. Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS) president, Rev. Joel Petermann, mentioned the accreditation of MLS and the eight-member board. Rev. George Ferch and Rev. James Naumann were thanked for their service on the MLS Board for the last 12 years. Petermann shared some of the history of the school, which recently celebrated a 100th anniversary. Photographs of new furniture were shown. Funding is

coming from the MLS Foundation. Two faculty retirements were noted. Luther Preparatory School (LPS) president, Rev. Matthew Crass, shared history of the school and the encouragement that is given to the students to become full-time workers. Rev. Phil Hirsch, chairman of the Board for Ministerial Education, spoke of numerous blessings including 1,500 called workers involved in continuing education and 1,500 students currently in the system. All were thanked for their presentations.

First Vice President Huebner took the chair. Rev. Mark Johnston, chairman of Floor Committee #3, President's report, presented the committee's written report. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 03-01. The motion carried. Resolution 03-03 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Reports 03-01 and 03-02 were read. The committee was thanked for its work.

Teacher Joel Babinec reported the results of several elections.

President Schroeder returned to the chair. Rev. John Braun, executive editor of *Forward in Christ* and vice president of publishing services at Northwestern Publishing House (NPH), reported on the planning taking place for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and on the ministry of NPH. The new president of NPH, Mr. William Ziche, addressed the delegates, describing the publications and the future ministry of NPH. NPH is self-supporting. Braun also reported on the 100th anniversary plans for *Forward in Christ*. Mr. Lee Hitter and Ms. Julie Wietzke were thanked for their work for *Forward in Christ*. A video was shown. Completion of a survey found at www.wels.net/forwardinchrist or on forms distributed to the delegates was encouraged. A 100th anniversary cap was presented to President Schroeder. The men were thanked for their presentations and gifts.

A break was declared at 3:27 p.m. Cake to celebrate *Forward in Christ's* 100th anniversary was served.

The afternoon session resumed at 4:05 p.m. Rev. Steven Degner, chairman of Floor Committee #5, Commission on Inter-Church Relations, presented the committee's report. Resolution 05-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 05-01, "Formalize fellowship with the Lutheran Confessional Church in Norway (LBK-Norway)," was moved and supported. Rev. Thomas Nass, chairman of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR), encouraged adoption of this resolution. The motion carried unanimously. Rev. Egil Edvardsen, president of the Lutheran Confessional Church in Norway (LBK-Norway), addressed the convention. He spoke of the long-standing close relationship between the LBK-Norway and listed the many WELS friendly counselors who have assisted the LBK-Norway through the years. He encouraged continuing fellowship with WELS, a fellowship that will grow stronger. A visual presentation including many photographs was shown. Edvardsen was given a standing round of applause, and the delegates joined in singing a hymn.

Rev. Jeffrey Seelow, chairman of Floor Committee #4, Finance and budget, presented the committee's written report. Resolution 04-01 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 04-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 04-03 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Robert Smith, chairman of Floor Committee #6, Ministry of Christian Giving, presented the committee's work. Resolution 06-01 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 06-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked.

Teacher James Unke, chairman of Floor Committee #7, Communications, read Report 07-01. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Steven Lange, chairman of Floor Committee #10, Home Missions, presented the committee's work. Resolution 10-01 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Brett Brauer, chairman of Floor Committee #11, Ministerial Education, presented the committee's work. Resolution 11-01 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Joel Gaertner, chairman of Floor Committee #21, Translation Evaluation Committee, presented the committee's work. Resolutions 21-01 and 21-02 were read.

Rev. Phillip Sievert, chairman of Floor Committee #22, Translation Feasibility Committee, presented the committee's work. Resolutions 22-01 and 22-02 were read.

Resolution 21-01, "Option 2," was moved and supported. There was discussion. It was moved to amend Resolved B to read, "... to choose whichever translation it deems best ..." The amendment passed. The amended motion carried.

The afternoon session adjourned with prayer led by Prof. Geiger at 5:30 p.m. In the evening, various mission presentations were made. Fellowship followed the mission presentations.

Thurs., Aug. 1, 2013

President Mark Schroeder called the morning session to order at 8:00 a.m. in the name of the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Rev. James Turriff, pastor of Grace, Yakima, Wash., led the opening devotion based on 1 Peter 1:24,25 using the theme, “By Scripture alone.” The assembly joined in singing “Blessed Jesus at your Word.” The devotion included a reading from The Large Catechism, Apostles’ Creed, Third Article, 51-55. Turriff was thanked for his devotion.

President Schroeder announced greetings from church bodies in our fellowship.

Rev. Jonathan Hein, chairman of Floor Committee #2, Synodical Council, read Report 02-01. The committee was thanked for its work.

Rev. Erich Schaser, chairman of Floor Committee #9, World Missions, presented Resolution 09-01, which was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Joel Luetke, chairman of Floor Committee #12, Congregation and Ministry Support Group—Worship, Evangelism, Congregational Counseling, presented the committee’s reports. Reports 12-01, 12-02, and 12-03 were read. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Keith Schreiner, chairman of Floor Committee #13, Congregation and Ministry Support Group—Special Ministries, Adult Discipleship, Youth and Family Ministry, presented the committee’s work. Resolution 13-01 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 13-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 13-03 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Caleb Schoeneck, chairman of Floor Committee #20, Christian Aid and Relief, read Report 20-01. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Joel Gaertner, chairman of Floor Committee #21, Translation Evaluation Committee, returned to the podium. Resolution 21-02 was withdrawn. Resolution 21-03 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked.

Rev. Phillip Sievert, chairman of Floor Committee #22, Translation Feasibility Committee, returned to the podium. Resolution 22-01 was moved and supported. Extensive discussion took place. An amendment was moved to delete the words “confessional Lutheran” and make other changes. The question on the amendment was called. The motion to amend failed.

A break was declared at 10:03 a.m. The session resumed at 10:35 a.m.

A motion to call the question regarding Resolution 22-01 was made and supported. The vote to call the question passed by more than a two-thirds majority. The original motion, Resolution 22-01, was defeated. A division of the house was called for. The division verified that the motion was defeated with a vote of 68 yes and 277 no. It was moved and seconded to thank the Translation Feasibility Floor Committee by saying “Yes.” The motion carried with a unanimous “Yes.” Resolved c) was withdrawn from Resolution 22-02, “Standing Translation Committee.” The remaining motion was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked.

Teacher Steven Vasold, chairman of Floor Committee #8, Support Services, read Report 08-01. The committee was thanked for its work.

Teacher William Zeiger, chairman of Floor Committee #14, Congregation and Ministry Support Group—Lutheran Schools, Task Force on Lutheran Schools, presented the committee’s work. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 14-01. The motion carried. Resolution 14-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 14-03 was moved and supported. A motion to amend Resolved d) by eliminating the words “and cease this practice by 2018,” was moved and supported. The vote on the amendment carried. The amended main motion carried. Resolution 14-04 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked for its work.

Rev. Tim Wempner, chairman of Floor Committee #15, Northwestern Publishing House and Publication Coordinating Commission, presented the committee’s work. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 15-01. The motion

carried. Resolution 15-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 15-03 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked for its work.

Mr. Dean Dawson, chairman of Floor Committee #16, WELS Historical Institute and WELS Archives, presented the committee's work. Report 16-01 was read. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 16-01. It was moved to amend Resolved a) and Resolved b) by adding the words, "subject to funding." The amendment carried. The amended motion carried. The committee was thanked for its work.

Mr. William Maschke, chairman of Floor Committee #18, WELS Foundation and WELS Investment Funds, read Resolution 18-01. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 18-01. The motion carried. The committee was thanked for its work.

Mr. Jim Albright, chairman of Floor Committee #19, Benefit Plans Office, presented the committee's work. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 19-01. The motion carried. Report 19-01 was read. The committee was thanked for its work.

Rev. Jonathan Stern, chairman of Floor Committee #23, Continuing education for called workers, presented the committee's work. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 23-01. The motion carried. Resolution 23-02 was moved and supported.

After announcements, the morning session closed with prayer led by Rev. James Turriff.

President Schroeder called the afternoon session to order at 1:30 p.m. Rev. Stern returned to the podium for Floor Committee #23. Certain wording of Resolution 23-02 was revised by the committee. The motion carried. Resolution 23-03 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked for its work.

Rev. David Waterstradt, chairman of Floor Committee #17, Church Extension Fund, presented Report 17-01. The committee was thanked for its work.

Rev. John Boeder, chairman of Floor Committee #24, Miscellaneous memorials, presented the committee's work. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 24-01. The motion carried. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 24-02. The motion carried. Memorial 2013-19 and Unprinted Memorial 2013-27 were studied by the committee and were not brought to the floor. The committee was thanked for its work.

Prof. James Holman, chairman of Floor Committee #25, Constitutional matters, presented the committee's work. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 25-01. The motion carried by more than a two-thirds majority. Resolution 25-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried by more than a two-thirds majority. Resolution 25-03 was moved and supported. The motion carried by more than a two-thirds majority. Resolution 25-04 was moved and supported. The motion carried by more than a two-thirds majority. Resolution 25-05 was moved and supported. The motion carried by more than a two-thirds majority. Resolution 25-06 was moved and supported. The motion carried by more than a two-thirds majority. The committee was thanked for its work.

Rev. Philip Zarling, chairman of Floor Committee #1, Conference of Presidents, presented the committee's work. It was moved and supported to approve Resolution 01-01. The motion carried. Resolution 01-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 01-03 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 01-04 was moved and supported. The motion carried. Resolution 01-05 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked for its work.

It was moved and supported to give the Committee on Constitutional Matters the right to include in the synod bylaws the wording approved by the convention for the district bylaws in Resolution 25-03. The motion carried by more than a two-thirds majority.

Teacher Joel Babinec, chairman of Floor Committee #26, Elections, presented Report 26-01. The committee was thanked for its work.

Rev. Tim Flunker, chairman of Floor Committee #27, Membership and attendance, presented Report 27-01. The committee was thanked for its work.

Rev. Mark Johnston, chairman of Floor Committee #3, President's report, returned to the podium. Resolution 03-02 was moved and supported. The motion carried. The committee was thanked (for the second time) for its work.

President Schroeder was given a special standing round of applause.

Mr. Lee Hitter, director of communications, presented the July 2013 *WELS Connection*. Five action steps were suggested, and statistics of the number of uses of digital media were shared. A second video with WELS statistics and information was shown. He was thanked for his presentation.

There were several announcements. President Schroeder offered closing thoughts. He encouraged all to journey home with joy “in Christ alone.”

It was moved and supported to adjourn at 3:16 p.m.

The convention closed with a worship service in the Martin Luther College Chapel of the Christ. Rev. David Rutschow served as the preacher and Rev. Mark Zarling as the liturgist. Dr. Brent Nolte served as organist, and a brass choir beautified the service. Installed in the worship service were Rev. James Huebner as re-elected first vice president and Rev. Robert Pasbrig as re-elected recording secretary.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Robert W. Pasbrig,
WELS recording secretary

2013 memorial disposition

Memorial	Title	Submitted by	Committee assigned to	Disposition	Rationale
2013-01	Synodwide offering for debt elimination	WELS Conference of Presidents	#1, Conference of Presidents	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 01-01
2013-02	Formalize fellowship with the LBK-Norway	WELS Commission on Inter-church Relations	#5, Commission on Inter-Church Relations	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 05-01
2013-03	Request for WELS-Canada to form its own mission district	Dakota-Montana District	#10, Home Missions	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 10-01
2013-04	Encouragements for WELS-Canada Board of Directors	Dakota-Montana District	#10, Home Missions	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 10-01
2013-05	WELS-Canada to form its own mission district	North Atlantic District	#10, Home Missions	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 10-01
2013-06	Additional associate director for the CLS—FWLS/Second Wind	Task Force on Lutheran Schools	#14, Congregation and Ministry Support Group C	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 14-02
2013-07	Improvement planning in WELS schools	Task Force on Lutheran Schools	#14, Congregation and Ministry Support Group C	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 14-01
2013-08	NIV2011 and Translation Evaluation Committee	Holy Cross, Oklahoma City, Okla.	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Addressed by resolution 22-01
2013-09	NIV2011	Chiricahua Circuit of the AZ-CA District	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 21-01
2013-10	Procedure for selecting a translation at convention	Michigan District Convention	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Committee did not recommend a single Bible translation
2013-11	Rejection of the NIV2011 as the official translation for use by WELS for publications	Mr. Ray Koenig and Mr. Jami Thomas, Aurora, Ore.	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 21-01
2013-12	Rejection of the NIV2011 as the official translation for use in WELS publications	Mr. Soral Nold, Graham, Wash.; and Mr. Vernon Knepprath, Damascus, Ore.	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 21-01

Memorial	Title	Submitted by	Committee assigned to	Disposition	Rationale
2013-13	Rejection of the NIV2011 as the official translation to be used in WELS publications	Mr. David E. Krueger, Mulino, Ore.	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 21-01
2013-14	The impropriety of the NIV2011 for use in the Wisconsin Synod	Rev. David Naumann, St. Peter, Minn.; Rev. Matthew Frey, Montrose, Colo.; and Rev. William Monday, Excelsior, Minn.	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 21-01
2013-15	Production of WELS Bible translation	Mr. Glenn M. Brunner, Kewaunee, Wis.	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Concerns expressed are already being addressed
2013-16	Congregation and school budgeting for called worker continuing education	Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee	#23, Continuing Education for Called Workers	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 23-01
2013-17	Support for school leaders (principals and directors)	Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee	#23, Continuing Education for Called Workers	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 23-02
2013-18	Task force to develop a synod-wide process for acknowledging the importance of ongoing professional growth for pastors and staff ministers	Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee	#23, Continuing Education for Called Workers	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 23-02
2013-19	Classification of "communicant" members	Rev. Richard Krahn, Neenah, Wis.	#24, Miscellaneous memorials	Considered but not forwarded	Unpersuasive rationale
2013-20	Salary considerations for experienced pastors	Rev. D. T. Rawerts, Aberdeen, S.D.	#24, Miscellaneous memorials	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 24-02
2013-21	Toward a thorough study of the doctrine of the divine call	Rev. Marcus P. Manthey, Saginaw, Mich.	#24, Miscellaneous memorials	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 24-01
2013-22	Remove from Constitution for the Districts the requirements for signed credentials for lay delegates at district conventions	Dakota-Montana District Pastor's Conference	#25, Constitutional matters	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 25-06

Memorial	Title	Submitted by	Committee assigned to	Disposition	Rationale
2013-23	Adopting an American Translation for a WELS congregational reference Bible	Mr. Glenn M. Brunner, Kewaunee, Wis.	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Encompassed in resolution 21-01
2013-24	Call for a review of our world mission strategy	Rev. Timothy M. Otto, Milwaukee, Wis.; and Rev. Robert S. Smith, Hastings, Neb.	#9, World Missions	Considered but not forwarded	Concerns expressed are already being addressed
2013-25	Synod archives and archivist	Rev. David Ernest, Tinley Park, Ill.; and members of the WLS History Department	#16, WELS Historical Institute and WELS Archives	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 16-01
2013-26	Bible translations	Rev. Robert Kujawski, Rev. Stephen Melso, and Rev. Waldemar Loescher, Manitowoc, Wis.	#22, Translation Feasibility Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Encompassed in resolution 22-01
2013-27	Science education	Mr. John Woidke, Farwell, Mich.	#24, Miscellaneous memorials	Considered but not forwarded	Concerns expressed are already being addressed
2013-28	Formation of the Canadian Mission District	Michigan District	#10, Home Missions	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 10-01
2013-29	Endorsement of the Translation Evaluation Committee's Option 2	Eastern Conference, Dakota-Montana District	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 21-01
2013-30	Translation Evaluation Committee resolution	Michigan District	#21, Translation Evaluation Committee	Considered and addressed in a committee resolution	See resolution 21-01
2013-31	Regarding the production of a confessional Lutheran translation	Michigan District	#22, Translation Feasibility Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Encompassed in resolution 22-01
2013-32	WELS not produce a synodically-funded new Bible translation	Eastern Conference, Dakota-Montana District	#22, Translation Feasibility Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Encompassed in resolution 22-01
2013-33	To the question, "Must we produce our own translation?"	Michigan District	#22, Translation Feasibility Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Encompassed in resolution 22-01
2013-34	Bible translations	Western Conference of the Dakota-Montana District	#22, Translation Feasibility Committee	Considered but not forwarded	Encompassed in resolution 22-01

Convention presentations

For a complete list of convention presentations, see the minutes, which begin on p. 95.

Opening service sermon

July 29, 2013

Martin Luther College Chapel of the Christ, New Ulm, Minn.

Rev. Michael Schultz

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!" Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes—who are they, and where did they come from?" I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, 'they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes' " (Revelation 7:9-17).

It was a night march and the American squadron was spaced out single file, with a scout in front and a medic bringing up the rear. One second they were walking, the next second lead was whistling past their heads and tracers were lighting up the night sky. A specialist/team leader started racing *toward* the enemy fire. His body armor stopped a bullet from ripping into his chest. Firing off rounds like mad he also threw 30-40 grenades in the enemy's direction, using them for cover to continue his advance. Rising over a ridge, he noted two of the enemy leading away the wounded American scout. He killed one, wounded the other, reclaimed his injured comrade, and waited for assistance.

Sal Giunta from Iowa was with the 173rd infantry in the Korengal Valley in Afghanistan in 2007. He became the first living recipient of the congressional medal of honor in approximately 40 years. But since both the scout and the medic died that day, he described the activity that gained him that medal as the worst day of his life, a day that would never be easy to talk about.

I don't know if you have true stories that are too tough to tell. The original readers of Revelation did because in their day the Romans were savagely persecuting and killing Christians. However your troubles compare to combat or religious persecution, please understand that visions of heaven are not to be equated only with "some day." They are for the right now, for any and every challenge or trouble you can name. Of all who came together for a synod convention in 2013, in this room or watching on streaming video, let it be said that they heard and believed and acted on the fact that forgiveness, joy, the strength to go on, and the certainty of a good future are found in Christ alone.

An article was recently forwarded to me telling how one group wanted to change the words of our opening hymn. In their new hymnal they wanted to print “till on that cross as Jesus died the love of God was magnified” (rather than “the wrath of God was satisfied”). Other than to say their name rhymes with Shresbyterians, they can remain unnamed, but it seems they weren’t comfortable associating Jesus’ death on the cross with God’s wrath at the sin of the world.

It’s not surprising. We’d prefer to edit God’s wrath out of the picture, too. Psalm 24 (Advent/Palm Sunday): “Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? *Who may stand* in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart.” Anger-free, slander-free, grudge-free, lust-free, sin-free—short of that, you deal with God’s wrath. Revelation 6’s picture of judgment day—of God the Father and of God the Son it is said, “The day of their wrath has come, *and who can stand?*” The Lamb is fuming when I call upon myself in the day of trouble, do what I think best to deliver myself from trouble, and then honor myself for getting through it. If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, *who could stand?* If God showed up here as record-keeper, that would be a story too tough to tell—no survivors, only the screaming and shrieking of souls being sent away from God forever, and the chief of sinners in the pulpit would be the first one to go.

Who can stand? Here’s an extended answer to that question.

There are believers in Jesus whom you and I have known and loved who are no longer with us on this earth: 1) Christian sons killed in combat in faraway places; 2) dear Christian mothers/daughters/sisters/aunts/grandmothers who’ve suffered and succumbed to breast cancer; 3) tragic accidents that have produced gut-wrenching phone calls, which have informed loved ones that their Christian loved one is no longer alive on this earth; 4) faithful Christian parents who prior to death experienced the mental deterioration of Alzheimers, whose own children’s faces became unrecognizable (how hard is that?); 5) Christian spouses you’ve loved so much, now no longer at your side, whom you still terribly miss; 6) (they say it should never happen but) the many Christian parents whose children have preceded them in death. I have no intention of turning an opening service into a time of tearful grieving, but we all know who it is that we’re thinking of when the conversation goes in this direction. While we may not be ambushed or shot at today, we know how much it hurts when our lives are touched by trouble or decimated by death.

It hurt just as much when first century Christians saw or heard how their fellow Christians or their own Christian family members had been killed in unspeakable ways. Against the backdrop of all that death, Jesus had John say, “Look!” Through the grief you’ve known, through the tears you’ve cried, right straight through what happened on those worst of days that you don’t want to think about, look what Jesus showed John. Those dear Christian loved ones of yours are not dead. Roman persecution did not make an inglorious end of them. They were not defeated by a disease nor are they now riddled with pain or any such thing. They’re alive as they can be, and for all the times we asked, “Who can stand before him?”, they are standing before him in heaven.

“Therefore” at the beginning of 15 tells you why they can—for this reason and for this reason alone: By the words they’re saying and the clothes they’re wearing, it is as though they themselves had come to New Ulm, Minn., and scored the Latin words over the entrance to this chapel—*Solus Christus*—in Christ alone have we been given these places before the throne. When the death of a Christian you deeply cared about is what messes with you the most and what stresses your faith the most, this is where to look. Look what Jesus did for them by giving his life for them and by giving them faith in him! **In Christ alone do the saints transition to glory.**

Lord, if you kept a record of sins, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you. Of all the human lives that have been lived since Adam and Eve had children, of all those lives that have been in some cases touched with trouble and in other cases been nothing but trouble, of all the terrible moments and horrible, hellish days (including combat) that human beings have ever had in this sin-wrecked, sin-crazy world, Jesus Christ had the worst day of anyone. The incriminating, damning guilt of everyone concentrated in one cup and on one late Thursday/one spring Friday, he drank it all. Jesus had the worst day of anyone, and he had it for everyone. The Son of God absorbed the wrath of God to reveal the grace of God and to make us the children of God. You have no sin on your record, only God on your side. Take that, you wretched, lousy troubles of this earthly life. You cannot convince me that God is against me. **In Christ alone do the saints persevere through trouble.**

Revelation labels life on earth as the big trouble. But look, look just a little closer as the elder focuses John’s eyes: These are the ones who are coming out of the great tribulation. It’s as if John could see Christians exiting the big trouble one after another, as if he could see them one by one, whenever one of them died, entering the perfection of paradise.

And how about this glorious group of people! Seeing God with 20/20 vision; serving God without a sinful nature; food and drink are no longer for survival but only for enjoyment; sunscreen is gone because sunburn can't happen; no more tears has nothing to do with shampoo but everything to do with existing in bliss with the Good Shepherd of Psalm 23 and John 10; sadness, sickness, sorrow, and death are all on the gone list; and what Minnesotan Christians perhaps anticipate the most, Deep Woods Off has been discontinued. We're encouraged to look! This earth is a place of big troubles. This vision is how God sees to it that the troubles don't swallow you up or bring you down. (WELS Connection music) "Jerusalem the golden with milk and honey blest the *sight of it* refreshes the weary and oppressed." Jesus kept them through troubles till he brought them into glory. It's preposterous to think he would do that for them and not for you. You're previewed in this vision, one of those ones coming out of the big trouble, kept safe in Jesus through trouble and finally taken out of trouble into glory. This is your future so that you take heart now!

Another huge way Jesus strengthens you to persevere through the big trouble is on the altar. The forgiveness won by Jesus' death is given out in individual doses as bread and wine, and his body and blood are given to you to declare to you—the white robe you see on the saints in Revelation 7 is already yours. It's yours right now on the 29th of July, and it will be yours forever. Take that, too, you wretched lousy troubles of this earthly life. You cannot separate me from Jesus. That (altar) is a foretaste of this (vision of heaven).

A synod that continues to rightly concern itself with a multitude of issues here is encouraged to look at the multitude of souls there. Those who traveled there along the path of Lutheranism may be a relatively small slice, but with all the others, they are God's blessing on preaching and teaching and mission work, which proclaims deliverance in Christ alone. They are the best results God will ever grant us and they are the results of one man's truly heroic service. As it is said to veterans, let it be said and sung and shouted to Jesus: "Thank you for your service." Our best "thank you" is to take up again the work that proclaims Christ and thus enables his people to move through trouble into triumph!

Soli Christo Gloria, and the angels gathered around the throne said . . . "Amen!"

President's report

July 30, 2013

Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

President Mark Schroeder

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge—because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

Things were not right in the congregation at Corinth, but you wouldn't guess that from these opening words of Paul in his first letter to them.

The congregation was dreadfully divided due to members' preferences for various pastors who had served them. Some were even implying that they had no use for pastors at all. Some of the members were heavily influenced by the culture that surrounded them. They placed a high value on human wisdom and eloquent rhetoric, apparently even elevating those things above the simple and clear Word of God. The members of the congregation had an inflated view of themselves, taking pride in their role in their congregation's accomplishments and outward success. Christian discipline was carried out inconsistently or not at all; people living in open sin were not admonished or corrected.

Christian love had given way to open quarreling and even lawsuits among the members. There was confusion over clear biblical teachings about marriage, the Lord's Supper, and even a denial of the resurrection.

If we were to witness these things in a congregation or a synod today, we might be tempted to question how such a group could still be called Christian, and we might wonder if the situation could ever be salvaged.

The apostle Paul, however, saw things differently. He did not deny or minimize or cover up the very real problems that existed in Corinth. In fact, his entire letter addresses each of the problems directly, honestly, bluntly, and pastorally. His loving words reflect several clear biblical truths. Christians are both saints and sinners at the same time. The visible church in this world remains an imperfect and struggling church, not immune to the attacks of Satan and the damage he desires to cause. The only way to combat these realities is to proclaim God's law in all its brute force and to comfort with the sweet message of the gospel, with its full and free forgiveness in Christ and with its power to bring about change in the hearts and lives of God's people.

When we look at our synod, we need to do so realistically. Part of that realism will focus on what God has done and still does for us. We treasure the blessings that God has showered on our church body. He has preserved his pure Word among us. He has filled our churches with people who confess their sins and who rejoice in God's assurance of forgiveness in Word and Sacrament. He has blessed us with schools in which faithful workers are trained to carry out a wide variety of ministries and talented students willing to prepare for ministry. He has moved us to value Christian education and has moved congregations to devote time and energy and resources needed to establish and maintain schools on all levels from early childhood through college. He has continued to help us focus on our double mission of holding on to his Word among us and proclaiming that Word to the world. With his help we have continued to find new opportunities in foreign fields and have been able to establish more home missions than in recent years. He has lifted our eyes to see the need to reach people of all cultures, many of whom are living in our communities and neighborhoods. We have demonstrated how much we value sound worship by committing our synod to developing a new hymnal. We have shown our high regard for the Word of God with the time and effort we have dedicated to choosing a translation for our synod's publications. God has moved the hearts of our people to provide help for victims of disasters and to show Christian love through humanitarian aid projects around the world. He has permitted the people of our synod to gather for worship without fear of persecution or censorship. He has moved our members, even in these difficult economic times, to support generously the gospel ministry in their congregations and beyond their congregations in the work we do jointly as a synod.

But a realistic view of our synod also will recognize that, like the congregation in Corinth, it is not by any means perfect. We don't need to look far to find evidence that sinful attitudes and actions show themselves. Christian love is sometimes lacking in how we deal with each other. Those called to lead and serve in the church make mistakes and allow their sinful nature to get the better of them. Those urged by God to respect and love their spiritual leaders sometimes treat them with disdain and criticism. False doctrine can and does infect and lead astray individuals or entire congregations. We who are "in the world" all too often show that we have become "of the world" in actions and attitude. Spiritual laziness and apathy are no strangers or mere occasional visitors among us. We focus on the material instead of the spiritual. We act as if what happens tomorrow is more important than what will happen in eternity. We see opportunities for mission and service that God places before us and, like the priest and the Levite, we pass by on the other side. Instead of trusting, we worry. Instead of praising, we complain.

The apostle Paul saw all of the problems in the congregation at Corinth. He did not give up on those imperfect Christians, because God himself had not given up on them. He reminded himself and them of the rich blessings God had showered on them. He recognized that, even though they were sinners, they were God's redeemed people. He addressed them with law and gospel, knowing that they were still a work in process. Like the spiritual father he was, he called them to repentance and then pointed them to the cross. He could do that not because of anything deserving in them, but because of the unchanging grace of a God who would not let them go: "He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful."

Members of WELS, fellow Corinthians, let these words of Paul touch you, your families, our congregations, and our synod. His Spirit will lead us to daily repentance. The power of his forgiving love in Christ will renew us and strengthen us and encourage us. His grace and peace in Christ will be with us until the time when the church militant finds that its struggles have ended and its warfare is over, joyfully gathered as the Church Triumphant around the throne of the Lamb.

Committed to our God-given mission

The two-fold mission of the church is to hold faithfully to the Word of God and his teaching without compromise and then to proclaim the message entrusted to us with the world. Everything we do as individuals, as congregations, and as a synod is in some way linked to that two-fold mission. And both parts of that mission are linked to each other. The message that God has entrusted to us cannot stop with us. It is to be proclaimed and shared among us, to the next generation, and to people everywhere. Faithfulness to doctrine in no way detracts from the mission of spreading God's teachings to others. And commitment to a vibrant and aggressive effort to spread the message in no way comes at the expense of sound biblical teaching. Those who know the truth of God's Word and the beauty of the gospel will say with the first disciples, "We cannot help speaking about the things that we have seen and heard." And mission work, if it is to be done faithfully and in keeping with what God has asked us to do, cannot be done in a God-pleasing way unless we hold to the teaching and the message that God himself has given us.

By God's grace, our synod continues to strive to do these two important things: to hold faithfully to the message that God has spoken to us and to share that message with as many people as possible.

"In Christ Alone" Long-Range Plan

The "In Christ Alone" Long-Range Plan was developed under the supervision of the Synodical Council and was adopted by the 2011 convention. It's printed on p. 96 of the *Book of Reports and Memorials*.

The plan intends to provide a broad road map of where, under God, we want to be as a synod in 2017. It is used to help establish ministry priorities and goals and then to guide the formation of the ministry financial plan (the budget) that funds programs of ministry. Each area of ministry has been developing and refining specific strategies and programs to implement the plan. The Synodical Council receives regular updates on the progress of the plan's implementation.

The goals outlined in the plan are subject, of course, to the way in which God chooses to bless our efforts. Already we have seen blessings and progress toward the goals outlined in the plan.

In our world missions, God has enabled us to reach increasing numbers of people with the gospel through expanded efforts in our multi-language publications. Our sister mission churches in Africa, Indonesia, and India continue to experience growth not only in members but in the number of fully trained national pastors. You will hear more about these and other encouraging developments in the reports given by representatives of our Board for World Missions and in presentations by several world missionaries on Wednesday of this week.

After several years of relatively few home mission openings, our Board for Home Missions has planned to establish 8-10 new home missions in the coming year, with a similar number in the years to follow. Efforts to reach other cultures within the United States continue to represent almost a third of the Home Missions program.

The financial situation at our two terminal ministerial education schools (Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Martin Luther College) has strengthened significantly over the past two years. Both institutions have been able to maintain and even expand their programs of training pastors and teachers. On the prep level, Luther Preparatory School and Michigan Lutheran Seminary do not have the level of financial reserves available to the terminal schools. We will continue to monitor the situations at the prep schools to assure that these schools will continue to carry out their mission effectively and efficiently.

Ministry financial plan

Even in a time of economic challenges, the synod ended the last fiscal year with a balanced budget without the need to reduce or eliminate ministry. We are thankful that God moved the hearts of our congregations and individuals to support our work together as a synod. We can also report that careful stewardship by areas of ministry and other factors resulted in significant underspending from what was originally planned.

Looking ahead, the Synodical Council is recommending the 2013-15 biennial ministry financial plan (budget) to the convention for consideration and action. The plan was developed over the past year, beginning with the adoption of the support forecast (a careful estimate of financial resources that we anticipate will be available). The Ministry Committee of the Synodical Council then established allocation levels for each area of ministry, based on the overall priorities for all synodical work. The Conference of Presidents also had the opportunity to provide input on the plan.

The plan has several noteworthy features:

- It provides for a significant number of new home missions.

- It enables the expansion of world mission efforts in East Asia and in the growing program of multi-language publications.
- It enables our ministerial schools to continue to operate with the staffing and resources needed to produce the quantity and quality of called workers needed in our congregations.
- It enables our vicar program to place vicar candidates in the locations where they can receive the best training for a wide variety of ministry situations.
- It provides adequate funding for areas of ministry support, such as technology, communications, human resources, and financial services.
- It continues the amortization payments toward the synod's capital debt.
- It provides for a small salary increase for synodical workers.

We continue to depend on Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) as the backbone and foundation of the financial support for ministry. We thank God for moving our congregations to support faithfully the work we do together as a synod. At the same time, we will want to remember that the synod cannot continue its plan of careful expansion of our mission and ministry without corresponding growth in CMO. That is not to minimize the importance of gifts from individuals, foundations, and bequests, all of which flow into the Financial Stabilization Fund and become available for use in the year after they are received. All of this support provided by God's people is evidence of the gospel at work in the hearts of his people.

The translation issue

One of the most visible and important issues to come before this convention is the matter of Bible translation. For more than two years, ever since it was announced that the NIV1984 would no longer be available for purchase or for extensive use in our publications, we have perhaps as no other church body studied and discussed the translation issue. Two committees (The Translation Evaluation Committee and the Translation Feasibility Committee) have spent countless hours, one evaluating existing translations to determine their suitability for use in our publications, the other studying the feasibility of producing a study Bible or a new translation by Lutherans. Both committees have submitted reports and recommendations to this convention. On behalf of a grateful synod, I want to thank them for their effort, and I publicly thank God for providing men to serve on these committees who are committed to upholding the truth of his Word and who have faithfully worked to carry out the task assigned to them.

It was recognized from the start of this process that the selection of a translation is a matter of Christian freedom. Since no translation is perfect, we are in a position in which sanctified human judgment will need to come to a decision about which translation can serve best to communicate God's inspired Word in the English language. We also agreed early on that it would be important for us to arrive at a strong consensus among us regarding our selection. As in any matter of Christian freedom, our decision will always be made prayerfully, guided by a desire to do what is best and to show love and consideration to those who may disagree.

There has been no shortage of opinions and views expressed over the translation issue. Those opinions as to the best course to take have varied widely during the past two years, and one could safely say that the differing opinions remain among us. That is not necessarily a bad thing among brothers in the faith. When decisions need to be made in matters of adiaphora, it is only by considering all facts and viewpoints and potential results that a wise decision can be reached.

What a blessing it is to belong to a church body that takes God's Word so seriously as to devote such time and effort to this matter. How thankful we can be that we are not debating inerrancy or verbal inspiration; commitment to those two doctrines is unquestioned among us. We are not debating the nature of the Bible or the truth of its message. We are discussing how best to communicate God's truth as faithfully and clearly as we can.

I ask you to join me in the prayer that our discussion on this matter be done in a brotherly, respectful, and loving way (as it has been) and that God lead us to a decision that will honor his Word and benefit his people now and in the future. Let's also pray that, whatever the decision this convention makes, we unite around and support that decision wholeheartedly.

The hymnal project

The 2011 synod convention authorized a project to develop a new hymnal. The work has begun in earnest, with Pastor Michael Schultz serving as the hymnal project director. A number of committees have been formed to address the various aspects of the work involved in the project. The hymnal project will strive both to unify and to expand options in WELS worship, taking advantage of the continued wealth of new worship resources (especially hymns) and

of the growing potential of technology for planning and implementing worship. The hymnal will have a clear, Christ-centered gospel and sacrament emphasis and will enhance our congregations' worship for more than a generation.

Inter-church relations

WELS cherishes its close fellowship relationship with other Lutheran bodies around the world. Here in the United States we continue to stand in full doctrinal unity with our brothers and sisters of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS). How good it is when brothers live together in unity! We will be privileged to hear directly from ELS President John Moldstad during this convention.

Our fellowship relationships with other Lutherans do not stop at the borders and sea coasts of North America. We continue to be blessed to be in doctrinal fellowship with 23 other Lutheran church bodies around the world. Together with them WELS belongs to the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference, an organization intended to celebrate the fellowship we share and to provide mutual strengthening and encouragement to hold on to the truths of God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions. A highlight of this convention will be our recognition of full fellowship with the Lutheran Confessional Church in Norway. We are pleased that the president of the Lutheran Confessional Church in Norway, Pastor Egil Edvardsen, will be with us for this happy event.

After nearly fifty years in which there had been virtually no official contact between WELS and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (our former partner in the Synodical Conference), lines of communication have been opened once again. One point of contact has been at the Emmaus Conference, held annually in Tacoma. [A free conference is a forum for theological discussion that does not involve or imply fellowship.] LCMS President Matthew Harrison and the presidents of WELS and the ELS have been presenters at these conferences.

When WELS suspended fellowship with the LCMS in 1961, the synod convention resolved in part that continued theological discussions should take place in an effort to heal the breach that had occurred. Such theological discussions never happened due to the circumstances following the end of the Synodical Conference. Last December that changed. With the full support of the Conference of Presidents and the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR), representatives from the LCMS, WELS, and the ELS met for three days for informal talks. The agenda for the meeting was simple: Where do we fully agree? Where do we still disagree? Are there mutual caricatures or misunderstandings that we can correct? These talks were not intended to be full doctrinal discussions; nor were they understood to indicate that a restoration of fellowship would be possible in the near future. Even if the restoration of fellowship is not possible in the near future, we believe it is our responsibility to each other and to God to strive for true unity based on full agreement in doctrine and practice. All involved concluded that the discussions were fruitful and beneficial. A second meeting is planned for December 2013. This convention may want to consider a resolution encouraging the continuation of these contacts.

I am happy to report that earlier this month President Harrison was overwhelmingly re-elected to serve a second term as president of the LCMS. I believe that his leadership has been a blessing to his synod and that God will continue to use him for his purposes. I also want to note that, while WELS has sent observers to the LCMS conventions for many years, we have not had the pleasure of welcoming LCMS observers—until now. At our convention are three representatives of the LCMS. Dr. Albert Collver III (Director of Church Relations and Assistant to the President), Rev. Jon Viecker (Sr. Assistant to the President), and Rev. Larry Vogel (Associate Executive Director of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations).

These men have come because the leaders of the LCMS have a sincere interest in our synod and in the work that we are doing. We appreciate the respect that these and other leaders of the LCMS have shown to our synod. We pray that their time among us will be mutually beneficial. Please give them a warm and cordial welcome.

With the recent decision by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to ordain homosexual clergy, the ELCA has experienced severe losses in terms of both congregations and members. More than two hundred congregations with more than 100,000 members departed the ELCA to form a new Lutheran church body, the North American Lutheran Church (NALC). This church body, now the fourth largest Lutheran denomination in the United States (after the ELCA, the LCMS, and WELS) mirrors the doctrinal stance of the ELCA in all areas except for the ordination of homosexual clergy. We have had no contact with the NALC, and none is planned or anticipated.

Many Lutheran church bodies around the world that have been affiliated with the ELCA, especially in Africa and Asia, have reacted with strong opposition to the ELCA's direction. The LCMS is working diligently to encourage these church bodies toward a biblical and confessional stance. While we have not yet had any direct contacts with church bodies such as this, we should recognize that the opportunity may come for WELS, through its CICR, to have a very

real influence in assisting Lutheran church bodies around the world to bring their teachings into line with biblical doctrine. This convention may want to encourage the CICR to look for and pursue such opportunities.

The Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC) is a confessional Lutheran church body in fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and is a full member of the CELC. While Lutheranism has a long history in Ukraine, the ULC in its present form had its origins in the efforts of Thoughts of Faith, a mission organization affiliated with the ELS. Two years ago, the work of Thoughts of Faith was folded into the Board for World Outreach of the ELS.

During the last several decades, with the generous support of many ELS and WELS individuals and congregations and the Marvin Schwan Foundation, Thoughts of Faith (and now the ELS Board for World Outreach) provided financial assistance and guidance to the ULC. This support helped the ULC to establish more than two dozen congregations, a seminary to train pastors, a radio ministry, and a church publication. In addition, Thoughts of Faith established and operated a medical/dental and pro-life outreach ministry called "Gift of Life." WELS has also provided limited financial support through budgetary allocations and through special offerings from WELS members and congregations.

The ULC is facing increasingly difficult challenges and an uncertain future. These challenges include financial pressures brought on by high inflation coupled with a decrease in the support coming from America; increased governmental regulation and at times open hostility; and a history in which biblical stewardship principles have not yet been fully implemented in ULC congregations.

To better respond to these challenges and to help the ULC become fully self-sufficient and self-sustaining, the ULC, the ELS, and WELS have jointly agreed to adjust the way that the work in Ukraine is supported and sponsored. The proposed adjustment states that, beginning in January 2014, the ELS will continue to have the primary responsibility for overseeing the Gift of Life ministry (a medical and pro-life outreach organization operating in Ukraine), while WELS will assume the primary partnering relationship with the ULC itself. The Schwan Foundation has agreed to direct its financial support for the ULC through WELS. Representatives of all three synods have agreed to this arrangement and are committed to working together in the coming years to strengthen the ULC and to share efforts in helping the ULC continue and thrive as a confessional Lutheran church body, with the goal of achieving full self-sufficiency within a reasonable period of time. Please keep the ULC in your prayers, confident that the Lord of the Church will bless this new arrangement.

Synod administration move to Waukesha

The move of the synod's offices into the new WELS Center for Mission and Ministry in Waukesha was completed in June. The 33,000-square-foot building was purchased two years ago for \$2.85 million after the synod received an unsolicited offer to purchase the Synod Administration Building on Mayfair Road in Wauwatosa. The sale of the Mayfair Road property fell through at the last minute, leaving the synod with two properties. To remedy the situation as quickly as possible, the Synodical Council placed both properties on the market. Earlier this year the synod received and accepted a new offer of \$2 million on the Mayfair Road property. That sale closed at the end of April. Terms of the sale allowed three months for the new building to be prepared for the move to take place.

The Center for Mission and Ministry is right-sized, conveniently located, and is of high quality construction. We are thankful for this blessing and are confident that this building will serve well for decades to come.

Lutheran schools: a heritage to treasure and preserve

Our system of Lutheran elementary and high schools, comprising one of the largest parochial school systems in the country, has been a special blessing for our synod throughout its history. Congregations have recognized the value of these schools and have sacrificed to establish and support them. Our schools have been places where our young people are connected more closely with their Savior through daily instruction in the Word. They have been effective training grounds for generations of future called workers and congregational members. I believe that God has used our schools to provide a well-educated laity and a synodwide commitment to biblical doctrine and Lutheran practice. Many schools have also proven to provide genuine opportunities for gospel outreach in communities.

It is no secret that our schools and the congregations that operate them are facing increased challenges today. The result is that some schools have closed their doors and others are on the brink of closure. Various factors are cited for this. A declining birth rate has affected school enrollment. Difficult economic times have made funding of schools more difficult. Competition has increased from the public sector, which offers free education and in many places well-equipped facilities and a variety of educational and co-curricular programs.

We need to recognize the value of our Christian schools. They have proven their value in the past, and perhaps, given the culture surrounding us, they are needed now more than ever. This convention will receive a report from a special task force that has studied the issue. May God help us to value the importance of our Christian schools, not just for our children and families, but for our congregations and our synod. May he lead us to demonstrate how much we value them by moving us to support the schools we have and to look for new opportunities to establish programs of full-time Christian education in our congregations.

Early childhood education

One area of Christian education that is rapidly expanding in our synod is early childhood education. WELS now has more programs of early childhood education than elementary schools. Responding to the need for qualified early childhood teachers and directors, Martin Luther College has established a program for early childhood education in its curriculum. Evidence of our synod's commitment to this growing opportunity can be seen in the synod's recent calling of a national coordinator of early childhood ministries (Teacher Cindi Holman) and in MLC's new Early Childhood Learning Center, now under construction just a few blocks away from campus.

Retaining our youth

In an age when many young people are drifting away from worship and congregational involvement, we need to redouble our efforts to retain the youth, both for their own sake and for the sake of the church. Such an effort should not be centered primarily in providing busy teens with wholesome social activities. A better and more long-term approach would be to recommit ourselves to solid catechesis in the church, school, and home; to strive for excellence in worship, not pandering to perceived trends but clearly teaching people of all ages the value of our worship heritage and the meaning of our Lutheran liturgies; to provide opportunities for meaningful, age-appropriate service and involvement in the life and mission of the congregation. If we are to bring up our children in the training and instruction of the Lord, Christian parents need to be Christian parents not only during the early years but also long after confirmation, and congregations need to do all they can to support parents in that task.

Synodical debt

In 2007 the synod recognized that it had capital debts scattered among various accounts. Those various debts were consolidated into a single account totaling \$22.4 million. An initial synodwide special offering reduced the debt by approximately \$5 million. The remaining balance was to be amortized by an annual budgetary allocation of \$1.6 million and is scheduled to be fully retired in 2018.

As of this convention, I am happy to report that the debt has been reduced to just under \$8 million and will be further reduced to approximately \$5 million by 2015. For that reason, the Conference of Presidents has submitted a memorial calling for a special offering in 2015 to eliminate the debt two years early. The practical benefit of eliminating the debt is that it would make the \$1.6 million budgeted for debt retirement available for missions, for support for our synodical schools and students, and for any other need or opportunity that may arise.

Striving to improve

In 2007 a special committee (the "Ad Hoc Commission") was formed to evaluate a wide range of synodical programs, policies, and structures and to bring recommendations for improvements to the 2009 convention. More than 80 of the committee's recommendations were approved and implemented, and our synod has benefitted from those changes in many ways.

Such evaluation of our synod's work should not be a one-time effort. We will always do well to be asking, "What can we do better and more effectively? How can we improve the way that we carry out our joint work? How can we be as faithful as possible in the stewardship of God's gifts?"

With that in mind, this convention may want to consider whether it is time for a second Ad Hoc Committee to continue the work begun by the first. If this is done, I would suggest that the second committee be given the same wide latitude that was given to the first, with the encouragement to look at all areas of the synod's structure and programs, especially in areas not addressed by the previous commission. Suggestions and recommendations resulting from such a study could then be considered by the 2015 convention.

Retaining and proclaiming our Lutheran heritage

As WELS looks to the future, we will naturally ask the question, "What kind of church body should we be?" The answer, I believe, is simple yet profound. We want our synod to remain distinctly Lutheran. What does that mean?

- *Sola gratia* (“By grace alone”), *Sola fide* (“By faith alone”), and *Sola Scriptura* (“By Scripture alone”) cannot be a mere slogan but must remain the focus and foundation of all we believe, teach, confess, and practice.
- We will continue to commit ourselves to the thorough training of our pastors, teachers, and staff ministers. We have been blessed with an educational system that is second to none. For 150 years our seminary has trained our pastors first and foremost to be rooted and grounded in the Scriptures. (President Wendland of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary will be providing you with more information about the 150th anniversary celebration taking place this year.) We equip pastoral candidates with the ability to search the Scriptures in the original languages. We enable them to distinguish clearly between law and gospel and to apply both appropriately. We emphasize that their preaching and teaching needs to be at all times centered on Christ, on his cross, and on his empty tomb. We equip them with the knowledge and skills not just to be theologians, but pastors, servant-leaders who care for the flock of God’s people. We instill in them that they have a double responsibility—to care for the souls of those who know their Savior and to lead God’s people to seek those who do not. We also train teachers and staff ministers in a way that enables them to serve not just in a profession, but in a ministry, equipped with the Word to serve the spiritual needs of those entrusted to their care. For us to retain our heritage as a confessional Lutheran church, these important emphases cannot be neglected or set aside.
- Our preaching and teaching must continue to be Christ-focused and grace-proclaiming. We live in a culture that seeks little more than shallow, instant gratification and places a high value on self-centered, emotional, and feel good entertainment. We are not immune to the culture’s influence on us. Like Peter, when a man asked him for what he thought he most needed, we need to be ready to say, “Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I will give you.” Grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone will always be relevant and will always provide what people really need for their spiritual welfare, regardless of their age, regardless of their situation in life.
- We need to recommit ourselves to thorough catechesis—in-depth instruction in the teachings of the Scriptures—for both young and old. Shortcuts and quick courses of study may serve to introduce basic biblical truths, but instruction over the course of a weekend or several evenings is hardly sufficient. It takes time and effort and commitment to lead people through an in-depth searching of the Scriptures, all with the result that the Holy Spirit will work through his Word not just to create saving faith but to strengthen and deepen and preserve it. The seed of the gospel that does not take deep root meets the same fate as the seed sown on rocky ground and the seed choked out by soul-destroying weeds.
- We need to treasure our heritage of Lutheran worship. More than that, we need to teach our people, young and old, the importance of liturgical worship and the meaning of those parts of our worship that have stood the test of time for nearly two millennia. We need to recognize that liturgical worship provides an effective teaching tool for God’s people, as well as the opportunity for God’s people to respond in prayer and praise. We need to incorporate those new hymns and worship forms that clearly proclaim Christ and the truths of the Scriptures—not because they are new, but because they are faithful to the Word and add to the resources available to congregations to enrich and beautify their worship.
- We need to be vigilant in holding on to the teachings and doctrines of Scripture. Nothing that God has said to us should be taken for granted. Each generation will need to rediscover and recommit to the teachings that have been passed down to us from previous generations of faithful witnesses. We also need to be vocal in defending the truth of God’s Word whenever and wherever it is attacked or denied, willing and ready to suffer the criticism and mocking that will likely result.
- We need to be zealous in our desire to proclaim the gospel to all the world. The gospel is ours not only to guard and hold for ourselves; it is ours to share with sinners, leading them to the cross and to the only Savior who can give them real peace and hope.

Speaking what we have seen and heard

Perhaps now more than ever, our relatively small synod finds itself perfectly positioned to be the kind of witness that this world needs.

In a time when the culture around us is rapidly decaying and deteriorating, we can offer the truth.

When moral principles involving marriage, the sanctity of human life, or common love and concern for others are challenged or attacked—principles that have been foundational to human society for thousands of years—we can stand firm on the truths that God himself has spoken and be unafraid to defend those truths publicly.

When an intrusive government threatens to force Christians and their churches to compromise their principles and participate in sin, we can and should defend our right to exercise our faith freely. And when that freedom is limited in any way, we can stand boldly saying, “We must obey God rather than men.” (As an aside, we should recognize that, if

the current trend continues, while Christian churches may continue to have the freedom to teach as they please, they may suffer a wide variety of consequences if they put those teachings into practice beyond the pulpit or classroom).

In a world in which the truth is obscured or the existence of truth itself is questioned or denied, we can stand firmly on the one truth that never changes, the truth of the Word of God itself.

When a creeping apathy and disillusionment with “organized religion” appear to be affecting a growing number of people (including some of our own members), we can emphasize the importance of corporate worship, the benefits of consistent biblical teaching, and the joy and love of a Christian community that shares a common faith and confession.

As the passing rain shower of the gospel seems to be departing relentlessly from North America (as it once did from Europe) and is increasingly watering the continents of Africa and Asia, we can help and encourage fellow Christians in those places to know and embrace the unconditional gospel and to build orthodox Lutheran churches founded on the truth of God’s holy Word.

Today we will want to recognize that God has placed us where we are and has equipped us with his message for just such a time as this. So hold fast to his Word. Stand on his truth. Kneel daily at the cross. Rejoice in God’s amazing grace. And take that message to the world wherever and whenever God gives the opportunity.

Public thanks

In my calling as synod president, I have the privilege of working daily with dozens of motivated and dedicated people, both called and lay. I am continually amazed with the people that God has provided to carry out our synod’s work. Their talents are remarkable, their love for their Savior is evident, and their desire to serve is clear. Please join me in thanking all of these people for their time and effort, and join me in thanking God for providing them.

I also want to thank the members of our synod for their prayers and for their many words of encouragement. Those things mean more than you will know.

Finally, this undeserving chief of sinners thanks you and thanks God for the privilege of serving as your synod president.

Soli Deo Gloria! To God alone be the glory!

Essay:

“In Christ alone: The foundation and focus of our mission and ministry”

July 30, 2013

Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

Rev. Paul Prange

Jesus Only! That has always been the basis of faith, life, and ministry of all orthodox teachers of the people of God, and it will remain so up to the end of days. All the prophets had already born witness to Christ Only, that everyone who believes in him should have the forgiveness of sins in him. Paul and his fellow apostles professed that they looked on everything as loss against the exalted knowledge of Jesus Christ, their Lord, and they only wanted to have the righteousness that comes from believing in Christ. They thus knew nothing else to preach than Christ crucified. For Luther, as is generally known, Christ Only was the beginning, middle, and end of all the thoughts which he probably had by day and by night. All the Lutheran fathers of the faith agreed with him. One may read the biographies of the founders of our dear synod. Their motto in life and death was one and the same: Jesus Only! (*Memorial Volume of the Late Honorable Pastor Johann Heinrich Sieker* by Paul Roesener, N.Y. German work printed at the Martin Luther Waisenhaus, West Roxbury, Mass., 1905; translated into English and copyrighted by William R. Gallagher; printed in Vienna, Austria, 2013).

Introduction

"In Christ Alone" is the theme of the current WELS long-range plan, which is printed for you on pages 96-101 in the 2013 *Book of Reports and Memorials* (BORAM). The long-range plan as presented there is divided into four parts:

- 1) Underlying principles;
- 2) Foundation for long-range planning—our purpose;
- 3) Long-range plans—the picture in 2017; and
- 4) Strategies to reach long-range plans.

Each of those parts has its own theme, a phrase taken from "In Christ Alone" by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend, hymn 752 in *Christian Worship: Supplement* (CWS).

"Christ alone" is one of the great principles of the Reformation. It is the scriptural teaching that Jesus Christ is the one mediator between God and human beings (1 Timothy 2:5). You see "Christ alone" in Latin ("*Solus Christus*") when you look above the door as you walk into the Chapel of the Christ here on the campus of Martin Luther College. If you want to say "In Christ alone" or "By Christ alone" in Latin, you usually say, "*Solo Christo*."

I wish I could tell you that the theologians who put together the long-range plan started with the theological concept of "Christ alone" and built on that as the foundation. But it wouldn't be true.

Part one of the long-range plan, "Underlying principles," is our summary of the discussion that the Synodical Council (SC) had as part of a scriptural study of long-range planning when we began our work.

Part two, "Foundation for long-range planning—our purpose," is our summary of the discussion that the SC and the Conference of Presidents (COP) had as part of a prayerful study of synodical constitutional documents.

Part three, "Long-range plans—the picture in 2017," is a snapshot summary of what we thought we would look like a few years later.

And part four, "Strategies to reach long-range plans," is an incomplete listing of what synodical boards and committees were talking about at that time, with strong input from district conventions.

You're not seeing the theological concept of "Christ alone" in that summary. Don't misunderstand me. The members of the Long-Range Planning Committee studied the Scriptures and prayed together. The work done on the four parts of the plan at all levels took place in the context of Scripture study, worship and prayer, and Lutheran doctrinal statements.

But just to be honest, we put the whole long-range plan document together, harmonizing different efforts, and then looked for a theme. We tried out several. When we came upon "In Christ Alone," we realized very quickly that, as the foundation and focus of our mission and ministry, it accurately summarized our long-range plan. The fact that it was the title of a hymn that had been written in 2002 and published for us in 2008 in CWS was an added bonus.

If you have studied the Lutheran Reformation, you might remember that we usually speak of "three *solas*" (or *solae*), and that "in Christ alone" is not among them. The three *solas* are *sola gratia* ("by grace alone"), *sola fide* ("by faith alone"), and *sola Scriptura* ("by Scripture alone"). But at the time of the Reformation it was common to refer to five *solae*. "Christ alone" is the fourth. We'll get to the fifth one later. In this essay I hope to demonstrate to you how the three famous Reformation *solas* are the foundation and focus of our mission and ministry, and how they are understandable only in Christ alone.

"In Christ alone my hope is found. He is my light, my strength, my song;
This cornerstone, this solid ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my all in all, here in the love of Christ I stand."

By grace alone

"Grace alone" is one of the great principles of the Reformation. It is the scriptural teaching that God chose us for salvation because of his own love for us, not because of anything that we have done (2 Timothy 1:9). "By grace alone" in Latin is "*sola gratia*," which you see on the southwest exterior of the MLC chapel, looking from the parking lot.

When we say "by grace alone," we are talking about why God saves us. The Bible speaks effusively about God's motives, and it links grace with compassion, love, faithfulness, and forgiveness (Exodus 34:6,7). Sometimes we distill

all of these ideas into the phrase “God’s undeserved love.” At other times we summarize all of these traits as God’s “favor,” as in the Paul Speratus hymn from the Reformation: “Salvation unto us has come by God’s free grace and favor” (*Christian Worship*, 390).

The Bible makes the idea of grace clear by saying what it is not. When we are under grace, we are not under law (Romans 6:14). God’s grace rules out our own works as a reason for our salvation (Romans 11:6). Grace means that our salvation is not from ourselves; rather, it is the gift of God (Ephesians 2:8,9). When we say “alone,” we are excluding our own works, our keeping of God’s law, as the reason for our salvation.

It’s a good thing that we exclude our own works, because if they are involved, we have no salvation. We start out life dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1). We try to do good things, but all of them are tainted by sin (Isaiah 64:6). There are people who try to keep the law, but no one succeeds (Romans 3:10).

And so God finds a way to give us his grace. We call that way the “means of grace,” the gospel in Word and sacraments. “Through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given” (Augsburg Confession, Article V).

God gives us his grace, and it’s not based on anything we have done. The means of grace is the way he gives his Holy Spirit, and it is the way he grows his Church. So if God does it all, why design a plan that makes it sound like we will do something? In view of grace alone, what’s the point of having a long-range plan?

The plan itself tries to answer that question in its second paragraph: “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.”

By the grace of God, we have been preaching, teaching, and confessing the unconditional gospel of Jesus Christ with remarkable clarity for 163 years. We have been stewards of God’s grace. We have not done anything to deserve this opportunity. In fact, we have done many things, individually and corporately, to prove that we do not deserve this privilege.

When we carry out our plans, long-range or otherwise, are we really doing anything, or is God doing everything?

An illustration may help. When I was a boy, I was naughty enough that I did not deserve the opportunity of earning some money by taking my mother’s delicious lemonade and supplying it to the neighborhood while sitting on the street corner. Mom and Dad supplied the lemonade, the pitcher, the glasses, the ice, the change, the table and chair, and the materials for me to make my elaborate signs. A few people humored me by purchasing something. They probably knew my parents. But I was allowed to enjoy the fruits of that labor, if you can call it labor.

We labor in the work of WELS, and we make our elaborate plans. But when I sense that we are beginning to take ourselves too seriously, I like to think of WELS as the acronym for “Wisconsin Evangelical Lemonade Stand.” God supplies all of the materials and humors us as we make our feeble, childlike use of them. We have our innovations and our emphases, and God chooses to bless them when and where he will. We try to be faithful to the Bible. The last sentence in the first part of the long-range plan says, “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.”

God really shouldn’t bless us. It seems to violate his perfection and holiness, since we are neither perfect nor holy. This unfair thing called grace is really only understandable in view of the cross of Christ alone (1 Corinthians 2:2). On that cross, God made the one who had no sin be sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). With justice accomplished in the life and death of Christ, grace reigns.

“In Christ alone—who took on flesh, fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness, scorned by the ones he came to save.
Till on that cross, as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied;
For ev’ry sin on him was laid. Here in the death of Christ I live.”

By faith alone

“Faith alone” is one of the great principles of the Reformation. It is the scriptural teaching that God saves us through faith in Jesus Christ, not through our own good works (Romans 4:5). “By faith alone” in Latin is “*sola fide*,” which you see on the northeast exterior of the MLC chapel, facing the lake.

When we say “by faith alone,” we are talking about the personal trust that God works in our hearts through the means of grace (Romans 4:16). We are confident that God keeps his promises, even though we did not witness many of the

historical events in which he has kept them so far (Hebrews 11:1). God declares the wicked “not guilty,” an action that we call “justification,” and we receive the benefits of that declaration of God through faith, through personal trust, not through any of our own works (Romans 3:28).

The Bible makes the idea of “faith” clear by saying what it is not, as you see in Romans 3:28. When Luther translated that verse in his German Bible, he added the word “alone (*allein*),” which is not there in the original Greek, after the word “faith.” He explained:

It is the nature of the German language to add the word *allein* [alone, only] in order that the word *nicht* [not] or *kein* [no] may be clearer and more complete. To be sure, I can also say, “The farmer brings grain and *kein* money,” but the words “*kein* money” do not sound as full and clear as if I were to say, “The farmer brings *allein* grain and *kein* money.” Here the word *allein* helps the word *kein* so much that it becomes a complete, clear German expression. . . . We must inquire about this of the mother in the home, the children in the street, the common man in the marketplace. We must be guided by their language, the way they speak, and do our translating accordingly. That way they will understand it and recognize that we are speaking German to them (Luther’s Works, American Edition, Volume 35, p. 189).

Faith is also not a simple knowledge of biblical facts, a knowledge that never affects our emotions and actions; if that is what “faith” means, then we are not saved by that kind of faith alone (James 2:24). Human eyes see human works. Only God knows whether they come from saving faith. Real, saving faith always produces good works, especially acts of love. They are not the reason for our salvation. But they are so attractive to human eyes that we are constantly tempted to think that they are.

That is why emphasizing justification by faith is so important. Our Lutheran Confessions say,

“The Holy Spirit works faith, when and where it pleases God [John 3:8], in those who hear the good news that God justifies those who believe that they are received into grace for Christ’s sake. This happens not through our merits, but for Christ’s sake” (Augsburg Confession, Article V).

“We obtain the forgiveness of sins only by faith in Christ, not through love, nor on account of love or works, although love follows faith. Therefore we are justified by faith alone” (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Article IV, paragraph 77).

So isn’t it dangerous to emphasize any work of human beings, as we do in the long-range plan? Couldn’t it easily lead to hints of gaining God’s favor by our own good works rather than by faith?

It certainly could! And that’s why we keep an eye on one another. Our trust in God is absolute, but our trust in one another as sinful human beings is a little like Ronald Reagan’s trust in the leaders of the old Soviet Union, “trust but verify.” That’s why the fourth paragraph of the long-range plan says, “The leaders of our synod not only desire to be good stewards but also recognize that they are responsible to the members, called workers, commissions, and boards of the synod. We trust them to do their work and ask them to provide reports as they have the opportunity.”

And in the actions of everyone in our fellowship, we look for clear confessions of faith. That’s why we write at the end of the third paragraph of the long-range plan, “At all times and in all we do our focus is the cross of Christ Jesus.”

When we focus on Christ Jesus and his cross, we are living the faith that God has given us. Saving faith is a gift of God, not a sneaky way of getting some credit for our own actions anyway (Ephesians 2:8). Saving faith is saving only because it has a saving object, the thing it trusts. That thing is Christ alone, and him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2).

If you want to be saved, if you want to go to heaven, you have to be perfect, pure, holy, and righteous (Matthew 5:48). God in heaven is perfectly holy, and he says about heaven, “Nothing impure will ever enter it” (Revelation 21:27). When I look at myself and at other human beings, I see that we don’t make that standard (Romans 3:23).

But God has provided righteousness for us in the person of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30). “This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe” (Romans 3:22). Christ did not sin in any way, but he took the punishment for our sin on the cross. In him, we become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Only Christ can be our righteousness, because only Christ has risen from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:20). If Christ had not risen, our faith would have been useless (1 Corinthians 15:14). But he has risen from the dead, and faith reigns.

“There in the ground his body lay, Light of the world by darkness slain;
Then bursting forth in glorious day up from the grave he rose again!
And as he stands in victory, sin’s curse has lost its grip on me.
For I am his and he is mine—bought with the precious blood of Christ.”

By Scripture alone

“Scripture alone” is one of the great principles of the Reformation. It is the scriptural teaching that we derive all of our public doctrine from the Bible, not from tradition or human reason (2 Timothy 3:16). “By Scripture alone” in Latin is “*sola Scriptura*,” which you see on the southeast exterior of the MLC chapel, the side behind the altar.

When we say “the Bible,” we mean the 66 canonical books of the Holy Scriptures. They alone are the final authority for all matters of faith because every word of them is inspired and clear, given by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). If we cannot understand some portion of Scripture, it is because of our own human weakness, not because of a weakness in the Bible. The prophetic and apostolic Scriptures are authentic as written by the prophets and apostles (Ephesians 2:20). A correct translation of their writings is God’s Word because it has the same meaning as the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.

In one of those beautiful events of a life of faith under the direction of a gracious God, while I was working on this section of the paper, a phone call was forwarded to me from the main switchboard of the synod. The person calling was a man who had read on our Web site that we teach “*sola Scriptura*.” He wondered how that could work, since everyone interprets Scripture differently. He asked, “Wouldn’t you need an authority to tell you how to read the Bible so that all of you teach the same thing?”

I tried to explain that while many people cite the Bible for their false doctrines, most of those difficulties go away when a person reads the Bible as it is intended, with Christ alone at the center of it (1 Corinthians 3:11). Jesus told the Bible readers of his day, “You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me” (John 5:39). When the Scriptures are read with Christ at the center, law and gospel snap into perspective, and both the foundation and the focus of our mission and ministry become clear (John 20:31). Christ alone is the authority who tells us how to read the Bible so that all of us teach the same thing.

Then why do we have Lutheran Confessions? We subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions not because they are part of our tradition, or because they are formulated by human logic, but purely because they are a correct presentation of the teachings of Scripture. The introduction to the Formula of Concord says, in part, “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone (Psalm 119:105, Galatians 1:8). Other writings of ancient or contemporary teachers, whatever their names may be, shall not be regarded as equal to Holy Scripture, but all of them together shall be subjected to it.”

Our own WELS Constitution says,

The synod accepts the canonical books of the Old and New Testament as the divinely inspired and inerrant Word of God and submits to this Word of God as the only infallible authority in all matters of doctrine, faith, and life. The synod also accepts the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church embodied in the Book of Concord of 1580, not insofar as, but because they are a correct presentation and exposition of the pure doctrine of the Word of God” (Article II).

Deriving our doctrine from the Bible alone means that we are not deriving it from tradition (Mark 7:8). Our own human reason, no matter how compelling, must be the servant of the Word of God, not its master (1 Corinthians 1:25). When we teach by Scripture alone, we do not look for revelations of the Holy Spirit outside of the Bible (Isaiah 8:20).

If we teach by Scripture alone, can we propose anything in our long-range plan that is not mentioned in Scripture? We must distinguish between Bible passages that simply describe how things were done (descriptive) and Bible passages that tell us how things need to be done (prescriptive). We live in the freedom of the gospel (Galatians 5:1). But as we freely pool our resources to provide a means for congregations and their members to extend the reach of their God-given mission of proclaiming the gospel in Word and sacrament, we take 1 Corinthians 10:23 very seriously and seek to do only what is beneficial and constructive.

So Christ alone is both the foundation and focus of our mission and ministry. Yet Christ alone does not stand as a principle alone. It is intimately connected with grace alone, faith alone, and Scripture alone. Together these inform our lives of faith, individually and as a synod. We walk together. We are not alone.

But there was a time when Christ was alone. As he hung there on the cross between heaven and earth, he was separated from the Father (Psalm 22:1, Matthew 27:46) with whom he had lived for all eternity. Bearing the sin of the entire world (John 1:29), he suffered hell in my place. He took the guilt of sin, the sting of death, and the power of the devil, and he destroyed them. Because he was alone, I will never be alone. Christ reigns. Thanks be to God.

“No guilt in life, no fear in death, this is the pow’r of Christ in me;
From life’s first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny.
No pow’r of hell, no scheme of man can ever pluck me from his hand;
Till he returns or calls me home, here in the pow’r of Christ I’ll stand.”

And the fifth Reformation sola?

S.D.G.—*Soli Deo Gloria*—To God alone the glory.

To learn more about sola gratia, you may read “The Seminary’s Unchanging Foundation in a Changing World: Sola Gratia” by John M. Brenner, in the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Essay File (available online at www.wls.wels.net).

To learn more about sola fide, you may read “The Seminary’s Unchanging Foundation in a Changing World: Sola Fide” by Paul E. Eickmann, in the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Essay File (available online at www.wls.wels.net).

To learn more about sola Scriptura, you may read “The Seminary’s Unchanging Foundation in a Changing World: Sola Scriptura” by Harold E. Wicke, in the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Essay File (available online at www.wls.wels.net).

Closing service sermon

Aug. 1, 2013

Martin Luther College Chapel of the Christ, New Ulm, Minn.

Rev. David Rutschow

Theme: We go to share the “solas”

Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.
(2 Thessalonians 3:1)

Finally! Was that maybe your thought when President Schroeder declared the convention adjourned? After all, we have been here three days (more than that, for some), and there has been a lot of discussion and debate and many reports and resolutions. It has been pretty much non-stop from morning into the evening, but it has come to an end, and now we can pack it in and go home.

Finally! That was Paul’s thought as he got to the last part of the second letter that God had him write to Christians in Thessalonica. Paul had taken up several matters in the previous pages. Some of it almost sound like convention resolutions, because Paul *commended* the Thessalonian Christians for growing in their knowledge of and faith in the Lord. He *expressed concern* about judgment day alarmists, *alerted* his readers to the rise of a man of lawlessness in the church, and *encouraged* his readers to stay faithful to the Word of God.

Paul had covered quite a bit there, but his “finally” didn’t mean that they could get ready to roll up the scroll, call it a day, and hit the hay. Not at all! Paul then made a prayer request of the faithful in Thessalonica: Pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.

1. With a sense of urgency for others

The word “rapidly” tells us that Paul had a sense of urgency and for good reason—good reasons, actually. One reason Paul gives in the next verse: “Not everyone has faith”—faith in Jesus Christ that alone saves people for heaven. And judgment day alarmists wouldn’t be of help to people without faith, nor would “the man of lawlessness.”

Only the message of the Lord Jesus could help and save, because the message of the Lord says: “There is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12); and the message of the Lord *would* help and save, because the message of the Lord says: “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, and faith (believing) comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ” (Romans 10:17, Acts 16:31).

“No other name” means “only one name,” and in convention this week we heard about three “onlys” or “no-others” in connection with how sinners are saved. We often heard it in Latin: *sola*. *Sola gratia*, by grace alone (the free, unearned and undeserved love of God); *sola fide* (by faith alone, not by deeds or character); *sola Scriptura* (only by the Word of God)—that’s how a sinner is saved.

Is *saved* because our nature and so much of our thought, speech, and action place us right on the rim of the Grand Canyon of death and hell. There we stand like summer tourists in our baggy cargo shorts of shortcomings on being Christ-like loving husbands and fathers. There we also stand in polo shirts with pride and selfishness and other logos of the Great Dragon, Satan, on them. And a single heartbeat—that’s how close we are to pitching forward, over the edge and tumbling down, down into the lake of everlasting fire.

But the Lord, Jesus Christ, pulled us back from that ledge by coming to this planet as our delegate, going under the commandments of the Creator for us. An always obedient child and respectful, cheerful law-abiding citizen, Jesus humbly took the tumble into hell and death on a cross for the guilt that we piled up before God and for the logos we have let the devil put on us; but Jesus came out of it. He came up from the dead, free of our sins, and therefore we are forgiven, clean and safe from falling over the edge.

Paul called that “the message of the Lord.” After our time together here this week we would say that the three *solas* are the essence of that message. And what comfort, peace, and hope they give! What *certain* comfort, *sure* hope, and *lasting* peace, because the grace that saves is God’s, freely given by him. The faith is God-worked by Scriptures that are God-worded. And God is true. God is perfect. God gets things right.

So it has been great to hear the *solas*, to confess the *solas*, to sing about the *solas* on this hill this week. But “finally” has come. As much as we, like Peter on the hill of Transfiguration, might want to stay on this hill and go on enjoying the assurances of the *solas*, the fellowship with God and one another, it is time to leave this hill of *solas* celebration and return to the plain, to the city, community, and countryside that we call home.

But there things will be different from what they have been here. Here everyone has confessed faith in Jesus Christ, but back home and around the globe there are many—millions, yes billions—who do not have faith in Jesus. They may not look like they are in danger or need urgent care, but they are and do, because they are standing on the canyon rim of hell, in the same grubby shorts and ratty shirts we once were, and so every one of them is one heartbeat from going over the edge and left to lie and writhe where they land.

You and I have legs and voices to bring the *solas* to them. Sad to say, as Jesus observed in his day, people who can share the *solas* today are few, because so few have and confess the *solas* as we do.

2. With a prayer for one another

Paul was one of the few who shared the *solas* in his day, and he asked the Thessalonians to pray for him so that his legs and voice would really get and stay moving. Does it surprise you to hear Paul make that request? It always surprises me a bit. I mean Paul was this super-missionary, right? He always had places to go, people to see, and things to proclaim, and like the Energizer bunny, Paul just kept going and going. If he took a licking (which Paul did many times), he was like the old Timex watch: He kept on ticking.

Did Paul’s voice sometimes get tired, his legs weary, and his feet heavy? Of course! The man was human. Did Paul get discouraged? Did he feel sometimes like he was swimming against an ever-stronger current, in a losing battle? Did he ever come home at night or return from a mission road trip and feel that he may as well stay home? Probably. Doing jail time and deflecting stone fastballs can do that to a person. Perhaps even more, having your calls to repentance and your message of forgiveness meet with rejection—that can also tire the tongue and take some zip out of one’s spirit.

We can’t say that for sure about Paul, but we can say it for ourselves, can’t we? These days in New Ulm, our *sola* legs and voices have been strong as we walked to sessions, talked, and sang. Back home, many around us will have no faith. Even in our home congregations, some people may not be as excited about the mission and ministry of the synod as the men who sat next to you on the floor of the convention and served on your floor committee.

I know that can weary my spirit, take some enthusiasm off my tongue, make my feet feel heavy and drag. I daresay it may have the same effect on you, and that will slow the speed and energy with which we want to share the soul-saving *solas*.

How often Paul had that experience, we don't really know. What we know is that he asked people to pray that his energy and speed would keep up and going.

Come to think of it, maybe that's why Paul stayed strong in leg and voice: Because people were praying, asking God to give Paul and his mission team good hearts, strong legs and voices. After all, God says: "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

When our spirits grow weary, our voices feel weak, and our feet drag, we can't very well get in our cars or board an airplane and come together in New Ulm; and we don't have to. Nor do we need to slog on solo in sharing the *solas*. Remember this week and review the *solas*—the certain comfort, peace, and hope that they have for you and hold for others, and be energized. And finally, remember the request of St. Paul: "Pray for us. Pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it is with you."

Brothers, that is and will be my prayer for you as I leave and when I get back home. Please make it your prayer for me and all of us here until God finally adjourns life and this world and convenes us with him and many others, not in New Ulm, Saginaw, or Watertown, but in Jerusalem the golden!

I move adoption! Support? Amen.