

Book of Reports and Memorials

May 2013

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
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Foreword

Convention theme

The theme of the 2013 WELS convention is “In Christ Alone,” which is also the name chosen for the long-range plan that the synod adopted in 2011. Convention worship, essays, and decisions will focus on the fact that everything about our relationship with our God is founded and centered in one place: in Christ, who redeemed us to make us his own, who through his Spirit working through the means of grace has made us his own through faith, who guides and strengthens us with his Word and promises, and who has commissioned us to be his witnesses to the world.

Major items for consideration at the 2013 convention include the proposed ministry financial plan (budget) for 2013–15, the opportunities described in the synod’s long-range plan, and a full discussion of translation issues as they relate to which version of the Bible the synod will use in its publications.

The *Book of Reports and Memorials*

This *Book of Reports and Memorials* (BORAM) is intended to summarize, both for convention delegates and for the synod’s entire constituency, the business that will come before the convention. It contains reports from all synodical entities, describing the synod’s activities during the past year and providing information about current efforts and future plans. It also contains memorials, which are formal requests to the convention to address specific issues.

Floor committees

The convention’s business will be addressed by 28 floor committees. Each committee is assigned specific matters to address or a task to perform during the convention. The floor committees, along with their chairmen, are listed on p. 1.

Floor committees will function during the convention as determined by their assignment. Meeting rooms are assigned to committees as needed. Each floor committee chairman is responsible for scheduling floor committee meetings and for seeing to it that his committee is provided with the informational resources it needs to complete its work. Advisory delegates are available to the committees as resources.

Delegates

All voting delegates are assigned to floor committees. They are expected to attend convention sessions unless their floor committee is scheduled to meet. Advisory delegates may attend floor committee meetings upon invitation of the floor committee or by mutual agreement. A floor committee chairman may at any time request that the committee conduct its work without the presence of advisors.

Memorials

A memorial is a formal request for the synod to take specific action. Some memorials will be assigned to the floor committee already dealing with the subject matter or area addressed by the memorial. Miscellaneous memorials dealing with issues not specifically assigned to a floor committee will be addressed by Floor Committee #24. All memorials can be found on pp. 205-221.

Sometimes memorials are submitted after the deadline for inclusion in BORAM. These are referred to as “unprinted memorials” because they are not printed in BORAM. Instead, they are printed and distributed to delegates during the summer and are assigned to appropriate floor committees for the same kind of consideration received by memorials printed in BORAM.

May God bless our gathering in convention to his glory and for the good of his kingdom!

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Additional information online

Synod convention information that pertains to all WELS members can be found at www.wels.net/2013convention.
Information for convention delegates and synod leaders can be found at WELS' Intranet site, <https://connect.wels.net>.

Convention floor committees

Committee	Assignment	Chairman
#1	Conference of Presidents	Pastor Philip Zarling
#2	Synodical Council and Facility Services	Pastor Jonathan Hein
#3	President's report	Pastor Mark Johnston
#4	Finance and budget	Pastor Jeffrey Seelow
#5	Commission on Inter-Church Relations	Pastor Steven Degner
#6	Ministry of Christian Giving	Pastor Robert Smith
#7	Communications	Prof. James Unke
#8	Support Services (Financial Services, Human Resources, Technology)	Teacher Steven Vasold
#9	World Missions	Pastor Erich Schaser
#10	Home Missions	Pastor Steven Lange
#11	Ministerial Education	Pastor Brett Brauer
#12	Congregation and Ministry Support Group A (Worship, Evangelism, Congregational Counseling)	Pastor Joel Luetke
#13	Congregation and Ministry Support Group B (Special Ministries, Adult Discipleship, Youth and Family Ministry)	Pastor Keith Schreiner
#14	Congregation and Ministry Support Group C (Lutheran Schools, Task Force on Lutheran Schools)	Prof. William Zeiger
#15	Northwestern Publishing House and Publications Coordinating Committee	Pastor Timothy Wempner
#16	WELS Historical Institute and WELS Archives	Mr. Dean Dawson
#17	Church Extension Fund	Pastor David Waterstradt
#18	WELS Foundation and WELS Investment Funds	Mr. William Maschke
#19	Benefit Plans Office (VEBA and Pension)	Mr. Jim Albright
#20	Christian Aid and Relief	Pastor Caleb Schoeneck
#21	Translation Evaluation Committee (TEC)	Pastor Joel Gaertner
#22	Translation Feasibility Committee (TFC)	Pastor Phillip Sievert
#23	Continuing Education for Called Workers	Pastor Jonathan Stern
#24	Miscellaneous memorials	Prof. John Boeder
#25	Constitutional matters	Teacher James Holman
#26	Elections	Teacher Joel Babinec
#27	Membership and attendance	Pastor Timothy Flunker
#28	Steering	Pastor John Guse

Congregation and District Ministry

The Congregation and District Ministry portion of the budget includes the Conference of Presidents (COP) and all entities overseen by the COP. These include:

Conference of Presidents

- Regular and special meetings of the Conference of Presidents and the Assignment Committee
- Travel and other expenses related to the office of district president
- Pastoral assistants provided for the congregations of the district presidents

Support Committee

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

Commission on Inter-Church Relations

- Regular meetings of the commission
- Travel expenses related to inter-church relations
- Limited support for sister church bodies

Ministry of Christian Giving

- Administration and staff salaries and office expenses
- Deferred gift counselors' salaries and travel expenses
- Current gift counselors' salaries and travel expenses
- Expenses for counselor training and consultation

Communication Services

- *WELS Connection*, *WELS Connection Close-up*, "Together," partial funding for *Forward in Christ* editorial staff
- *WELS Annual Report*
- *Book of Reports and Memorials*, *Report to the Twelve Districts*, *Proceedings*
- Web site content management
- Graphic design management
- Publication coordination and management

Synod Nominating Committee

Congregation and Ministry Support Group

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

Synod convention

District ministries

- Costs related to the functions of the districts, their praesidium, and their circuit pastors
- District conventions and other meetings
- District committees

Conference of Presidents

Floor Committee #1

The Conference of Presidents (COP) is composed of the 12 district presidents, elected by their respective districts, as well as the synod president and the two vice presidents, all of whom are elected by the synod convention. The synod president serves as the chairman of the COP. The synod secretary, while not a member of the COP, attends all COP meetings and serves as the secretary of the COP.

The COP meets in person three times annually for regular face-to-face meetings, and at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minn., and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wis., at the time of the assignment of ministerial candidates. Between regular meetings the COP meets monthly via teleconference.

The Conference of Presidents is entrusted with the following broad responsibilities:

- Overseeing all matters of doctrine and practice to insure that the synod, its congregations, its called workers, and other affiliated entities remain faithful to the Scriptures and the Confessions of the evangelical Lutheran church.
- Working to maintain and strengthen the synod's unity in doctrine and practice and in its purpose and mission.
- Assisting congregations in the calling process by providing call lists and advice.
- Providing counsel to congregations either directly or through the circuit pastors of the district.
- Overseeing the various ways in which the congregations and individual members provide financial support for the work of the synod, including the ongoing instruction in Christian stewardship as well as in the planning of special offerings that may be held periodically.
- Overseeing and serving as the calling body for the Ministry of Christian Giving, as well as for all units of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group. It also oversees the other areas included in Congregation and District Ministry, including Communication Services, the Commission on Inter-Church Relations, and the Support Committee.
- Promoting the synod's mission and ministry in the districts.
- Overseeing the planning of the synod convention.

The COP works in close cooperation and consultation with the Synodical Council (SC). Three district presidents, along with the synod president and two vice presidents, serve as members of the SC.

Doctrine and practice

Each district president is entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing doctrine and practice in his district, including carrying out discipline when Christian love and faithfulness to God's Word require it. To assure as much consistency as possible from district to district, the COP devotes considerable time in its meetings to discussing practical situations, providing a forum for mutual advice and encouragement. As overseers of doctrine and practice, the district presidents often recommend to pastor and teacher conferences topics and essays that will be valuable to study and discuss.

The COP was pleased that Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary chose "brotherly admonition" as the topic for its annual symposium in fall 2012. While the COP is fully committed to the biblical principle of Christian freedom in matters of adiaphora (things neither commanded nor forbidden by Scripture), it continues to encourage called workers and lay leaders to exercise their Christian freedom with wisdom, brotherly love, and extensive consultation with others in our fellowship who may be affected. The COP continues to encourage open and brotherly discussion of such things as worship style, outreach efforts, and congregational organization. The COP believes that such discussion, when done in a spirit of Christian love and based on an ongoing study of Scripture, is essential to maintaining our synodical unity, a correct understanding of Christian freedom, and our clear identity as a confessional Lutheran church body.

Some specific matters of doctrine and practice addressed or discussed by the COP:

- The 2011 synod convention discussed a memorial regarding the status of Time of Grace as a "Recognized Service Organization" (RSO) of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Concerns had been raised about the published definition of an RSO and what such recognition required. Time of Grace had been assured by LCMS officials that nothing would be required of Time of Grace that would compromise its teachings. Since that time, the LCMS has clarified and expanded its requirements for Recognized Service Organizations. Once that was done, Time of Grace recognized that it would not be able to meet the requirements and discontinued its status as an RSO. The president

of the LCMS has stated that LCMS members and congregations are still encouraged to make use of the resources and programming provided by Time of Grace.

- A special committee was appointed to review a 1989 COP document entitled “Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage.” The purpose of the review was to consider revisions or expansions in certain areas that may not have been addressed in the original document. The committee made recommendations for additions and changes that will be considered by the COP. In connection with this discussion, the COP also resolved to develop study materials on the topic of sexual ethics as a means to help pastors deal with these issues in their ministries.
- The COP discussed possible changes that may take place in how Thrivent Financial for Lutherans defines itself (expanding its fraternal group to all Christians rather than just to Lutherans). The COP regarded this potential change as outside of its concern, since there is no formal relationship between Thrivent, an insurance and financial services organization, and WELS. The COP encouraged district presidents to remind congregations to deal with Thrivent as they would any other corporation.

Free conferences

In recent years, there has been an increased interest in free conferences. The COP addressed the issue of free conferences by adopting the following at its October 2012 meeting:

A simple definition

Historically, a free conference is a gathering in which people belonging to different church bodies come together to discuss doctrine and practice. Participants come, not as official representatives of their church bodies, but as individuals who are interested in assessing where doctrinal agreement may exist and where there are differences in doctrine. Meant as a forum for an open discussion of doctrine, free conferences are conducted outside the framework of fellowship. A free conference does not include joint prayer, worship, or a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Convocations intended to share methodologies would by definition not be considered free conferences.

Some encouragements for those considering attending or organizing free conferences

The Lord desires that we seek to extend our fellowship. Free conferences may clear up misunderstandings that we have of those in other church bodies or that they may have of us. While there may be more outward reasons to organize free conferences currently, there will always be wisdom in discussing doctrine with others. A free conference provides an excellent opportunity to testify to the truth and to see where there may be an opportunity to extend our fellowship.

Out of love for God’s Word and for the people within our fellowship, those who organize free conferences will want to identify it clearly as a free conference. While the conference may address one specific teaching of Scripture and thus provide a unifying theme to the gathering, the term “free conference” should always be highlighted. In addition, because free conferences have not been held or attended frequently among us in recent history, the organizers will want to explain carefully what a free conference is and means to be. They will make it clear that fellowship will not be expressed by an invocation, joint prayer, worship, or a celebration of Holy Communion.

Those who are interested in organizing a free conference, whether national or regional, would preserve good order by informing the presidents of the districts in which they serve and the district in which the gathering will be held. Doing that earlier rather than later in the process would demonstrate concern for carrying out such a meeting in a fitting and orderly way. The district president may be aware of other gatherings that are being considered and could provide useful counsel. The district president would inform the synod president and Conference of Presidents regarding the free conference.

Those who attend free conferences, whether national or regional, will want to take the time and effort to explain to their calling bodies their purpose in attending, lest souls be unnecessarily offended. Men who attend free conferences should also make their circuit pastors aware of their attendance.

Organizers of free conferences will want to take great care in selection of presenters for the gathering. While we may seek to understand better the doctrine of another church body, the primary purpose of a free conference is not to offer a forum for propagation of falsehood, but to offer a forum for discussion of the truth. The goal is ultimately that the truth be extended.

Assignment of ministerial candidates

In its role as the Assignment Committee of the synod, the COP continually monitors the number of candidates graduating from Martin Luther College (MLC) and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS). The vast majority of assignments are made in May, with a smaller number of assignments made in December at the time of mid-year graduation at MLC. In 2012 all seminary graduates and all eligible MLC candidates but one were assigned in May. One mid-year graduate from MLC was assigned in December 2012.

The Assignment Committee also assigns third-year seminary students to their place of vicarage. These assignments are made by the COP after extensive consultation with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and the Board for Home Missions. Since the vicar year is actually a part of the seminary's program of education, great care is taken to ensure that the candidates are placed in locations where they can receive thorough training in the practical aspects of the pastoral ministry.

Continuing education

Acting on a recommendation from the Ad Hoc Commission, the 2009 convention called for the establishment of a flexible program of continuing education for called workers. The Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee (CECW) began to develop such a program shortly thereafter. Significant progress has been made and will be outlined in a report from the CECW to the 2013 convention (see p. 82).

Funding for the synod's mission and ministry

The Synodical Council is responsible for formulating and recommending the synod's ministry program and its funding requirements, while the COP is responsible for funding the ministry program adopted by the synod in convention.

The COP operates under the principle that the foundational support for the mission and ministry of the synod is the Congregation Mission Offering (CMO). Other sources of financial support, such as gifts from individuals, bequests, grants from foundations, etc., are great blessings and play an important role in providing the resources necessary to carry out the synod's work. Gifts from these sources can vary widely from year to year. CMO, on the other hand, has been a more consistent and predictable source of financial support.

The COP worked to encourage congregations to increase their commitments in 2012 and to meet or exceed those commitments by the end of the year. We thank God and his people for the results, with calendar year 2012 CMO gifts coming in at 103.7 percent of what was projected and 3.5 percent higher than the previous year. The additional \$764,000 beyond projections proved to be a special blessing, particularly in view of the fact that gifts from the Marvin Schwan Foundation were less than what had been anticipated.

The COP believes that one factor in the CMO performance may have been the reduction in the size of circuits. Smaller circuits enabled circuit pastors to have more contact with their congregations and called workers, with more opportunity to encourage congregational support for the synod.

The vast majority of congregations provide financial support for the synod's work through CMO and other gifts. It is a matter of concern, however, that 62 WELS congregations provided no financial support for the synod. The district presidents and circuit pastors will continue to encourage these congregations to participate in the joy of supporting our synod's work to the extent that they are able.

Status of the synod's combined capital debt and a recommendation

In 2007 all capital debt of the synod was combined into a single total. The total debt at that time was \$22.4 million. The 2007 convention resolved to begin the effort to eliminate the debt through a special offering called the Year of Jubilee. The offering officially concluded in 2009 with gifts of \$4.2 million, but gifts have continued to be given toward debt retirement. In December, the total gifts given for debt retirement surpassed the \$5 million mark.

Since 2007 an annual budgetary allocation of \$1.6 million has also been made to amortize the debt. By July 2013, the debt will have been reduced from \$22.4 million to an outstanding balance of less than \$8 million, a truly amazing blessing.

Once the debt is completely eliminated (currently estimated to be October 2018), the \$1.6 million annual allocation will be available for other ministry. For that reason, the Conference of Presidents makes the following recommendation to the 2013 convention:

- 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 \$700,000 towards debt elimination so that the debt now stands at [approximately] \$8.8 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; 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.

Early Childhood Learning Center at MLC and 150th anniversary at WLS

The COP authorized Martin Luther College to undertake an effort to gather offerings to support the construction of the Early Childhood Learning Center. The effort to raise these funds has been carried out by MLC in collaboration with the Ministry of Christian Giving and is focusing on individual gifts rather than a synodwide effort to gather support from congregations.

The COP also gave approval to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary to conduct a similar effort beginning in fall 2013 in commemoration of the seminary's 150th anniversary.

Congregation and Ministry Support Group

Since 2009 what had been the Board for Parish Services has been restructured into the Congregation and Ministry Support Group (CMSG). The most significant change in the restructuring was the placement of the commissions of the CMSG under the direct supervision of the COP. This change has been highly beneficial, since the COP now has a better understanding of the work being carried out and is in a better position to promote and support it. Directors of CMSG entities (Lutheran Schools, Worship, Evangelism, Special Ministries, Congregational Counseling, Adult Discipleship, Youth and Family Ministry) are called by the COP; commission members are appointed by the COP. Currently, the positions of Director of Youth and Family Ministry and Adult Discipleship are vacant, with no immediate plans to fill them.

The Commission on Congregational Counseling (CCC) was first established by the 2009 restructuring. The first call for a director was issued in January 2013 and accepted by Pastor Jonathan Hein, who had been chairing the commission. A notable feature of this position is that Hein will remain in the congregation he is currently serving and will be provided with a seminary graduate as his assistant. The intent of having the director remain in the congregation is to keep him closely connected to congregational life and to allow him to put into practice the kinds of programs that he may be promoting. The call is a two-year limited call, providing the opportunity for evaluating whether the parish-based arrangement is beneficial for the director, for the commission's work, and for the congregation.

Proposed bylaw revisions

The COP is recommending revisions to two bylaws governing the districts. In both cases (district councils and district legislation committees), entities required in the districts are recommended to become optional. These recommendations have been assigned to Floor Committee #25 (Constitutional Matters).

The proposed amendments to the bylaws:

ARTICLE XIII District Council

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 chairmen 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 district nominating committee shall be done by the circuit pastors of the district in consultation with the district praesidium.

ARTICLE XVIII Nominating Committee

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.

ARTICLE XVII Legislation Committee

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 interests 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.

Policy for those who defer assignment

The COP adopted the following policy in order to clarify the process for assigning those who are assigned to temporary calls, those who are given the approval to defer assignment for a legitimate reason, and those who decline assignment:

1. Pastor or teacher graduates who have been assigned to temporary ministry situations return to the Assignment Committee after completion of their assignment. Such graduates will be considered for assignment for three springtime assignments. During a third such temporary ministry assignment, a graduate is eligible to be called directly by a calling body or may choose to return to the Assignment Committee.
2. Pastor or teacher graduates who are granted a deferment return to the Assignment Committee at the end of their deferment and will be considered for assignment for three springtime assignments. Should a deferred graduate remain unassigned after three springtime assignments, he or she is eligible to be called directly by a calling body.
3. After the completion of a third year of a deferral, in order to be eligible for assignment a teacher candidate will be required to commit to a certification process. In order to be eligible for assignment or a call from the field a pastor candidate (after completion of a third year of deferral) will be required to work in consultation with the district president where he has his church membership to determine eligibility.
4. Graduates who decline assignment are not eligible to be assigned by the Assignment Committee. If at a later date they wish to become eligible for a call from the field they will be required to speak with the district president of the district in which they reside.

Guidelines for congregations and pastors considering retirement calls

The COP adopted guidelines to assist congregations considering whether to call a pastor to serve in a part-time retirement call. There are also guidelines for pastors who are considering such calls, as well as procedures that will be followed by district presidents in identifying candidates for retirement calls and providing them with information on opportunities to serve. The guidelines are available from your district president.

Calls issued by the COP

Teacher Cindi Holman, national coordinator of early childhood ministry
Rev. Jim Behringer, director of special ministries
Rev. Michael Schultz, hymnal project director
Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, director of the Ministry of Christian Giving
Rev. Michael Dietz, Christian giving counselor for the Ministry of Christian Giving
Mr. James Rademan, associate director of Lutheran Schools

Limited or provisional calls issued for one year by the COP

Rev. James D. Liggett, semi-retired Christian giving counselor
Rev. John Graf, semi-retired Christian giving counselor
Staff Minister Gerald Heckmann, semi-retired Christian giving counselor
Rev. David Waege, semi-retired Christian giving counselor
Rev. Paul Soukup, semi-retired Christian giving counselor
Rev. David Dolan, semi-retired Christian giving counselor
Staff Minister Carl Leibner, Christian giving counselor (pursuing synod certification)
Staff Minister Vernon Caulk, Christian giving counselor (pursuing synod certification)
Staff Minister James Schwartz, Christian giving counselor (pursuing synod certification)

Our thanks and our welcome

Pastor Vilas Glaeske (South Central District) and Pastor Joel Petermann (North Atlantic District) have completed their time of service on the COP. Glaeske retired from his position as district president; Petermann accepted the call to serve as president of Michigan Lutheran Seminary. We invite all members of the synod to join us in thanking God for their faithful service and in praying for his continued blessings on them and their families.

The COP also welcomed two new members to replace those who departed. Pastor Donald Patterson was elected president of the South Central District, and Pastor Donald Tollefson was elected president of the North Atlantic District. We pray that God will give them wisdom, courage, and a pastor's heart as they serve as district presidents and members of the COP.

A look ahead

The COP will continue in its role of providing supervision of doctrine and practice, as well as in assisting congregations in the calling process.

In addition, the COP will:

- Monitor the progress of the hymnal project and provide input and suggestions to the director.
- Develop materials to assist pastors as they address the topic of sexual ethics.
- Encourage congregations to grow their Christian stewardship in their financial support of the synod and its mission.
- Look for ways to assist the synod in maintaining its identity as a confessional Lutheran synod and to communicate our synod's beliefs to the outside world in a clear and loving manner.
- Work with the Commission on Congregational Counseling and other entities of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group to help congregations grow stronger and healthier through the means of grace.

In Christ alone

The COP invites all members of the synod to join in thanks to a gracious God, who has blessed our synod with his pure Word, who has permitted us both to hear and proclaim the saving gospel, and who has led us as a synod and as individuals to place our faith and our hope in Christ alone.

Rev. Mark Schroeder, reporter

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president and chairman
Rev. James Huebner, first vice president
Rev. Joel Voss, second vice president
Rev. Jon Buchholz, Arizona-California District
Rev. Charles Degner, Minnesota District
Rev. Douglas Engelbrecht, Northern Wisconsin District
Rev. John Guse, South Atlantic District
Rev. Theodore Lambert, Pacific Northwest District

Rev. Peter Naumann, Dakota-Montana District
Rev. Donald Patterson, South Central District
Rev. Herbert Prah, Western Wisconsin District
Rev. David Rutschow, Southeastern Wisconsin District
Rev. John Seifert, Michigan District
Rev. Donald Tollefson, North Atlantic District
Rev. Earle Treptow, Nebraska District

Ex officio:

Rev. Robert Pasbrig, recording secretary

WELS Support Committee Floor Committee #8

Our calling

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

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

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

Our current situation

The committee is composed of five district first vice presidents of WELS. The first vice president in every district is the contact person for the Support Committee. The Support Committee looks to local pastors, circuit pastors, and district officers to be alert to possible circumstances of need on the part of retired called workers and their surviving spouses living in their district. These pastors inform the retired called worker/spouse needing help of the possibility of receiving financial assistance from the Support Committee and, if needed, communicate this situation also to the chairman of the Support Committee. In 2012 there were 30 family units throughout the synod receiving support. The amount budgeted to provide support for these family units was an expenditure of \$250,000 for the year. Sometimes during the course of a year new requests are made to the Support Committee. We thank our Lord for enabling our synod to take care of all those who needed assistance in 2012.

A look ahead

The Support Committee continues to provide assistance to retired called workers and/or their surviving spouses as long as synod finances make it possible. At the beginning of 2013 there were 27 family units receiving support, calling for a monthly expenditure of \$19,119 and an annual budget for approving requests of \$229,428. In some cases the requests needed to be reduced because of budget constraints. The Support Committee budget is no longer able to cover the cost for subscriptions to *Forward in Christ*, *Meditations*, and *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*. The Support Committee thanks Northwestern Publishing House for covering the costs of these subscriptions in 2013 to provide support recipients with the periodicals requested.

Rev. Mark Johnston, reporter

Rev. Mark Johnston, chairman
Rev. Douglas Free
Rev. Paul Naumann
Rev. John Steinbrenner
Rev. Joel Zank

Commission on Inter-Church Relations Floor Committee #5

Our calling

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

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

Our current situation

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod

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

Pastor Steven Lange attended the ELS convention in June 2012 as an official WELS observer. At the convention, the ELS Doctrine Committee recommended against the use of NIV2011 in its member congregations. The convention delegates resolved that members of ELS congregations should be informed of “the weaknesses of NIV2011” and seek pastoral guidance in selecting “accurate and understandable translations” and that the ELS Doctrine Committee continue its study of various Bible translations and report its findings to the synod. It may be noted that the WELS Translation Evaluation Committee has published a short response to the statement of the ELS Doctrine Committee, which can be found at www.wels.net/translation.

The ELS convention delegates also wrestled with the implications of the Affordable Care Act and the Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate to cover contraception, abortifacients, and sterilization. The convention directed their synod president to produce a statement about the HHS ruling, which was published in the August 2012 *Lutheran Sentinel* and is now available on the ELS Web site, www.evangelicallutheransynod.org.

ELS Vice President Glenn Obenberger delivered the convention essay, “Created in Christ Jesus for Good Works.” Obenberger highlighted the important truth that, while faith alone saves, it is never alone. Christians will not use the doctrine of justification by faith alone as a license to sin but will naturally produce good works as a fruit of faith, especially as they carry out their earthly vocations. Section V of the essay, entitled “Proclaim the Excellencies of Him Who Called You,” elicited considerable discussion and asserted things that could cause some concern among us. Obenberger discussed what he perceives as an unscriptural emphasis on outreach over the doctrine of justification. He suggested that many Christians have been made to feel guilty about not always intentionally telling others about Jesus when such proclamation should flow naturally from situations that arise as Christians pursue their vocations. He asserted that only called ministers have an explicit command from God to proclaim the gospel. Finally, he stated that showing mercy and charity corporately through social ministry is also a part of the mission of the church.

Several CICR members joined other WELS representatives to meet with ELS leaders at the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Forum, held at Bethany Lutheran Seminary and College in Mankato, Minn., in October 2012. The forum spent several hours discussing essays written and presented by both WELS and ELS pastors, including Obenberger's convention essay. The discussion was fruitful, as participants came to a better understanding of one another's perspectives. As always, it was encouraging to recognize the fundamental unity of doctrine and practice that is present among the leaders of our two synods.

The CICR is scheduled to meet with the ELS Doctrine Committee in September 2013.

Baltic and Eastern Europe

Official contact with our sister churches in the Baltic and Eastern Europe has been relatively scarce in the past year, partly due to the fact that the pastors of these churches must hold down other jobs in order to support themselves. In Latvia, 25 participants were involved in a summer youth camp, and work continues on their official church Web site, www.latvijasluteranis.lv. The Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC) continues to face challenges posed by an increasingly hostile government and a decrease in the financial resources that are used to provide support for congregations and workers. In spite of those challenges, the ULC continues to work faithfully to proclaim the saving gospel and to be a voice for confessional Lutheranism in Ukraine. The CICR maintains direct contact with the confessional Lutherans in these regions through its contact man, Pastor Jonathan Balge, who hopes to make a visit to both Latvia and Ukraine in the coming year.

Scandinavia

The CICR continues to promote contact and communication with sister churches in Sweden, Norway, and Finland. That work is especially carried out through the CICR contact man to Scandinavia, Pastor John Vieths, whose faithful service in this role will come to an end at the synod convention. Annual trips have provided him with an opportunity to preach, present essays and workshops, and strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship through personal contact.

In Sweden, the Lutheran Confessional Church (LBK) has been wrestling with the doctrine of church fellowship in recent years. Work remains in clarifying the positions of various participants in the controversy, and additional assistance from WELS theologians has been requested.

Our sister church in Finland, the Lutheran Confessional Church in Finland (SLT), continues to seek out other confessional groups in Finland for doctrinal discussion and exploration of fellowship. Vieths accepted an invitation to present an essay on Romans 5:18 at their 2013 convention.

With respect to the Lutheran Confessional Church–Norway, the CICR resolved to recommend to the 2013 synod convention that WELS officially recognize this recently established independent church body as our sister church body (see p. 205 for the memorial).

Germany

The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany (ELFK) is a church body of nearly 1,300 members with about 35 congregations and preaching stations. Pastor Martin Wilde serves as president.

The ELFK met in convention June 1–3, 2012, in Zwickau, Saxony. The convention heard reports on the new hymnal that a committee has been preparing in recent years and approved a list of hymns to be included. The convention also declared fellowship with a formerly independent congregation in Würzburg after several years of doctrinal discussion.

The Concordia Book Store in Zwickau is publishing an edition of Luther's Small Catechism with German on one page and an Arabic translation on the opposite page. An Arabic-speaking man offered the translation to the ELFK because he thought that Luther's Small Catechism offers an ideal approach to Muslims.

Pastor Holger Weiss was elected the new rector of the seminary in Leipzig. Pastor Gottfried Herrmann had served in that capacity for some time. Herrmann will continue to teach church history, Old Testament, and practical theology. Weiss also teaches New Testament. The seminary had four German students and a student from Norway this past school year. Martin Luther College graduate Julius Buelow also studied at Leipzig this year. The Germany Support Fund provided financial assistance to one ELFK student at Michigan Lutheran Seminary this past year.

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

Portugal

Prof. Ken Cherney serves as the contact man to our sister church body in Portugal, the Lutheran Church of Portugal (ILP). Pastor Artur Villares has expressed “profuse thanks” for the continued support offered by the CICR and WELS in recent years. Besides his ministry work in Portugal, Villares has received contacts from Brazil and is very willing to help in other potential areas of WELS world mission work. Economic necessity has forced the second pastor in the ILP, António Canoa, to rejoin his family in Brazil, where he hopes to be of help to WELS mission efforts.

Puerto Rico

It is the responsibility of the CICR to maintain contact with our sister church in Puerto Rico, the Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Church. Pastor Timothy Satorius is the CICR’s liaison to Puerto Rico, and he makes periodic visits there. Satorius reports that Eligio Rodriguez, who attended the 2011 WELS convention, has completed his seminary studies. Rodriguez serves the congregation in Humacao part time, as he continues to work full time as a police officer.

The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference

The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) consists of confessional Lutheran church bodies throughout the world, including WELS. CICR members have consistently participated at CELC triennial meetings through their attendance and through their service as elected officers of the conference.

More than 100 registered delegates and visitors representing 33 different countries attended the Seventh Triennial Convention of the CELC in New Ulm and Mankato, Minn., June 4–6, 2011. Pastor Davison Mutentami, representing the Lutheran Church of Central Africa (Zambia), offered a keynote essay titled “The Mission of the Church.” During the convention, delegates voted to approve full or associate membership to three new churches: All Saints Lutheran Church of Nigeria, the Lutheran Confessional Church–Norway, and the East Seoul Canaan Church of South Korea.

Several new officers began service for the CELC at the 2011 convention. Pastor Daniel Koelpin (WELS) was installed as the new president and Prof. Michael Smith (ELS) as the new vice president. Elected to the Planning Committee were Pastor Michael Duncan (WELS) and Pastor Steven Petersen (ELS). Prof. John Brenner (WELS) has joined the Theological Commission, replacing Prof. Lyle Lange (WELS) who completed 15 years of service.

In 2012 regional conferences were held in Africa (Lusaka, Zambia) and Europe (Porto, Portugal). About 100 men attended the African regional meeting, which was described by one participant as a “mountain-top experience” and “hugely important for the African churches,” as it gave them an opportunity to offer mutual encouragement and support to one another face to face. The European regional meeting was also well-received and rewarding for all participants.

Plans are going forward for the upcoming international conventions. The Eighth Triennial Convention will be hosted by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Peru in May 2014, hopefully at a hotel within walking distance to the Peruvian seminary. This will be the first time that the convention has been held in South America. The topic will be “Sanctification,” and essayists have been selected. In 2017 the CELC is planning to meet in Germany, hosted by the ELFK. Since 2017 will be a big Reformation anniversary year, the ELFK has already booked a facility in Grimma for June 28–July 2, 2017.

Free conferences

A free conference is a gathering that individuals attend, not as representatives of their church bodies, to discuss doctrinal and practical issues of the day. They are historically conducted outside the framework of fellowship (no joint devotions or prayers). In keeping with their historical use by American Lutherans, they have the goal of bringing about doctrinal clarity, clearing up misunderstandings between Lutheran church bodies, and giving a forum for the presentation of the truth of Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Several free conferences of note took place in the last biennium, with presenters and participants from several different Lutheran church bodies in America, including WELS. Two of these free conferences were held on the campus of Martin Luther College. Attendees have expressed great interest in pursuing additional free conferences in the future.

Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod

The CICR continues to monitor developments in the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS), recognizing some positive signs but noticing others that are cause for continued concern. An informal meeting between leaders of WELS, the ELS, and the LCMS was held in December 2012 in an effort to discover what common ground may exist between the three church bodies on the basis of the Holy Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions, to determine where differences still exist in doctrine and practice, and to help defuse any caricatures of theological positions that may

have developed since the dissolution of the Synodical Conference in the 1960s. A follow-up meeting is planned for December 2013 that will primarily address church and ministry issues. The CICR also plans to send an observer to the 2013 LCMS convention, as it has done in the past.

Church of the Lutheran Confession

Pastor Thomas Jeske attended the 2012 convention of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) in Eau Claire, Wis. He observed that the CLC has several new leaders. Pastor Michael Eichstadt of Hales Corners, Wis., has replaced Pastor John Schierenbeck as president of the CLC. Pastor Matthew Ude has become the new head of CLC missions, with the semi-retirement of Pastor David Koenig. Immanuel Lutheran College also has a new president, with Prof. Steven Sippert replacing Prof. John Pfeiffer. WELS President Mark Schroeder has communicated with the new CLC president, as we continue to have interest in this church, now 50-plus years after its break with WELS.

Other meetings

Commission members attended several other church meetings, either through invitation or because of an interest on our part. These meetings enable the CICR to have firsthand information on churches within and outside our fellowship. Such visits also help other church bodies "put a face" with WELS. Pastor Peter Prange attended a meeting of the Protes'tant Conference of the Wisconsin Synod in Mishicot, Wis., in June 2012, and a conference of mostly LCMS sister church bodies held in Peachtree City, Ga., in the fall of 2012. Prof. Thomas Nass attended a meeting of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren in Fergus Falls, Minn., in January 2013.

CICR special funds

The CICR now oversees five special funds that are used to cover contact expenses and to help sister churches in specific areas. The funds are the Baltic Eastern Europe Fund, the Germany Support Fund, the Portugal Fund, the Puerto Rico Fund, and the Scandinavia Fund. Gifts may be sent to the Synod Administration Building and will be received with thanks from the CICR.

A look ahead

This year CICR personnel will serve as convention observers in various places. Besides sending an observer to the LCMS convention, Pastor Steven Lange is slated to attend the 2013 ELS convention. The commission sees attendance at these gatherings as opportunities to express interest in what is happening in other churches and to keep ourselves informed about events and activities in their midst.

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

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

Rev. Peter M. Prange, reporter

Prof. Thomas Nass, chairman
Pres. Paul O. Wendland, vice chairman
Rev. Peter M. Prange, secretary
Rev. Jonathan Balge
Prof. John Brenner
Prof. Kenneth Cherney
Rev. Thomas Jeske
Rev. Steven Lange
Rev. John Vieths
Prof. Keith Wessel

Advisory:

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Rev. James Huebner, WELS first vice president

Ministry of Christian Giving

Floor Committee #6

Our calling

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) serves on behalf of the Conference of Presidents to remind every WELS member that Christ's love is our calling to "excel in the grace of giving." We consider it a privilege to help God's people make planned gifts to Jesus for his work in their congregations, synod, and WELS agencies. The MCG assists the Conference of Presidents with their responsibility to fund the synod. The funding of the synod is provided through Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) as well as direct gifts to WELS from individuals and foundations. In the area of CMO, we share ministry opportunities and stewardship resources with congregations and inform them of how, with God's guidance, they can help proclaim Christ's love through their offerings. In the area of direct gifts from individuals, we send regular letters and e-mails with ministry updates and opportunities for donations. We also provide information about planned gifts that allow donors to support ministry in a way that is most beneficial for them and their families. Gifts from foundations are often the result of consultation with the MCG director and other synod leaders regarding ministry needs. The MCG provides 17 Christian giving counselors (12.8 full-time equivalents, or FTE, due to a number of them being semi-retired) across all 12 districts of WELS to assist prospective donors with gifts of any kind. Our services are free and confidential.

Our current situation

The 2011 synod convention unanimously adopted the long-range plan developed by the Synodical Council. As part of this plan the MCG was tasked with developing an every-member visit "directing all to the 'why' . . . and the 'how to' of joyful and generous financial stewardship." The result is the "It's All About Jesus" program that churches were encouraged to use in 2012–13. According to the synod's long-range plan, the hoped-for, gospel-inspired results of this program (100 percent of eligible churches submitting 10 percent of offerings for synodical work—currently at about 94 percent of churches submitting 7 percent) would fund the ministry expansion detailed in the plan. We pray that our Father richly blesses the every-member visit. The MCG does not plan on this being a one-time effort but rather will continue assisting churches with teaching joy-filled stewardship in order to improve the culture of giving in WELS.

Other major developments in the Ministry of Christian Giving since 2011:

- Office staff was reduced by another .5 FTE through attrition and now stands at three full-time workers in addition to the director. Christian giving counselor staffing increased from 11.2 to 12.8 FTE.
- We thank Pastor Dave Liggett for his seven years of service as director of Christian Giving and appreciate his continued service as a semi-retired Christian giving counselor.
- Pastor Kurt Lueneburg, formerly a Christian giving counselor, has been serving since the start of this year as the new director of Christian giving. Pastor Michael Dietz, Lueneburg's replacement, began his ministry as a Christian giving counselor in the Minnesota and Nebraska Districts on Feb. 1, 2013.
- The MCG, particularly through visits by Christian giving counselors, assisted Martin Luther College with its *Let the Children Come* campaign for building an early childhood learning center. The MCG is also assisting Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary with its *Heritage and Hope: Remembering . . . Rejoicing* 150th anniversary emphasis.
- In keeping with the Ad Hoc Commission's resolution at the 2009 synod convention that the MCG should "explore ways to work with all synodical entities and parasynodical agencies appealing for funds" (2009 *Proceedings*, p. 63), the MCG, working with WELS Foundation, continues to promote a close-knit relationship with parasynodical groups in the area of development by sharing helpful resources and hosting an annual development training seminar open to these organizations.
- Efforts to eliminate the synod's capital debt of \$22.4 million began with the Year of Jubilee coordinated by the MCG in 2009. Gifts have continued to be received for debt retirement to the point of surpassing the \$5 million mark. Those gifts, along with annual allocations of \$1.6 million from the synod's budget, have enabled the synod to make significant progress toward final elimination of the debt. Once the debt is completely eliminated, \$1.6 million annually will be available for the synod's mission and ministry.

A look ahead

A high priority of the Ministry of Christian Giving is encouraging increased Congregation Mission Offerings to meet

the opportunities presented in the synod's long-range plan. As directed by the 2005 synod convention we also continue to build up the WELS endowment funds, mostly through giving counselor visits, toward the \$300 million goal (they are at about \$70.7 million as of the date of this writing).

The MCG will continue to work with other areas of ministry to provide the latest technological conveniences to those we serve. In partnership with Communication Services we plan to add mobile giving capabilities in 2013. Working with WELS Technology and ministerial education schools we will enhance the capabilities of our online donation system by adding a tribute gift option and by working toward the addition of an event registration component. We also hope to further streamline databases with our ministerial education schools to improve communication with alumni.

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

Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, reporter

Mr. Mark Handeland

Rev. Kevin Schultz

Mr. Jerry VonDeylen

Mr. Dennis Walters

Mr. Robert Trojan

Mr. Robert Tupper

Advisory:

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

Communication Services Floor Committee #7

Our calling

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

Our current situation

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

- *WELS Connection*, the monthly video production viewed in more than 800 congregations, which highlights the important work of the synod's areas of ministry;
- *WELS Connection Close-up*, the print companion piece to the video presentation, which has a print run of 123,000 per month;
- *Forward in Christ*, WELS' official monthly publication that informs and inspires our members, which has a print run of more than 30,000;
- "Together," a bi-weekly e-newsletter filled with the latest WELS news, which is e-mailed to more than 10,000 subscribers and viewed online on www.wels.net—more than 300 congregations also use the print version; and
- www.wels.net, the synod's official Web site, which had more than 380,000 unique visitors during 2012.

WELS members should notice the same topics being discussed from different angles in each of these platforms each month. The mailed monthly appeal from the Ministry of Christian Giving also follows this theme. Communication

Services' goal is to work with each area of ministry to identify their priorities—and then to communicate these priorities to laypeople and called workers alike through this cross-promotion strategy.

The following new initiatives were implemented since April 2012:

- A redesign of the wels.net home page, which now showcases fresh content each day on the Web site. The lead banner offers inspirational stories from *Forward in Christ* magazine and the Daily Devotion. We've also added more topical articles and images relating to current events and how they impact us as confessional Lutherans. Pastor Paul Prange also provides story content on a weekly basis for the home page. Every member of the synod is invited to make www.wels.net their personal computer's home page.
- A strategic plan is in place to showcase WELS' events and special services on the wels.net home page. An excellent example of this initiative is our coverage of the Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary call and assignments days. WELS' home page provided the reader with excellent articles related to the assignment days from President Mark Schroeder and Pastor Paul Prange, along with live video links to the call services as well as the concerts and graduation services from each of the schools. Eight live events in all were available on www.wels.net. We also added a link to each school's list of graduates and their assignments following the services. This is an example of the type of cooperation and partnership that Communication Services enjoys with WELS Technology and our schools. The result is that WELS members who were not able to attend these special events were still able to experience them and have access to important material relating to them.
- Social media is another important communications platform and tool to reach our members. Our Facebook page, facebook.com/welslutherans has more than 12,000 followers, and we strive to be active daily on the Facebook page and to invite more interaction from our followers. We also have a Twitter page: @welstweets, with nearly 1,000 followers. We used social media as a communications and marketing tool for the WELS International Youth Rally in Knoxville, Tenn. With nearly 2,000 young participants attending the rally, the wels.net home page and our Facebook and Twitter pages were the source of information and stories happening at the rally. It was a great way for parents, family, and friends of the participants to keep up to date on events at the rally and have these young people share their experiences and photos from the rally.
- Communication Services recently hired a marketing/graphic designer who is responsible for driving creative innovation to support the objectives of WELS areas of ministry and subsidiary organizations and for developing all graphic materials for the Communication Services department. This staff member uses computer-based applications to produce graphic materials to enhance projects/programs and to project a professional WELS image. This position is fully funded by WELS subsidiaries—Church Extension Fund, WELS Foundation, Benefit Plans, and WELS Investment Funds—through 2014. The position will then be funded by Communication Services.
- WELS Communication Services created plastic, biodegradable banners with the WELS logo for our churches and schools to display if they have a booth or table at community festivals or meetings. Many have used it as a table skirt or cut the plastic banners into sections and placed the WELS logo on the walls of their event. We provide this free of charge, and more than 100 churches have proudly promoted their affiliation with WELS at community events.
- Communication Services assisted the Board for Ministerial Education in the production of the annual *Walking Together* video that showcases the work of WELS in an action-packed, four-minute video. The people responsible for the stewardship of your Congregation Mission Offering (CMO) dollars want you to know exactly how your offerings are being used. They also want you to be confident that increases in CMO will be used in a responsible way according to the synod's long-range plan.
- *WELS Annual Report 2012* was redesigned as an attractive, easy-to-read booklet and made available in print and as a PowerPoint presentation. Besides the print version, for the first time, we created an online digital version that is optimized for mobile devices, so even more members can now access this informative annual report on their tablets and smartphones. Our hope is that every member will know how God has blessed WELS through their support.
- The WELS Mobile application, formerly called WELS Online, has been updated and re-launched. WELS Mobile brings together much of the written, audio, and video content available on www.wels.net and reformats it to be accessible on mobile phones, tablets, and other devices. Two new features include the ability to search for WELS and ELS churches along with driving directions and to share content via social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

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

A look ahead

The synod's long-range plan states:

Worldwide identity as Confessional Lutherans

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

To accomplish this goal, an external communication and promotional plan is proposed. This plan includes:

- providing digital delivery of subscription-based Northwestern Publishing House publications such as *Forward in Christ*. The plan is to launch the *Forward in Christ* digital product at the synod convention with an initial marketing campaign that includes free electronic access for the remainder of 2013 and a giveaway of several tablet devices.
- creating a television studio for video podcasts, Schools of Outreach "Training the Trainers," online Bible study series, www.wels.net "extras" featuring our areas of ministry, and the weekly WelsTech video podcast. This studio should be located in a high traffic, visual location near the lobby of the Synod Administration Building.
- designing a portable set for synod convention news updates throughout the day (morning, afternoon, and evening) rather than one late night wrap-up story. This is in addition to live streaming the convention floor sessions. Interactive components and a Q&A will be included in the news update reports.
- launching WELS Mobile, an organized series of WELS apps, Multi-Language Publications digital coordinator products, and evangelism applications for mobile devices, which will promote the synod and give our members the knowledge, confidence, and security they need to proclaim the gospel and share what they believe as members of WELS, all in the palms of their hands.
- increasing the visible church known as WELS in the state of Wisconsin—home to our largest concentration of congregations—and nationally. Television, radio, and online advertising campaigns would promote www.wels.net and WELS Mobile products. This campaign would establish WELS as a beacon of confessional Lutheranism and promote all of our congregations as places where the law and gospel are preached.
- developing a "text to donate" option for our members who wish to use their smartphones or tablet devices to support a synod area of ministry. The \$10 or \$25 donations are billed directly to the donor's cell phone. We would also send text messages to those donors to inform and encourage them of ongoing WELS events.

Mr. Lee Hitter, reporter

Advisory:

Rev. John A. Braun, Northwestern Publishing House

Mr. Lee Hitter, director of communications

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Prof. Daniel Leyrer, *Forward in Christ* consultant

Nominating Committee Floor Committee #26

These candidates have been chosen by the synod Nominating Committee to be presented to the delegates of the 62nd biennial convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The delegates will elect one man for each position listed unless otherwise indicated. Incumbents are noted by an asterisk (*).

Synodical Council

Pastor-at-large, 2-year term

Joel Jenswold, Hortonville, Wis.*

Jonathan Stern, Flagstaff, Ariz.

Dan Witte, Myakka City, Fla.

Pastor-at-large, 4-year term

Nathan Cordes, Niles, Ill.

Ross Else, Phoenix, Ariz.

Jonathan Schroeder, Sharpsburg, Ga.*

Teacher-at-large

Ryan Hill, Houston, Tex.

James Moeller, Watertown, Wis.*

David Wilson, Westland, Mich.

Board of Appeals

Chairman (pastor)

Kenneth Cherney Jr., Mequon, Wis.

Karl Walther, Watertown, Wis.

Paul Zell, Mequon, Wis.

Pastor

Marc Frey, New Carlisle, Ohio

Thomas Jeske, Omaha, Neb.

Norman Seeger, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Teacher

Thomas Hering, Grafton, Wis.

Nathan Kieselhorst, Watertown, Wis.

Joel Nelson, Muskego, Wis.

Layman

Todd Hanselman, Livonia, Mich.

Mark Maurer, Aurora, Colo.*

A. Frederick Nell, Canton, Mich.

Board for World Missions

Pastor

Glen Hieb, Cleveland, Ohio

Howard Mohlke, Nampa, Idaho*

Charles Papenfuss, Pewaukee, Wis.

Teacher

Robert Anderson, Lannon, Wis.*

Justin Gregorius, Watertown, Wis.

Chris Poetter, Federal Way, Wash.

Layman

David Miller, Chelsea, Mich.

Mark Schulz, Milton, Wis.*

Gerald Zimpelmann, Eagle River, Wis.

Board for Ministerial Education

Chairman (parish pastor)

Phil Hirsch, Manhattan, Kan.*

John Koelpin, Dallas, Texas

Paul Seager, Southlake, Texas

Teacher

Richard Gibson, West Saint Paul, Minn.*

John Kolander, Brookfield, Wis.

Nathan Sievert, St. Joseph, Mich.

Layman

Joseph Jewell, Pasadena, Calif.
Michael Krueger, Midland, Mich.
Brian Scheele, Plymouth, Neb.

Luther Preparatory School Governing Board

Chairman (parish pastor)

Kenneth Brokmeier, Brookings, S.D.*
Eric Roecker, Menomonee Falls, Wis.
Daniel Schroeder, Chula Vista, Calif.

Michigan Lutheran Seminary Governing Board

Chairman (parish pastor)

John Bortulin, Plymouth, Neb.
Joseph Dietrich, Medford, Wis.
Benjamin Tomczak, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Commission on Evangelism

Chairman (pastor, teacher, or layman)

Donn Dobberstein, Port Orange, Fla.*
Joseph Fricke, Mauston, Wis.
Jonathan Scharf, Covington, Ga.

Commission on Lutheran Schools

Chairman (pastor, teacher, or layman)

Bruce McKenney, Lake Mills, Wis.
Stephen Schultz, Antioch, Ill.
James Sievert, West Bend, Wis.*

Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors

Pastor

James Janke, Janesville, Wis.
Bruce McKenney, Lake Mills, Wis.
Luke Werre, Sun Prairie, Wis.*

Martin Luther College professor

Daniel Balge, New Ulm, Minn.
David Sellnow, New Ulm, Minn.
Keith Wessel, New Ulm, Minn.*

Layman

Michael McCormick, Rocky River, Ohio
Patrick Mulrain, Tomah, Wis.
John Spaeth, Jenera, Ohio

Rev. Robert Pasbrig, chairman
Rev. Jonathan Bergemann, North Atlantic District
Rev. Donald Buch, Western Wisconsin District
Rev. Joel Gaertner, Northern Wisconsin District
Rev. Raymond Kimbrough, Southeastern Wisconsin District
Rev. Henry Koch, Minnesota District
Rev. John Koester, South Central District
Rev. Dale Raether, South Atlantic District
Rev. D. Thomas Rawerts, Dakota-Montana District
Rev. Alois Schmitzer III, Michigan District
Rev. Paul Schulz, Arizona-California District
Rev. Andrew Schwartz, Pacific Northwest District
Rev. Philip Spaude, Nebraska District

Congregation and Ministry Support Group

Floor Committees #12, #13, and #14

Our calling

Following recommendations of the Ad Hoc Commission, the 2009 synod convention placed the former Parish Services under the Conference of Presidents (COP). In October 2009 the COP reconfigured the former Parish Services units into a new Congregation and Ministry Support Group (CMSG). This restructuring created a closer and more direct cooperative relationship between the district presidents and the resources available to them and the congregations in their districts.

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

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

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

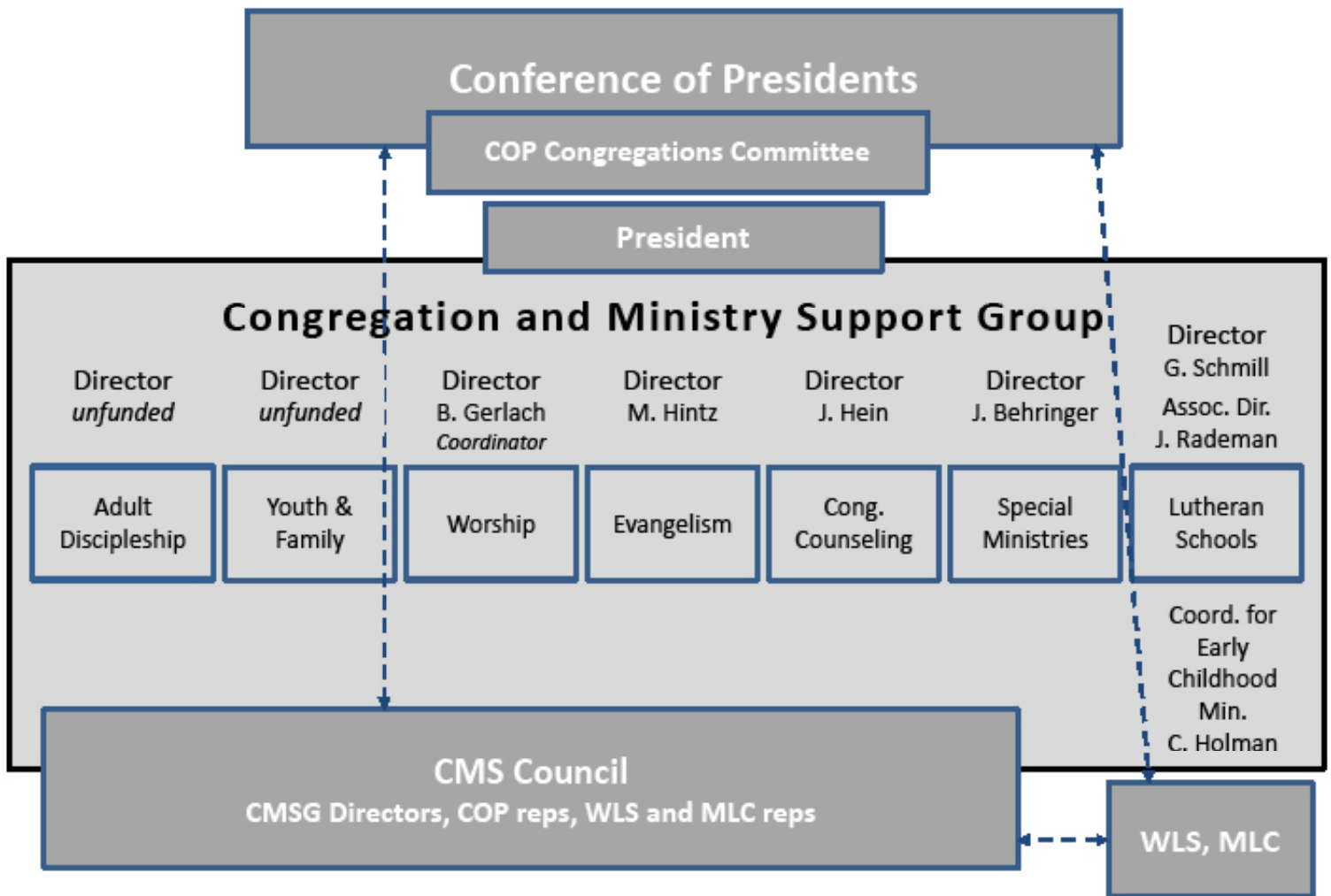
Our current situation

Budgetary realities since 2009 have required a downsized CMSG with continued vacancies in some positions. In early 2013 there are seven people serving in called CMSG positions, down from 11 in 2009. This includes the new national coordinator for early childhood ministry, a position prioritized by the COP and filled in July 2011, and the new director of the Commission on Congregational Counseling.

The Parish Assistance program ended in June 2010. The COP, following the input of a committee formed to recommend how congregational needs will be met without Parish Assistance, established the Commission on Congregational Counseling (CCC) and appointed Pastor Jonathan Hein as chairman. The 2013–15 budget includes funding for a parish-based interim director for the CCC, and Hein recently accepted the call to be that director. See details under the CCC report on p. 29.

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

The current structure of CMSG is shown in the chart on the following page.



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

A look ahead

Along with the guidance provided to the directors by their commissions, guidance and coordination of CMSG program and priorities come in part from the Congregation and Ministry Support Council (CMSC), when needed. The CMSC is chaired by First Vice President James Huebner and includes CMSG directors, members of the COP Congregations Committee, Board for Ministerial Education representatives (Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Martin Luther College presidents, along with heads of continuing education), and WELS President Mark Schroeder.

The CMSG has been working on various stronger partnerships, as envisioned by the Ad Hoc Commission and by the 2009 synod convention. In the time that has passed since 2009, this work in progress seeks to answer these questions:

- How can the CMSG better serve alongside district presidents and a revamped circuit pastor system?
- How can district presidents encourage better usage of CMSG resources and programs?
- How will the CMSG be a part of the growing emphasis on continuing education of called workers and efforts toward building stronger and healthier parishes and schools?

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

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, reporter

Congregation and Ministry Support Council:

Rev. James Huebner, chairman and WELS first vice president

Rev. Jim Behringer, director of WELS Commission on Special Ministries
Rev. Bryan Gerlach, coordinator of the CMSG and director of WELS Commission on Worship
Prof. Richard Gurgel, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
Rev. John Guse, Conference of Presidents
Rev. Michael Hintz, director of WELS Commission on Evangelism
Teacher James Rademan, associate director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools
Rev. Ted Lambert, Conference of Presidents
Teacher John Meyer, Martin Luther College
Teacher Greg Schmill, director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools
Rev. John Seifert, Conference of Presidents

Advisory:

Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Pres. Paul O. Wendland, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
Pres. Mark Zarling, Martin Luther College

Appendix: Institute for Worship and Outreach

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

The IWO carries out the following functions.

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

During the past two years the Institute for Worship and Outreach has presented to six districts; the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Symposium; Martin Luther College's Evangelism Day; Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's Mission and Ministry; and the National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts. Several members of the institute are regular presenters at Schools of Worship Enrichment. The members of the institute are thankful for a Thrivent grant to help cover costs during challenging financial times.

Rev. Jonathan E. Schroeder, reporter

Rev. Jonathan E. Schroeder, moderator
Rev. Jonathan Hein, co-moderator
Prof. Daniel Leyrer
Prof. James Tiefel
Rev. Donn Dobberstein
Rev. Michael Hintz
Rev. James Huebner
Rev. Bryan Gerlach
Rev. Jon Zabell
Rev. Chuck Westra
Rev. Aaron Christie
Rev. Jonathan Bauer

Rev. Michael Geiger
Rev. John Steinbrenner
Rev. Adam Mueller
Rev. Nathan Strutz
Rev. David Scharf
Rev. Michael Schultz
Rev. Earle Treptow

Commission on Worship Floor Committee #12

Our calling

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

Worship is the heart of all parish life, the time when the greatest number of members gathers to proclaim the gospel and receive God's life-giving power in Word and sacrament.

Our current situation

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

The National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts

The National Worship Conference is the largest worship conference of all North American Lutheran church bodies (including events sponsored by the pan-Lutheran Association of Lutheran Church Musicians), even though WELS is one of the smaller Lutheran synods. The triennial conference took place July 19–22, 2011, both in St. Peter, Minn., (using a larger chapel for opening and closing events and enjoying air-conditioned dorm lodging) and in New Ulm, Minn., to feature the new chapel at Martin Luther College.

Conference planners are searching for a campus that would provide improved facilities over past venues: a larger air-conditioned chapel, more air-conditioned dorm lodging, a location closer to WELS heartland. No campus has been identified that is strong in all areas. Check the Commission on Worship Web site at www.wels.net/worship for more information about the July 2014 conference.

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

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

Schools of Worship Enrichment

The Commission on Worship has offered Schools of Worship Enrichment since 2002. By the end of 2012, we had served 267 churches. The soul membership of these churches is one-third of WELS. School of Worship Enrichment events have been some of the most valuable and appreciated efforts of this commission. Participant surveys at every site representing a wide variety of parishes throughout the country have given these events high marks. Agenda, presentation, and worship modeling were revised in fall 2011 to help maintain the excellence of these events.

Christian Worship: Supplement

Sales of *Christian Worship: Supplement* (CWS) have far exceeded NPH projections from 2008. By early January 2013 1,860 accompaniment editions had been sold, indicating that a strong majority of WELS parishes are using CWS to some degree. The pew and spiral editions have a combined sales of 50,766 copies.

In addition to the 255-page pew edition and the accompaniment edition, other editions (with sales) are: electronic (572) and guitar (573). Purchase of the electronic edition makes use of the pew edition optional. Total sales of all CWS editions are approaching \$1 million.

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

Publishing

The commission publishes two bi-monthly newsletters: *Worship the Lord* and *Preach the Word*. These newsletters are used also in Hong Kong, Ukraine, Sweden, Indonesia, and parts of Latin America. In addition, a growing number of non-WELS pastors are making use of *Preach the Word*.

In August 2012, Prof. Richard Gurgel from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) ended a two-year term as editor of *Preach the Word* in connection with new efforts at continued education for pastors. Gurgel's work was funded initially by a WLS grant while the Commission on Worship funded the *Preach the Word* newsletter. In September 2012, Pastor Paul Prange began a series of conversations about various aspects of preaching.

A seven-part *Worship the Lord* series ran through May 2012 and was planned by Pastor Jonathan Bauer and Ms. Katherine Tiefel with helpful ideas for choirs and other vocal groups in worship. The current series, focusing on worship and the Confessions, was planned by Pastor Stephen Valleskey.

An updated edition of *Planning Christian Worship* was released serially over the last few years on the Commission on Worship Web site (not by NPH). The final portions became available in late 2011. Thanks to the writers: Pastors Daniel Deutschlander, Joel Gawrisch, and Jonathan Schroeder.

NPH released the electronic pew edition of *Christian Worship* in 2011. Sales at the beginning of 2013 were 151 units.

Pastor Michael Schultz, Commission on Worship member and hymnal project director, prepared a new service setting for guitar and piano in 2011, providing new tunes for the songs of the Lutheran liturgy. Music is available from Schultz.

A look ahead

Ongoing activity

Many of the activities described above will continue in the future, encouraging WELS toward good worship variety and vitality. Development continues on several projects not mentioned above, including a redesigned/expanded HymnSoft originally scheduled for release in 2012 but delayed until 2013 and Intranet resources on Connect along with planning resources provided by some district worship coordinators.

Future activity

Newest initiatives

- **Hymnology:** In July 2012 a committee began work on a hymnology curriculum. The mission is simple: "This curriculum will help teachers cultivate in their students a deeper appreciation for Christian hymnody." The curriculum will include up-to-date educational trends and teaching strategies for the 21st-century classroom. The committee hopes to complete the project in 2015, with sample plans distributed at the 2014 worship conference. Initial committee members include two pastors (Jon Zabell and Jason Oakland) and six teachers (Julie Neujahr, Naomi Laabs, Beth Nolte, Mary Prange, Mike Marquardt, and Kevin Bode).
- **Worship education resources:** The Commission on Worship has determined to place higher priority on resources for worship education. This will include a variety of Bible study approaches and a professional volume on the theology of worship. Since the hymnal and *Christian Worship: Manual* were published in 1993, the Commission on Worship has published 16 projects, culminating in the 2008 hymnal supplement (these projects include two ongoing newsletters and the serial *Worship Music* keyboard resource). The majority of these projects have been practical rather than educational resources. The last major publication for worship education was the 1996 curriculum *Come Worship Christ*.
- **2017 Reformation anniversary planning:** In anticipation of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the Commission on Worship is exploring revision of some historic Lutheran hymns. The language in translation of some hymns may be improved, making these worship masterpieces more accessible to 21st-century worshippers. New translations would speak with as much clarity and impact as found in newer English hymns, such as "In Christ Alone." In some cases, new music might be provided. See "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands" in *Christian Worship: Supplement* for an example of new music. The 2011 worship conference featured new translations of two

historic texts, both with new tunes: “Jesus, Priceless Treasure” (CW 349) and “Where Wilt Thou Go?” (*The Lutheran Hymnal* 197).

2024 hymnal project

WELS’ long-range plan, adopted by the 2011 convention, includes this goal under strategies for Congregation and District Ministry: “establish a committee to publish a new hymnal by the 500th anniversary of the first Lutheran hymnal (1524).” In 2024 our 1993 hymnal will be just over 30 years old. At the publication of *Christian Worship* (CW), the Commission on Worship suggested that a replacement not wait as long as the time from the 1941 *The Lutheran Hymnal* (TLH) to CW—52 years. With many changes occurring in worship since the late 20th century, even 40 years may be too long between hymnals. A goal of a new hymnal 30 years after CW allows for several benefits: earlier and wider usage of excellent new hymns (the “hymn explosion” of the late 20th century has continued), addressing beneficial worship trends, consolidating primary worship resources into one book, and contributing to unity within WELS. The Commission on Worship has reviewed the possible scope and timeline for the project and launched the project in 2012 when the Conference of Presidents called Pastor Michael Schultz to serve as hymnal project director. Funding is provided by Northwestern Publishing House and will not rely on Congregation Mission Offerings.

Background

What a difference a generation makes! The 1983 synod convention authorized a new hymnal project. The preceding and following years witnessed anxiety over several issues: changing language, loss of a long familiar hymnal (TLH), concern about an adequate talent pool for developing a WELS hymnal, change in worship, acceptance (and sales) of a new hymnal.

Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal (CW), the 1993 hymnal, went on to become the most successful denominational hymnal of the late 20th century—judged by the percentage of a denomination’s congregations adopting its hymnal. Well before its tenth anniversary, upwards of 95 percent of WELS congregations were using CW. As a “new/revised” hymnal, CW served remarkably well as a transition from TLH.

There have been other worship changes over the last generation. Many in WELS have appreciated a heightened emphasis on the priority of worship as a key factor driving all areas of congregational health and vitality.

Goals

Christian Worship was produced over a period of ten years. Its ancillary volumes, such as *Handbook*, *Pastor’s Companion*, *Altar Book*, and *Occasional Services*, were released over the next several years. The vision for the next hymnal is that all of its ancillary volumes and accompanying materials will be released at the same time as the hymnal itself. This goal, coupled with congregations’ continuing desires to acquire quality worship materials (as evidenced by the use of *Christian Worship: Supplement*), will make it a very busy ten years for the hymnal committee.

With the project in its infancy and a project director at work for less than two months at the time of this writing, groundwork is being done in preparation for the time when committees will be filled and the research and development phase of the project will be in full swing. With current technology and the digital resources of this project being high in the minds of many, a project Web site will provide information on the progress of the work.

This project targets much more than just a new hymnbook ten years from now. It is an opportunity for ongoing worship education and dialogue, a time for continued encouragements in the musical arts (instrumental performance, musical composition, authoring and translating of hymn texts), and an occasion for a heightened emphasis on the principles of worship that unite us as fellow Christians.

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

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, reporter

Rev. Jon Zabell, chairman
Mr. Philip Becker, vice chairman
Rev. Aaron Christie, secretary
Teacher Kevin Bode
Rev. Jason Hacker
Mr. Brian Heinitz
Dr. Kermit Moldenhauer

Advisory:

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, director of WELS Commission on Worship

Mr. Carl Nolte, Northwestern Publishing House

Rev. Michael Schultz, hymnal project director

Prof. James Tiefel, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Commission on Evangelism Floor Committee #12

Our calling

The Commission on Evangelism exists to assist congregations and members to seize every opportunity the Lord provides to evangelize lost souls. Our service to WELS is:

1. To develop and promote evangelism resources that faithfully proclaim the truth of Scripture to the lost.
2. To promote evangelism attitudes, structures, and programs consistent with Christian doctrine and the situation into which God has called a church, its called workers, and its people.
3. To promote the “equipping of the saints” for organized congregational evangelism and individual Christian witness.

Our current situation

School of Outreach

A key objective of the WELS Commission on Evangelism is to assist every WELS congregation with specific and ongoing guidance for evangelism planning, organization, and implementation of outreach strategies. The School of Outreach continues to be an important aspect of our work to help accomplish this objective.

In the last two years, 126 congregations representing all 12 districts participated in the School of Outreach program. Leaders from those congregations attended two one-day workshops that were scheduled several months apart. Pastors from the area, who have been trained in the School of Outreach program, made presentations on key components of a congregational evangelism program. At each of the workshops, there were breakout sessions at which the presenters worked with individual congregations to advise them regarding outreach plans and strategies. In the months following each of the workshops, those advisors made several contacts to offer follow-up assistance specific to the needs of congregations.

WhatAboutJesus.com

WhatAboutJesus.com, an outreach Web site produced by the Commission on Evangelism, continues to reach many people with God’s Word. New articles are posted on a regular basis. Daily devotions written by WELS pastors are sent to more than 8,400 e-mail subscribers every weekday morning. The devotions appear also on the home pages of WhatAboutJesus.com and www.wels.net.

Evangelism Day at Martin Luther College

The Commission on Evangelism partners with the faculty of Martin Luther College to enhance the evangelism training of students at the college. Annual evangelism days have been conducted on the MLC campus since 2006. The day for focusing on personal and congregational evangelism starts with a worship service, includes two workshops for each class, large-group presentations, and various “elective” presentations. More than 40 individuals including pastors, teachers, staff ministers, and lay members make presentations.

Road to Emmaus

The *Road to Emmaus* movie is reaching thousands and thousands of people with the message that Jesus is the promised Savior whose death and resurrection give us the peace of forgiveness and the hope of eternal life. More than 260,000 DVDs of the movie have been distributed! Versions are available in English, Spanish, Urdu, Nepali, French, Cantonese, and Mandarin; others are being developed for use around the world. Also, study materials based on the movie are available.

Evangelism resources

The Commission on Evangelism produces many materials to help congregations with their evangelism programs

and individuals with their Christian witness. Some of these products are sold at Northwestern Publishing House and others are available free at the Evangelism area of ministry site on Connect (<https://connect.wels.net/evangelism>).

District evangelism coordinators

Arizona-California: Pastor Steven Hillmer
Dakota-Montana: Pastor Peter Sulzle
Michigan: Pastor Joel Thomford
Minnesota: Pastor Michael Dietz
Nebraska: Pastor David Koelpin
North Atlantic: Pastor Frederick Guldberg
Northern Wisconsin: Pastor David Scharf
Pacific Northwest: Pastor Timothy Schwartz
South Atlantic: Pastor Jonathan Scharf
South Central: Pastor John Hering
Southeastern Wisconsin: Pastor David Pagel
Western Wisconsin: Pastor Joseph Fricke

A look ahead

School of Outreach

The Commission on Evangelism works closely with district evangelism coordinators and their commissions to arrange and implement the School of Outreach program. Our intent is to continue conducting the program annually at various locations in each district so that all congregations have an opportunity and are encouraged to attend. The commission will be developing and offering more training materials for all presenters and advisors to help them better serve congregational leaders who attend a School of Outreach.

Certificate program for Evangelism

The Commission on Evangelism is preparing an Evangelism course for certificate that will be offered through the online program at Martin Luther College. Three units of three credits each are planned. The goal is to have the online Evangelism course available by summer 2014.

Road to Emmaus sequel

A second outreach movie is being developed. A committee made up of Pastors John Braun, Paul Hartman, David Kehl, and Michael Hintz have completed the script. The title of the movie is *Come Follow Me. Road to Emmaus* identified who Jesus is and what he accomplished for our salvation. The sequel focuses on what it means to be his follower. Boettcher/Trinklein Media, Inc., is the producer. Funding for the new movie is coming from a combination of grants, special funds, and gifts from individuals and congregations.

Reaching the "nones"

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

New outreach initiative

In a cooperative effort with the Board for Home Missions, district mission boards, and Kingdom Workers, the Commission on Evangelism is launching a special effort in WELS' larger membership districts (Michigan, Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin, Southeastern Wisconsin, and Western Wisconsin). In each district, members of the district mission board and district evangelism commission along with trained laypeople from Kingdom Workers will seek to assist congregations with their outreach efforts to the community around them and if possible help them establish new ministries (such as Hispanic outreach or another special ministry) or a new mission in their area.

Rev. Michael Hintz, reporter

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

Advisory:

Rev. Michael Hintz, director of WELS Commission on Evangelism

Prof. Daniel Leyrer, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Commission on Congregational Counseling

Floor Committee #12

Our calling

The Commission on Congregational Counseling (CCC) is the newest of the seven commissions in the Congregation and Ministry Support Group (CMSG). It was formed by the Conference of Presidents (COP) in 2010 but its director position has remained vacant. The CCC assists WELS congregations to assess and evaluate ministry, review biblical teachings and principles that impact ministry, develop plans to adjust and expand ministry in appropriate ways, and carry out their plans over a period of time. The CCC serves under the direction of the COP, serving as a means for them to provide encouragement and support to their congregations.

Our current situation

The CCC formally launched its program ministry in 2012. It began with E12, a worship/outreach/leadership module that worked with congregations to develop a comprehensive ministry plan focusing on Easter 2012. E12 provided a wide variety of materials. It also trained congregational leaders how to replicate similar efforts in the future.

The goal was to have 400 churches participate in E12. It ended up having more than 500 WELS and Evangelical Lutheran Synod congregations participate. More than 2,600 people, both called workers and laity, received weekly e-mails offering instruction and encouragement. Approximately a half-million postcards were sent out, inviting unchurched members of the community to join our congregations on Easter. Further information regarding the efforts and blessings of E12 can be found at <https://connect.wels.net/ccc>.

In January 2013 the Conference of Presidents called Pastor Jonathan Hein to serve as director of the CCC. He accepted this call. The call is unique in that Hein will keep his call to his parish; the synod will provide a seminary graduate to Hein's congregation to make sure all the congregation's needs are being met. The call also will be a two-year interim call to allow opportunity for re-evaluation.

Filling this position in 2013 fits with Synodical Council and COP priorities to give more attention to congregational health. Strong and healthy congregations are best able with gospel motivation and energy to help all of WELS carry out its primary missions.

A look ahead

Hein will be responsible for developing resources for training leaders in WELS congregations as well as for identifying and training 60 synodwide counselors who will work directly with congregations. These men will be trained to go into congregations to help them do self-assessment, to help them understand the community better, and to look at biblical ways to make their ministry as good as it can be to the glory of God.

For additional information, visit the CCC Intranet site, <https://connect.wels.net/ccc>.

Rev. Jonathan Hein, reporter

Rev. David Scharf, chairman

Rev. Adam Mueller

Prof. James Tiefel

Rev. Doug Tomhave

Advisory:

Rev. Jonathan Hein, director of WELS Commission on Congregational Counseling

Rev. James Huebner, WELS first vice president

Commission on Special Ministries

Floor Committee #13

Our calling

The Commission on Special Ministries offers spiritual and practical guidance and training to congregations and individuals as they share God's love to those with needs or circumstances that prevent them from being served through a congregation's usual ministry.

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

The commission carries out this work via appointed committees focused on specific areas of special need and district special ministries coordinators who bring our work to the district level.

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

Our current situation

During the past biennium, Pastor Carl Ziemer, who had served as director of Special Ministries for a decade, retired, and Pastor Jim Behringer accepted the call to be director. We are grateful to Ziemer for his patient and energetic stewardship of this work. His evangelical approach increased the harmony of work with the commission's partners in Special Ministries, steered Special Ministries through the rough waters of financial cutbacks, and creatively generated responses to emerging needs.

The Commission on Special Ministries employs three full-time called workers—the director of Special Ministries, a civilian chaplain to the military serving in Europe, and a prison ministry administrator. Our national civilian chaplain to the military serves part time. The latter two positions are supported entirely by special gifts and grants. Under the direction and support of these and other leaders, the commission mobilizes thousands of unpaid volunteers in a worldwide effort to meet the spiritual needs of people who might otherwise be ignored or forgotten. The work of the commission, as well as that of its eight committees, is described in the following paragraphs.

Health and Wellness

The WELS Health and Wellness Committee encourages and assists WELS members and their congregations as they offer spiritual and other services in the following areas: ministry to the aging; nursing and parish nursing; hospital, nursing home, and assisted living ministries. The committee currently has a special concern for the needs of caregivers for those with long-term illness or disabilities.

In its ministry to the aging, the committee offers a "Serving Seniors Symposium" aimed at congregational leaders—men and women—who want to learn, share ideas, and serve others. "Ministry to Alzheimer's Patients and their Families" is the title of another presentation the committee offers.

The Health and Wellness Committee cooperates with several organizations.

The Organization of WELS Seniors (OWLS) grew out of the committee's early involvement in ministry to the aging. Through involvement, fellowship, mutual support, life enrichment activities, and service to others, its members are encouraged and helped to serve as God calls them. Having originated with Special Ministries, OWLS also promotes and strongly supports WELS Special Ministries. The OWLS annual conventions have been held in Lake Geneva, Wis., and North Mankato, Minn., in the last two years. The next OWLS convention is scheduled for Wausau, Wis., Oct. 8–10, 2013.

Parish nursing provides a practical way for congregations to demonstrate loving Christian care and a clear gospel witness to members and the community. For helpful guidelines on how to begin a program, contact the Special Ministries office, 414-256-3241.

The WELS Nurses Association has begun to network and serve God's people. This organization provides support for WELS nurses to grow spiritually as they serve. The association's 2012 workshop on supporting the military and military families provided useful information on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and ministering to families coping with these. Their mission is to "work together as servants of Christ." Visit www.welsnurses.net.

WELS chaplain certification is a continuing education initiative that involves the cooperation of leaders from several Special Ministries divisions and partners and Martin Luther College (MLC). In an era of growing security in institutions, it will become increasingly difficult for local pastors to minister in prisons, military bases, and large health care facilities. Chaplain certification and ecclesiastical endorsement will be increasingly necessary, especially if a pastor or layperson wants to reach out to more than one's own members. Chaplaincy certification means that the applicant has fulfilled all of the class and clinical requirements for certification. The ecclesiastical endorsement means that the Chaplain Certification Committee and the Commission on Special Ministries are endorsing the applicant's abilities and moral character for this specialized ministry. Online courses are being coordinated through MLC; candidates must also take at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at an accredited institution that offers some practical clinical experience. Pastor Robert Dick was the first to complete the WELS chaplain certification course. Costs for the program are the responsibility of the student; we encourage churches and other calling bodies to include funds in their continuing education budget for this purpose. We are seeking grants to provide scholarship assistance where necessary. Pastor Dan Krause is the chairman of this committee. Applications for the program are received by the Chaplain Certification Committee through the Commission on Special Ministries' office.

Military Services

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

Civilian Chaplain Joshua Martin serves hundreds of military personnel and civilians in Europe. He and his family live in Spiesheim, Germany (near Mainz and Frankfurt). Besides worship services, Martin conducts retreats at Reformation and Easter.

As WELS national civilian chaplain and liaison to the military, Pastor Paul Ziemer maintains regular contact with many WELS troops and their families. He coordinates training conferences for WELS military contact pastors and orients and mentors new military contact pastors. When military clearance and funding permit, he supervises periodic chaplain trips to the Middle East or other areas of hostility.

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

The Military Services Committee continues to conduct a "ministry by mail" for those in military service. We send free copies of *Meditations* to military and overseas civilians on our mailing list and a printed monthly worship service to overseas civilians on our mailing list. We also offer devotions online at www.wels.net/military-services/devotions.

WELS Military Services is funded through designated gifts and grants. With two called workers serving as chaplains, we pray that this work may soon have its synodical funding restored. Offerings from individuals and groups such as OWLS continue to flow into the Civilian Chaplaincy Special Fund.

Please help us serve our military personnel and WELS members living in Europe by sending their names and addresses to Special Ministries at 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222. Our online referral service is also available at www.wels.net/military-services.

For more information, contact Pastor Joel Jaeger, committee chairman, at jaegerj@sbcglobal.net.

Prison Ministry

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

Through a central office at New Ulm, Minn., a small staff utilizes the services of hundreds of volunteers to manage a ministry-by-mail program that has reached more than 80,000 inmates. The rate of response to our materials is high. Seventy-five percent of our Bible study course books that are given out produce a response from an inmate! Volunteers prepare regular mailings, correct Bible correspondence tests, and serve as pen pals to inmates.

Partnering with Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries, WELS Prison Ministry equips individuals and congregations for local jail and/or prison ministry through its Jail Ministry Training Team. After initial training, the team offers supplemental training via online courses, occasional visits, and teleconferences. The Jail Ministry Training Team has trained hundreds of lay volunteers and called workers from congregations in 10 of the 12 WELS districts. This effort has been largely funded by grants.

WELS Prison Ministry and Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries continue to seek out men and women for face-to-face jail and prison ministry. Through a program called "Raising up Volunteers for Jail Ministry" we identify and recruit laypeople to bring the gospel to inmates in local institutions. More than 400 lay volunteers have been trained to do face-to-face ministry in a local jail/prison throughout the U.S. Additional training continues in areas of interest. This effort has been largely funded by generous grants. For more information, contact specialministries@wels.net.

WELS Prison Ministry continues to be the major Bible study source for prisoners, with our nineteen Level 1 Bible correspondence courses (and more being written) and three Level 2 publications. New publications are a Level 2 commentary on Romans and two correspondence courses on Contentment and Job. Simplified commentaries on Galatians and Ephesians are in development through a partnership with Multi-Language Publications. It is hoped that this partnership will produce many more books useful for prison ministry as well as world missions. WELS Prison Ministry obtained "I am Blessed" by Pastor Harold Essmann from Multi-Language Publications for use in prison and jail work. Almost all jail and prison ministry resources are available free of charge from WELS Prison Ministry.

For information, contact Mr. Dave Nack, prison ministry administrator, at prisonministry@wels.net or 507-354-3130.

Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry

The Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry promotes and encourages active participation in ministry to people with special needs in our synod. The ministry develops resources and provides information to parents, caregivers, children, adults, pastors, teachers, and congregations about education programs, mentoring networks, support groups, and printed and digital materials. The key to accessing these supports is through the revised Web site found at www.wels.net/iddm and by joining the ministry's mailing list by request at iddm@wels.net or 414-256-3241.

Sample resources found at www.wels.net/iddm include a Webinar titled "Overcoming Seven Hurdles Parents Face in Establishing a Special Needs Trust;" "He Cares; We Care" (spiritual material and crafts mailed on a regular basis to people with intellectual or developmental disabilities upon request); and "Guidelines for Establishing a Parent Special Needs Support Network" (a manual designed for congregations to use in serving parents in their congregation and reaching out to others in their community).

In late July 2013 the ministry is holding a caregivers' retreat called "Give Me a Break!" It is intended for families and other caregivers of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

For more information, contact Pastor John Zeitler, chairman, at jzeitler@trinitybelleplaine.org.

Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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

It is estimated that loss of hearing affects more than 300 million people worldwide. One in three people over 65 years of age and one in two over the age of 80 have a hearing loss. These percentages are also true for WELS churches and the communities they serve! Addressing the needs of these individuals will improve gospel ministry in worship services and Bible classes.

The Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing offers training and resources for ministry to deaf and hard of hearing people. It also produces a newsletter, "Open to All," that acquaints leaders with issues of hearing loss and solutions available to congregations seeking to improve their ministry to the many members and visitors with hearing loss.

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

Mission for the Visually Impaired

The Mission for the Visually Impaired helps people who are unable to read normal-sized print, whether they are blind or have impaired eyesight. Much of the work is done by volunteers at the headquarters in St. Paul, Minn. The mission produces devotional and other materials in Braille, large print, and on cassette tape. These materials are distributed

free throughout the world to WELS and non-WELS visually impaired people. In particular, the mission provides many blind people in Africa with spiritual materials in Braille.

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

Care Committee for Called Workers

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

The committee provides a free resource, *Care to Care*, which includes a DVD and a CD. The DVD provides a general overview of the purpose of the local care committee and portrayals of the three types of visits (entrance, annual, and transition) for which the local Care Committee is responsible. The CD provides more detailed information about Care Committee work, including how to start a Care Committee, suggestions for the types of questions to ask during the visits mentioned above, and suggestions for activities that the committee can carry out. The committee is developing resources to help called workers successfully plan and transition into retirement.

For more information, contact Pastor Paul Schaewe, committee chairman, at revpes2@hotmail.com.

Committee on Mental Health Needs

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

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

The committee is currently divided into several sub-committees.

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

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

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

For more information, contact Prof. Alan Siggelkow, committee chairman, at asiggelkow@wlcfs.org.

A look ahead

The Lord is blessing the work of Special Ministries as the number of lay volunteers continues to grow and as our resources for ministry become more easily accessible via the Internet. The resources that we have developed for one field of special ministry are finding application in other areas of the ministry.

As long as Special Ministries' work must be done with minimal funding from the WELS budget, it will continue to be a challenge to train and equip the many men and women who are passionate about ministry to the "least of these."

In the next biennium, such programs as chaplain certification, jail ministry team training, and military contact pastor conferences will equip and strengthen those whom the Lord is calling to serve. We plan to expand Internet resources for families of those with intellectual or developmental disabilities, addictions, and mental health needs. Under God's blessing, WELS members who serve as nurses will find increasing support and encouragement in their vocation through the new WELS Nurses Association.

We will need even more creative, talented, and dedicated laypeople as well as pastors, teachers, and staff ministers to selflessly devote their time to developing materials and training others to bring the gospel to those who cannot access it through the usual congregational channels. Many Special Ministries committee chairmen will retire this year or in this biennium.

Our work will require closer cooperation with the many WELS organizations that have sprung up to carry out work not funded in the WELS budget. The leaders of our special ministries will also need to increase their attention to communicating the financial needs of Special Ministries for the sake of financial support by interested Christians and organizations.

These challenges are not disheartening. Christ, the head of the Church, has shown that he has all authority in heaven and earth. He goes before us in our labors, creating opportunities and blessing the gospel, whether shared in a military contact pastor's living room or signed in a Sunday morning worship service. The prisoner and the Christian struggling with depression are finding that the Lord has compassion on them. We know that the Lord will hear our prayer, "Your kingdom come!" Our calling is to go into all the world—join us in sharing the Savior in the forgotten parts of our communities.

For more information on any or all of the areas of special ministry, visit www.wels.net/special-ministries.

Rev. Jim Behringer, reporter

Teacher Charles Buege, chairman

Rev. Joel Jaeger, vice chairman and chairman of the Military Services Committee

Mr. LeRoy Robbert, secretary

Mr. Leon Brands, chairman of the Prison Ministry Committee

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

Rev. Frederick Kogler, chairman of the Health and Wellness Committee

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

Prof. Alan Siggelkow, chairman of the Committee on Mental Health Needs

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

Rev. John Zeitler, chairman of the Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Committee

Advisory:

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

Mr. David Nack, administrator of the Prison Ministry office

Commission on Adult Discipleship

Floor Committee #13

Our calling

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

Our current situation

Two Schools of Adult Bible Study

The five-hour School of Adult Bible Study is for pastors. This class teaches the principles of how adults learn, helps pastors focus their teaching on single objectives, and teaches them how to achieve a single objective through teaching

methodologies that reflect the principles of how adults learn. We have taught pastors in almost all conferences of our synod; the response has been very favorable. Some conferences have requested a half-day or full-day review and expansion of this class. If your conference is one of the few we have not yet taught, we will do our best to get to you. Contact Pastor Randy Hunter to schedule yours (randykhunter@gmail.com). The commission thanks the Conference of Presidents, Martin Luther College, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary for its partnership in this work.

The second School of Adult Bible Study is a two-day class for pastors, teachers, and lay Bible study leaders. Pastors Tom Kock and Randy Hunter have written the two-day School of Adult Bible Study to help pastors build on the five-hour class. Day one helps leaders create and write adult Bible studies, and day two helps leaders teach and facilitate adult Bible studies. Although the disciplines are different, those who are doing either task—writing or teaching—will find it valuable to understand and practice both. This two-day class, taught on a Friday and Saturday, is intended for groups of congregations. Class size is limited to 40 people, and we ask that pastors attend with their current or potential Bible study leaders. This class will help pastors continue to train their leaders for excellence in adult Bible study. Registration information is available at <https://connect.wels.net/adultdiscipleship>. Scheduling is now open for classes beginning in fall 2013.

Marriage enrichment

No other WELS entity exists to help husbands and wives glorify God in their marriages. Adult Discipleship has for the past decade developed a different biblical marriage enrichment event each year and trained pastors to use it through “on the job training”—congregational leaders participate along with members. In the past two years, we have served members and trained pastors at dozens of events in 9 of our 12 districts. Most have benefited from the event called “Sticky Marriage.” These Friday through Sunday events have helped couples develop habits and practices to keep sticking together by applying the grace of God to their relationship. By conducting these events, the CAD not only serves pastors and wives in their own marriages, but it also provides pastors who attend valuable resources for enriching the marriages in their churches. We have developed two additional enrichment events: “Distracted Marriage” and “Mysterious Marriage.” For more information, contact Pastor Randy Hunter (randykhunter@gmail.com).

Interactive Faith online Bible studies

Pastor Tom Kock and the South Atlantic District Adult Discipleship Committee have developed a live, online Bible study led by WELS teachers. For example, Seminary President Paul Wendland taught a six-week course on Romans at the end of 2012. Almost 200 groups or individuals logged on. Typically the presenter lectures, assigns questions or activities to the congregations listening, and later responds to questions and comments submitted by participants via instant messaging. To participate, congregations will need a computer hooked to a high-speed Internet connection. For an ideal presentation, congregations should have a video projector and a sound amplification system. Direct questions to Pastor Tom Kock, thomasdkock@gmail.com or Pastor Marty Mielke, pastormielke@verizon.net.

Women’s Ministry

The Women’s Ministry Committee of the Commission on Adult Discipleship continues its work of reviewing Bible studies written by women for women and building a network of contact women in each district to understand the local needs for women’s ministry and to provide two-way communication for more widely sharing Christ-centered materials, models, and ideas for congregational use. The committee’s third national conference is planned for July 19–20, 2013, at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.

Road to Emmaus

Pastors Dave Kehl (CAD), John Braun (Northwestern Publishing House), Paul Hartman (WELS Multi-Language Publications), and Michael Hintz (WELS Commission on Evangelism) have developed this DVD movie together with Boettcher/Trinklein Media, Inc. More than 260,000 copies of the high quality video have been distributed. A Bible study to go with the video is available at <https://connect.wels.net/adultdiscipleship>.

Heart in Focus, a Christian financial course

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

Staff

The unfilled called position of Adult Discipleship director slows our ability to develop new training and resources for congregational leaders. We are grateful for the leadership of our commission members, but they are full-time called

workers in other ministries. They cannot serve our synod as well as a full-time called director could. We continue to anticipate a director for Adult Discipleship.

Likewise, we now function without a dedicated administrative assistant. Ms. Laura Schulz, administrative assistant for the Commission on Worship, serves as our contact in the Synod Administration Building, and the directors of Worship and Evangelism funnel calls toward our commission and help with budget development.

A look ahead

Schools of Adult Bible Study

- Teach the five-hour School of Adult Bible Study to pastor conferences or groups of circuits that we have not yet taught.
- Teach the two-day School of Adult Bible Study to groups of pastors, teachers, and lay leaders of adult Bible study.

Marriage enrichment

- Lead “Distracted Marriage” where requested by districts to help couples practice 32 practical strategies to eliminate distractions and give each other the attention Jesus’ grace moves us to give each other. This is also a training event for pastors and wives who attend.
- Lead “Mysterious Marriage” where requested by districts to help couples discover the biblical secret for marriage, access Jesus’ power for marriage, live in the essence of marriage, enjoy the mission of marriage, develop friendship in marriage, and fulfill the roles of marriage. This is also a training event for pastors and wives who attend.

Find information at Connect under Adult Discipleship or friend us on Facebook: “WELS National Marriage Enrichment.”

Interactive Faith online Bible studies

Professor Keith Wessel will teach “The Ministry of Elijah” in fall 2013.

If you have suggestions for further online studies, contact either Pastor Tom Kock, thomasdkock@gmail.com, or Pastor Marty Mielke, pastormielke@verizon.net.

Women’s Ministry Committee

- Gather and post Bible studies and women’s ministry resources and ideas.
- Continue to build the network of contact women in districts.
- Coordinate Women’s Ministry Leadership Conference, July 19–20, at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.
- Pastors Ben Kratz and Dave Kehl will provide a link between the Women’s Ministry Committee and the CAD.

Road to Emmaus

- Pastor Dave Kehl will continue to work with Boettcher/Trinklein Media and other agencies to produce three sequels to *Road to Emmaus*:
 - 1) the events from Easter through Pentecost (*Come Follow Me*),
 - 2) Paul telling about his conversion and missionary trip to Philippi (reaching all cultures), and
 - 3) Mary’s story (true God and true man, Christmas, and Christ’s ministry).
- We will develop a 12-week Bible information class using the DVDs.

Small group ministry

Seek out churches and leaders with experience and expertise in small group Bible studies to help make their resources and experiences available to others. Contact Pastor Aaron Boehm with requests, suggestions, or offers to help.

Ministry to twenty-somethings

Seek out churches and leaders with a passion for reaching out to the “lost” generation of twenty-somethings and make their resources and expertise available to others. Contact Pastor Dave Wenzel at DWenzel@FVLHS.org with requests, suggestions, or offers to help.

Rev. Randy Hunter, reporter

Rev. Randy Hunter, chairman

Rev. Tom Kock

Rev. Phil Spaude

Rev. Aaron Boehm

Rev. Dave Wenzel

Advisory:

Prof. Stephen Geiger, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Rev. Dave Kehl, former director of WELS Commission on Adult Discipleship

Commission on Youth and Family Ministry

Floor Committee #13

Our calling

During his earthly ministry, Jesus made many claims about himself. In John 10:7, Jesus said, “I am the gate for the sheep.” Just four verses later, he said, “I am the good shepherd.” These pictures declare that Jesus is our protector and provider. Along with all the other comforting “I Am” pictures of Jesus, these words speak to us about the importance of instilling these truths into the hearts and lives of our children. The mission of the Commission on Youth and Family Ministry is to help and encourage parents and congregations as they teach and instruct children about Jesus. The work of the commission is to provide materials and encouragement for children from birth through college to know and believe that Jesus is the “I Am” of their lives.

Our current situation

In between the “I Am” pictures of John chapter 10, Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life and have it to the full” (John 10:10). The Commission on Youth and Family Ministry used this verse as the theme of the International Youth Rally that was held in Knoxville, Tenn., in June 2012. Almost 2,000 teens and adult chaperones attended the rally. This summer, a number of districts will be hosting regional youth rallies.

The commission has also continued to produce and promote the *Kids Connection* monthly video series. Teenage hosts introduce grade-school-age children to a variety of ways that others are serving and staying connected to Christ. Pastor Tony Schultz gives encouraging devotions at the end of every segment.

The commission is also working with Northwestern Publishing House to promote materials that have been created to help parents and congregations minister to children. Since some of those materials were created using technologies that are now outdated, the commission is studying the possibility of updating and reproducing them in new formats.

A look ahead

The Commission on Youth and Family Ministry continues to look for ways to serve our youth into the future. We were so encouraged by the attendance at the last rally that we have begun planning for another international youth rally in 2014. In addition to offering spiritual encouragement to our teens at the rally, we also want to include a series of workshops to help youth leaders carry out their important work. We will continue to provide *Kids Connection* to our churches and schools. We will continue to listen to the needs of our people, and we will look for ways to meet those needs. We are confident that Jesus, the Great “I Am,” will bless the children of our congregations as we take to heart and carry out the theme “Christ’s Love, Our Calling.”

Rev. Thomas Schneider, reporter

Rev. Thomas Schneider, chairman

Staff Minister Thomas Banaszak

Rev. Benjamin Berger

Rev. John Boggs

Rev. Snowden Sims

Advisory:

Prof. Stephen Geiger, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Rev. Raymond Schumacher, Northwestern Publishing House

Prof. David Sellnow, Martin Luther College

Commission on Lutheran Schools

Floor Committee #14

Our calling

God's command to us as Christians is clear: "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Luke 18:16). The mission statement of the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) is also clear: "to guide and assist congregations in advancing the gospel of Jesus by providing resources, training, and personal assistance for starting and strengthening Lutheran schools." It is with these two statements in mind that the CLS works to serve our 10,423 early childhood ministry (ECM) students; our 24,254 Lutheran elementary school (LES) students; our 5,796 Lutheran high school (LHS) students; and our more than 2,700 faithful and talented teachers, directors, and principals by providing resources and assistance to help strengthen the teachers and leaders of our schools, and encouraging a trusting and hope-filled vision for the future of our schools. The CLS helps our congregations and schools welcome children and young adults into the Savior's waiting arms through our schools' outreaching and nurturing ministries.

Our current situation

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

- Providing personal and electronic consulting with principals, directors, teachers, schools, and congregations to assist them with basic questions, legal questions, planning efforts, problem solving, and conflict resolution
- Accrediting 10 to 15 schools each year through a nationally validated, intensive self-study and site-visit process
- Developing approximately 250 call lists per year on behalf of the 12 district presidents
- Managing personnel and statistical data for more than 2,700 teachers; 500 schools; and more than 40,000 students
- Facilitating the induction and mentoring of new teachers and principals
- Facilitating formative and summative assessments of directors, teachers, and principals
- Helping to develop new school leaders from the ranks of experienced teachers
- Serving as a visible link between 2,700 called workers and their church body through participation in various teachers' conferences and school visits throughout the synod
- Publishing a weekly electronic news bulletin—the CLS e-News
- Working on the development and operation of an accessible, useable, and attractive CLS Web presence for our teacher and school leaders that provides information, resources, and the opportunity to interact.
- Developing and hosting district, regional, and national conferences for teachers and school leaders
- Producing Bible studies, handbooks, planning guides, and video resources
- Developing promotional materials to assist schools in raising the congregation and community's awareness of the school's mission to proclaim Christ through full-time Christian education
- Coordinating a synodwide Lutheran elementary school testing program to assess our students' progress and provide tools for modifying instruction to improve learning
- Representing WELS schools to the general public through interaction with the National Council on Private School Accreditation, the Council for American Private Education, the United States Department of Education, and various other state and national education agencies and organizations
- Developing partnerships with the district schools coordinators, Northwestern Publishing House, Martin Luther College, and many others to provide resources to strengthen the instruction, materials, and curriculum within our schools (a list of resource partners is on the CLS Web site)
- Providing personnel support of our schools through its directors (Director Greg Schmill) and two associates (Associate Director James Rademan and National Coordinator of Early Childhood Ministries Cindi Holman) and two support staff (Ms. Rachel DiGiorgio and Ms. Tierney Arndt)

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

- Partnering with the Task Force on Lutheran Schools to discuss the challenges and opportunities that exist for WELS schools and to provide insights, recommendations, and resources for the future. This task force was formed as a result of a 2011 synod convention resolution, and it will conclude its work by the 2013 synod convention. A complete report on the work of this task force begins on p. 45. A quick summary of task force activity:

- Defined a set of foundational principles and guiding statements for WELS schools
- Identified critical issues and resources for working with these issues
 - Strengthening the mission/vision focus of our schools
 - Ongoing spiritual and professional growth
 - Appropriate funding and governance models
 - Enhancing and supporting school leadership
- Supported extensive reworking of the CLS Web site to better house the resources that address critical issues
- Determined there is a critical need to fund and staff the position of Forward with Lutheran Schools director/consultant to provide onsite consultant services for starting new WELS full-time children's ministries and revitalizing existing school ministries (Second Wind program)
- Determined that there is a strong need for all of our school ministries to thoroughly evaluate their ministries using the Foundational Principles and Guiding Statements or the WELS School Accreditation standards or the *Foundations* program
- Providing spiritual and professional support for teachers and school leaders dealing with the challenges and complexity of operating Christian school ministries. While Christian education has always brought about the need for insights and wise decisions in serving children and families, the uncertain, complex, and rapidly changing world of education along with the enrollment, financial, and leadership challenges faced by many of our WELS schools, has resulted in the CLS experiencing an increase in the need for providing support and encouragement. Partnering in many situations with our district schools coordinators, our district presidents, WELS Human Resources, and others, CLS strives to help and serve called workers and church leaders by providing the encouragement, information, referrals, and prayers they need and request.
- Continuing Education for Called Workers: The Strengthening Educators in Ministry initiative (WELS StEM), soon to be Growing in Educational Ministry (GEM), continues to focus on three areas:
 - New Teacher Induction (NTI) program: CLS expanded the program this fall to mentor newly assigned teachers in Southeastern Wisconsin, Western Wisconsin, and Northern Wisconsin Districts plus several other locations; looking to expand to Minnesota and South Atlantic Districts in 2013–14; Teacher Jonathan M. Schaefer has accepted the call as professor of continuing education/new teacher induction at Martin Luther College.
 - School leadership development: CLS continues to offer Leadership Institute Modules throughout the synod; working on new principal support through the use of modules and other training through MLC; CLS and various partners are working on programs that support, strengthen, and prepare school leaders
 - Veteran teacher development: CLS continues to develop and promote the use of Ministry Development Plans by teachers and principals; CLS shares recently developed WELS teaching standards and continuum on a limited basis
- Transitions in staffing: With the departure of Associate Director Jeff Inniger, who accepted a call as principal at Trinity, Waukesha, Wis., in July 2012, the CLS was pleased to welcome Teacher Ken Proeber who served with the CLS team as the Interim Associate Director. This part-time, limited duration call covered some of Inniger's responsibilities until the newly called Associate Director James Rademan could join the team on July 1, 2013. Proeber was responsible for providing Lutheran Elementary School (LES) call lists for the district presidents and helping carry out limited administrative and leadership duties. Other key CLS team members serving on an interim basis for 2012–13:
 - Dr. LeDell Plath: interim WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) director; Principal Apprenticeship program coordinator
 - Mr. Karl Peterson: CLS special project coordinator (grant writing and special projects)
 - Teacher Kathie Horn: interim coordinator of WELS New Teacher Induction
 - Teacher Jim Henrickson: coordinator of Strengthening Educators in Ministry initiative
- The National Leadership Conference, which was sponsored by the Commission on Lutheran Schools, was held at the Country Springs Hotel and Conference Center in Waukesha, Wis., on June 25–28, 2012. The theme of the conference was *Christ In All to All—Christ Who Motivates Me, Teaches Me, Strengthens Me*. Approximately 300 teachers, principals, ECM directors, and others learned many ways to strengthen the marvelous gift of Lutheran schools. Many insights and great encouragement focused on preparing our students for the 21st century and making use of technology in doing so.

- The growth of our early childhood ministries: Each day, more than 10,000 little ones walk through the doors of a WELS early childhood ministry (ECM) and hear about their Savior, Jesus! What a tremendous blessing, opportunity, and privilege the Lord has given us. The CLS continues to work on ways to support, equip, and encourage those serving in WELS ECMs. For example, the task force for Building Blocks is preparing materials for formatting. The early childhood district coordinators are working on ways to connect individuals within their districts to share ideas and support one another. Progress continues on the early childhood ministry page of the CLS Web site. Work has also begun to adapt the Principal Apprenticeship program for early childhood teachers assigned as directors, thereby providing support for both the called worker and the congregation.
- The continued decline in the number of Lutheran elementary schools (now at 316, down from 345 in 2006–07) and the decline of enrollments in both our Lutheran elementary schools and area Lutheran high schools are clearly shown in this chart.

WELS Lutheran Schools enrollment by level, 2006–13

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

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

- Voluntary Supplemental Contribution (VSC) program: Encouraging support for this program and using the resources to benefit and bless our schools has been a major emphasis in the CLS. All of our schools are currently encouraged to contribute \$4.00 per high school student and \$7.50 per elementary and early childhood student. Current numbers indicate that approximately 39 percent of WELS schools participated in the program this last year. This includes 175 Lutheran elementary schools (54.6 percent), 18 Lutheran high schools (75 percent), and 8 self-standing ECMs (4 percent). The program has provided approximately \$150,000 to support ministry to Lutheran schools. One hundred percent participation could allow the CLS to rebuild the Forward with Lutheran Schools position and process to help start new and strengthen existing ministries, and it could provide additional resources for district ministry. Contributing schools receive *Parents Crosslink* newsletter, Learn360 video-streaming library service, a promotional CDToolkit, and the knowledge that they are true partners in allowing the services of the CLS to exist. The funds are allocated for district ministry to schools (\$40,000), CAPE membership (\$6000), *Parents Crosslink* subscriptions (\$11,000), and Learn360 subscriptions (\$20,291) with the remainder used to cover further development of the StEM program and CLS support staff salaries/office expenses.
- The WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) program: During the past two years, 25 schools hosted onsite visits. Fourteen schools were accredited in September 2012. Eleven more schools plan to be accredited in September 2013. This will bring the total number of WELSSA accredited schools to 104 during the first nine years of the program’s existence. Another seven schools have been granted candidacy status and will be visited in the near future. In addition nearly 30 schools are in the early stages of the process. WELSSA offers a separate self-study process for early childhood, elementary, and high schools.
- The priorities of the Commission on Lutheran Schools: The CLS continues to work with a set of specific priorities (established in 2011) for the CLS office and to revisit those priorities every six months and adjust as needed. One of the greatest challenges facing the CLS is holding to those established priorities and not doing ministry and providing resources that have not been identified as priorities. This is especially difficult considering the many challenges and opportunities for our school ministries and the lack of full-time agencies to help with onsite consulting/coaching and the strengthening of the families and youth of our congregations.
- Forward with Lutheran Schools (FWLS): The ministry of Forward with Lutheran Schools, which had been part of Parish Assistance, was incorporated into the CLS in 2009–10. Forward with Lutheran Schools has continued to provide personal onsite consulting services to congregations who desire to begin new children’s ministries and also to congregations who desire to strengthen/revitalize their schools through the Second Wind program. Through the use of part-time lead consultants and associates, the program has served some of the congregations requesting help during 2012; however, the defunding of a full-time FWLS consultant position in July 2009 has limited the availability of services and has resulted in the onsite consulting not being available to all who seek it. Efforts by the CLS office to

keep the ministry of Forward with Lutheran Schools operating while also carrying out the other CLS priorities was overwhelming, so much so, that in September 2012, the CLS officially ceased all onsite ministry support work for Forward with Lutheran Schools and Second Wind. Congregations seeking assistance are now encouraged to use district services if available and are provided some support through phone, e-mail, and Skype. There continue to be a significant number of requests for new starts and school strengthening.

A look ahead

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

- **Communication:** The CLS will continue to strive to communicate more effectively with our teachers and school leaders. The strengthening of the CLS e-News is a key part of that effort. Each week, more than 2,200 individuals receive critical information, educational insights and resources, news about our schools, and the vital link to call updates in their CLS e-News. The goal is that all WELS teachers, directors, and principals receive and read this newsletter. Sign up by visiting www.wels.net and click on “Subscriptions” at the bottom of the page. In addition, significant improvements to the CLS Web presence are planned for spring 2013, especially in connection with the work of the Conference of Presidents’ Task Force on Lutheran Schools. A team of WELS teachers stand ready to work with WELS Technology and the CLS to provide and monitor Web site content, to encourage interaction, to invite others to make use of the CLS Web presence, etc. The goal is to develop and maintain an accessible, useable, and attractive CLS Web presence for our teachers and school leaders that provides information, resources, and the opportunity to interact.
- **Task Force on Lutheran Schools:** The COP Task Force on Lutheran schools will be reporting its conclusions to the 2013 synod convention. Moving forward into 2013 and beyond, the CLS will be working to effectively communicate the following information and encouragement from the task force:
 - The foundational principles and guiding statements
 - The recommendation that all of our schools do a self-evaluation using the tools that are available
 - The recommendation for the restarting of the FWLS and Second Wind ministries by funding and staffing that position
 - The critical issues and the tools available to better deal with the critical issues
- **WELS Strengthening Educators in Ministry (WELS StEM):** What began as a task force working to redesign the Team Ministry Process (TMP) has become a much larger multi-year WELS initiative to Strengthen Educators in Ministry (WELS StEM). This effort focuses on three areas: new teacher induction, school leadership development, and veteran teacher development. The task force has been working for five-and-a-half years of what is planned to be a ten-year redesign process leading to systemic processes that will continue to be reviewed and strengthened. The work and recommendations of the Team Ministry Process Redesign Task Force and the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee (CECW) were supported by the synod in convention in 2011 through passage of the CECW resolution calling for a synodwide new teacher mentoring program and continuing education standards for all WELS teachers. In an effort to facilitate implementation of the CECW resolution, a part-time CECW for teachers coordinator began work in January 2012 to facilitate and develop plans for new teacher mentoring and teacher professional growth in cooperation with Martin Luther College and the Commission on Lutheran Schools. The following is a synopsis of progress and plans in the three areas of development:
 - The New Teacher Induction program is thriving through New Teacher Center trained mentors who are working with some 50 first- and second-year teachers in the three Wisconsin districts and two outlying districts. The WELS StEM task force has patterned much of its work after that of the New Teacher Center from Santa Cruz, Calif., and its affiliate, the Wisconsin New Teacher Center. Supporting ministerial training school graduates during their formative initial years of ministry is critical for maximizing the synod’s investment in these workers and is essential for the future health of our system of Lutheran schools. The redeveloped teacher mentoring program was designed to bring mentors into first- and second-year teacher’s classrooms for observation and coaching. The program features training programs for mentors and periodic forums to support networking between mentors and beginning teachers. A WELS Induction Process Handbook and mentor standards have been written to facilitate greater understanding of and participation in the program. As the synod in convention resolved that the assignment of Martin Luther College teacher candidates be accompanied by a system of new teacher induction, efforts continue to extend the WELS New Teacher Induction Program to all new teachers in all districts of the synod. To this end, Martin Luther College has added a professor of continuing

education/new teacher induction. Teacher Jonathan Schaefer will begin serving in this position in July 2013. His initial task will be to design a synodwide process of new teacher mentoring that incorporates the best qualities of the current program and adjusts to the variety of contexts in a nationwide program. Reaching this goal may involve continued cooperation with New Teacher Center for mentor training, development of distance mentoring models via technology, the identification and training of qualified teachers as mentors, and the development of a financial model based on the congregational support of \$1,000 per year for two years. Finally, full implementation of the induction program will support the seamless introduction of new teachers to formative and summative assessment models and Ministry Development Plans (MDPs) being designed to promote continuing growth of WELS teachers. Presently the WELS New Teacher Induction program is being managed by Mrs. Kathie Horn and the CLS, trained lead mentors, and WELS induction team members. It is a goal to see oversight of the induction program transferred to MLC by July 2014.

- School leadership development: The Commission on Lutheran Schools continues to provide and promote the ten Leadership Institute Modules (LIM) developed by the New Teacher Center (NTC) of Santa Cruz, Calif. This partnership has allowed the CLS to utilize the research and expertise of NTC to train WELS leaders to co-present LIMs for WELS principals, ECM directors, pastors, and other school leaders. The first WELS-sponsored Leadership Institute Module was held in November 2009, and since then 38 WELS leaders have been trained as LIM presenters resulting in LIM seminars being presented in all 12 districts reaching more than 250 WELS school leaders. The institutes focus on the following areas:

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

The goal for the coming years is that all school leaders would participate in the Leadership Institute Modules with a majority of them completing all ten.

The Leadership Institute Modules have been positively received by school leaders; however, they are simply a first step in strengthening school leaders. The CLS and MLC continue to examine additional methods of supporting, strengthening, and preparing school leaders. One area being explored is mentoring models designed to supplement the modules and better enable principals to implement plans for positive school change. By coaching principals in spiritual, emotional, and physical health, the CLS believes it can increase the health of our schools. MLC is also working to develop a true master's degree in school administration. More support and potential coursework is being provided for newly assigned apprentice principals/teachers. As the New Teacher Induction process becomes established synodwide and becomes part of WELS culture, the energy will shift to leadership development and veteran teacher development.

- Veteran teacher development: The 2011 synod in convention adopted the proposal expressing an expectation for ongoing continuing education for all teachers and directed that standards for continuing education be developed along with a plan for creating, following, updating, and reporting a Ministry Development Plan (MDP). Continuing education standards for WELS teachers will be built upon the WELS Teaching Standards and Continuum. These teaching standards and the continuum will be rolled out to WELS schools in conjunction with training to support a model of formative and summative teacher assessment aimed at development of Ministry Development Plans (MDPs) to promote teacher growth and student learning. It is a goal to see future development of the continuing education standards and MDPs be coordinated through a full-time position at Martin Luther College.

- Call list production improvements: The time and labor intensive service to provide teacher call lists for the district presidents will be modernized, strengthened, and streamlined with the addition of WELSource in July 2013. The improvements to the WELS database will allow the CLS to search for and identify call list candidates and better handle the necessary information of more than 2,700 teachers. An upcoming step will be an online data entry system that will allow teachers to enter and update their biographical information directly into the database, saving many hours of data entry for the CLS that can then be redirected to other school supporting and strengthening efforts.
- *Foundations*: A major emphasis for the CLS in the next two years will be encouraging our schools and congregations to make use of *Foundations*. Released in April 2013 and produced in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House, this program is designed to meet parents and congregations at their need points of love, joy, peace, and hope and use this connection to strengthen the understanding of and value placed on WELS schools. The program is made up of a book, a book study guide, a faculty Bible study, sermon studies, hymns and songs, classroom devotions, and more. This suite of materials is designed to inform parents and congregation members about the advantages of Christian education and to help bring parents and teachers and congregations into a closer partnership as they approach the education of children from a Christian perspective. The *Foundations* project has six specific objectives:
 1. Reestablish God's Word as the bedrock for Christian education.
 2. Serve as a powerful witness for Jesus as the Lord of life and our Savior from sin.
 3. Reassert the proper application of law and gospel as the basis for the motivational model used in WELS schools.
 4. Reorient WELS schools to a supportive role that assists the work of parents in training their children in body, mind, and spirit.
 5. Provide opportunities for non-member parents to participate in group Bible study during their children's first years in a WELS school or childcare center.
 6. Embrace the parent-teacher partnership as a critical component of the Christian education model.
 Additional information on *Foundations* is included in the report of the Task Force on Lutheran Schools (see p. 56) and at the Northwestern Publishing House Web site, www.nph.net.
- Technology: The CLS will continue to work with several individuals and groups to encourage the use of technology in our schools. Efforts include the following:
 1. Area Lutheran High Schools Online continues to fulfill its mission to develop and offer a set of high school online courses taught from a scriptural perspective. Recent changes in this program include:
 - Due to the strong enrollment numbers during the first year of the pilot program, it was decided to transition out of the pilot program into a regular program during the 2012–13 academic year.
 - ALHS Online became an official Minnesota non-profit organization on Aug. 10, 2012.
 - Articles of incorporation and bylaws were created.
 - A board of directors was appointed by the newly formed corporation to oversee the governance of ALHS Online.
 - Application has been made to the IRS for 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt status.
 - A superintendent has been appointed to oversee the day-to-day operations of ALHS Online.
 - Course offerings have been expanded and include AP courses and soon will include language and religion courses.
 2. DVI Consulting has been working with our schools to make wise technology decisions and purchases. In addition, a process and resources will also be available to help our schools transition better to serve true 21st-century learners.
 3. WELS Technology continues to provide leadership and assistance for individual school and the commission's technology needs.
 4. PowerSchool: a Web-based student information system that is subscribed to by our schools and supported and coordinated in connection with the CLS office, has solidified its base, and it is hoped that more schools will find this product useful and subscribe through the CLS.
- Uncalled teachers: As a result of downsizing within schools and the closing of once-thriving schools, there exists a significant number of qualified and willing, yet uncalled, teachers in WELS. Every effort is being made and will be made to use these teachers on call lists and to look for opportunities for these people to return to ministry.
- Common core task force: The WELS Task Force on Common Core State Standards (CCSS) has begun its work and will continue through the next biennium to provide resources, training, and personal assistance to our schools as they seek to understand and align with the Common Core standards. The WELS Task Force on Common Core State

Standards includes educators from all facets of Lutheran Christian education in our church body—preschool through college—and plans to work in close conjunction with ALHS and district leaders to carry out its work. Thus far, the task force has researched the status of the CCSS and WELS, planned presentations for the 2013 area Lutheran high school convention, and also developed a set of FAQs on the CCSS and WELS schools that is being published in the CLS e-News. As the education and implementation process continues, school leaders and teachers from all ministry types will be encouraged to actively participate through their federation/association/district connections and professional learning communities.

- Task Force on WELS Testing: Our current testing program, the TerraNova Achievement Test given in grades 3-8 every spring, reveals that on average the WELS class of 2013 outperformed the nation in the areas of reading, language, mathematics, science, and social studies achieving a 72 percent or higher national percentile ranking. The contract for the current testing program will expire in two years, so by the summer of 2013, the CLS will need to appoint a task force to study the current testing program of WELS schools and make recommendations for the future of the program. This group will need to study the timing of the tests, the format—written or electronic, the impact of the CCSS, and much more. Please look for opportunities to give your input on this very important decision.
- *Christ-Light*® 2: Because the NIV 1984 is no longer available from Zondervan, NPH delayed publication of its *Christ-Light* curriculum revision and shifted its focus to a translation neutral Sunday School version of *Christ Light 2*. Barring any unforeseen circumstances, NPH believes it will be able to publish the Lutheran elementary school module (New Testament) of the *Christ-Light* curriculum revision in time for the 2014–15 school year. Like the Sunday school module, the Lutheran elementary school materials will be published in a format that is usable no matter which Bible translation a congregation or school prefers. NPH is on schedule for a 2013–14 release of year one of the Sunday school materials; year two is slated to be released for 2014–15. To summarize:
 - 2013—Sunday School: Year 1
 - 2014—Sunday School: Year 2 and Lutheran elementary school: New Testament
 - 2015—Sunday School: Year 3 and Lutheran elementary school: Old Testament

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

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

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

Teacher Greg Schmill, reporter

Teacher James Sievert, chairman

Rev. Phil Heyer, secretary

Rev. Matt Brown

Mr. Ron Conradt

Teacher Stephen Granberg

Teacher Shawn Herkstroeter

Mr. Jim Sexton

Advisory:

Teacher Greg Schmill, director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools

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

Teacher Cindi Holman, national coordinator of early childhood ministries

Prof. Robert Klindworth, Martin Luther College

Prof. Michael Quandt, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Task Force on Lutheran Schools

Floor Committee #14

Introduction

We commend and thank the 2011 synod convention delegates and the Conference of Presidents (COP) for establishing the Task Force on Lutheran Schools (TFLS). The TFLS members consider it a privilege to serve our Savior and our synod through this work.

This document will serve a few purposes. It will include a report of the committee's work, recommendations, and discussion/study topics. Some portions have a "report feel" to them. Recommendations are embedded in various places. We also weave in some topics that are meant to be more foundational and philosophical in nature and are intended to create discussion and study opportunities for congregation and school leaders. Our hope is that our pastors, principals, directors, teachers, and lay leaders will use this document and other resources provided by the TFLS and the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) to assist them as they work to strengthen their school ministries. We also recognize that each congregation and school is blessed with uniquely gifted called workers and laypeople, and so we also pray that schools will work more proactively with each other to learn from each other.

Blessings result when God's Word is rightly shared and taught. For more than a century and a half, our schools have had the privilege, honor, and blessing of teaching the saving message of salvation through Jesus to throngs of children and their families. There is much to celebrate, and there is much for which to give thanks and praise to God. We should humbly give thanks to God for using our schools as his instruments to share his Word.

We should thank him for giving us his Word so that we can know the way to heaven. We should thank him for the countless pastors, teachers, and staff ministers who have lovingly and humbly labored in the public ministry. We should thank him for our strong worker training system. We should thank him for the countless supportive laypeople who have a love and passion for Christian education as it is carried out in our Lutheran schools. The ungodly philosophies that abound in our society make our schools all the more important. To have our children sit at the feet of Jesus for every aspect of their educational program is a tremendous blessing.

While we must remain mindful of the bounties of God's goodness in the past, and while we in faith know that many more blessings are always on the horizon, we must continue to "get about the work" that he has called us to do. Identifying and addressing challenging issues confronting our schools is a good thing to do. It is always a blessing when people and organizations, while being respectful and mindful of the past, look forward with a spirit of developing a culture in which ongoing improvement is the norm. The process involved with improvement itself is a blessing, as are the products that result. A culture of growth and improvement can become "just the way we do things" when church and school leaders are always asking, "How can our Lutheran schools best carry out gospel ministry?" We certainly embrace the truth that the gospel in Word and sacrament is what changes hearts and motivates people for Christian living; yet, the school is just that—a school. It is a formal educational setting. Schools can and should strive for excellence in all aspects of their operations as they carry out their work. "Excellence" will look different in each school setting. "Excellence" to us means stewarding a congregation's resources, talents, and time with which they've been blessed by God in ways that help the congregation carry out its work.

To this end we submit our plans to God. We pray for his leadership and direction. We submit to his will. We acknowledge that our lives and our plans are in his hands. We look to seize opportunities he provides. We ask him to bless our efforts in his name as we carry out the work he has called us to do.

The scope of our work

Defining and determining the scope of our work was a significant challenge. Ours is a school system comprised of autonomous organizations, each with different settings, opportunities, and challenges. We focused on early childhood ministries and our traditional Lutheran elementary schools because these are the ministries that assist local congregations in carrying out their mission and vision.

Also a factor is the role of our task force related to the congregation as a whole. Because our schools are ministries of congregations, we recognize that "as goes the congregation, so goes the school" (leadership, governance, funding

philosophy, purpose of the school, traditions, etc.). Although issues relating to the congregation as a whole are significant, tackling those issues in detail was beyond our reach. We are focusing on school ministries with the hope that congregational leaders will consider the broader picture of how congregational ministry can be improved. With that said, the next section of this document takes a philosophical broad look at the congregation as a whole before moving specifically into addressing our schools.

A word about the congregation

What a blessing it is that our congregations preach the truth of God's Word in its entirety! God's Word is the change agent, the effective tool. With that truth as our cornerstone, we also know congregations and schools are organizations. They plan and then work to carry out those plans. They make decisions as to how to carry out their work of nurture, outreach, and evangelism. So, before determining how their Lutheran school is to be utilized, congregational leaders need first to engage the entire congregation in determining what it is they want to do. The mission is the same for every congregation, which is to proclaim God's Word in all its truth and purity. The church carries out many functions in striving to do nurture, outreach, and evangelism. As members are served with and through the Word, they are equipped to be ambassadors for Christ. While this overall mission—as commanded us by Christ—is the same for all of our congregations, each congregation functions in a different setting. Each has its own history and traditions. Each has a different makeup. Each has unique called workers and laypeople with all of their diverse gifts. Each faces its own difficulties and challenges. Each is presented with unique opportunities for ministry.

The uniqueness of each congregation implies a uniqueness of vision for the work that each congregation can do as part of the overall mission of the Church at large. It is valuable for congregational leaders and members to have a clear understanding as to why they exist and what work they are to do. Satan will stop at nothing to lull a church into complacency, to have church leaders spend time and energy on non-essential activities, and to chip away at a congregation's zeal to do the work that matters. Without meaning to do so, it is possible for a church to be so caught up in the daily, monthly, and annual operations of the "organization" that it loses its focus on what is most important. Sadly, when this happens, Jesus' words to the pastor at the church in Laodicea can ring true. He accused that congregation of being lukewarm—that they were neither hot nor cold—and that he was about to spit them out of his mouth (Revelation 3:16).

When a congregation is not clear on its vision and its ministry plan in light of Christ's command to preach, teach, and baptize, it is simple to see how and why dissonance becomes the norm among people who have strong opinions about the matters of the congregation. Certainly, rifts can also occur when there is a clear vision, but those rifts are more effectively overcome when all own the vision and direction of the congregation. When all own the vision, differences of opinion and healthy debate among God's people lead to blessings, because those involved acknowledge that they are all pulling in the same direction. When there is not a shared vision and plan, these activities become hurtful and sometimes personal. This erodes relationships and hampers planning efforts. The congregation not only is handicapped in simply operating, but many ministry opportunities also go unnoticed. Much of the healthy debate and harmful arguing and bickering in congregations relate to the allocation of limited resources. Lutheran schools are expensive, so it is no wonder that in times of financial stress, the school is often discussed as a "cost" rather than in terms of "investment." The tremendous ministry opportunities the school could assume as part of the congregation's overall plan can be easily missed in a climate of financial stress.

What a blessing it is when church leaders and members pull together to do the hard but tremendously rewarding task of getting about the real work of the church on earth. It takes time and focus to do the job right. All activities must be based on the unshakeable foundation of God's Word. Bible study, with a strong focus on adult spiritual growth, is so very important as people work to develop and carry out their congregation's ministry plans.

Stating the vision of the congregation is not a one-time project, however. It really never ends. Just as with school development, the blessings often result from the process of the work rather than just the product itself. If congregation members immerse themselves in developing a ministry plan, spending time in Bible study and prayer, having meaningful conversations with fellow members, and fellowshiping with Christian brothers and sisters, tremendous blessings—by the grace of God—will result. The Word of God is the Word of the omnipotent God; it is mighty. It will be effective anywhere it is shared and taught properly. We are to be faithful with the Word. We as God's people have been entrusted to carry out the work, but we dare not use a faulty definition of the word "faithfulness" as an excuse for not doing all we can—with God's guidance, and by his grace—to carry out the work he entrusted to us.

Some would see that WELS is not growing in membership and infer that called and lay leaders are not carrying out their duties well enough. Some would see that WELS schools' total enrollment has dropped dramatically over the past

decade and then question the efforts of schools and their staffs. This is dangerous. We must remember that God's Word will never return to him empty, but it will accomplish what he desires, and it will achieve the purpose for which he sent it (Isaiah 55:11). God will accomplish what he will accomplish. We are to preach law and gospel faithfully. In short, we must not rest on the false assumption that numbers indicate success and failure in spiritual matters. With that being said, we should never weary of looking for more opportunities to share the gospel with the people in our flock and with those lost in spiritual darkness. Although the Word of God is the sole effective agent, church and school leaders can be creative in planning ways to reach more people so they can be impacted by that Word.

Once the vision and direction of the congregation is set, then ministry plans can be developed. Here is where the question "how" should be asked again and again. How can we best train and equip our own members? How can we best reach out with the gospel to the whole world and also to our local community? From these key questions will flow other questions and ideas about the utilization of the school in assisting the congregation in carrying out its plans.

We also must remember that we don't know the future, we can't control the comings and goings of called workers and laypeople, and our operational ministry plans are fallible because they are developed by sinful people. Still, we plan. We seek guidance and direction from our God, and we are flexible as new challenges and opportunities invariably arise. We remember our mission is to teach and preach Jesus, but our vision setting and ministry planning is likely going to be changing over time. We believe this to be a good thing, though, because these are opportunities to consider how to address challenges and opportunities in ways that carry out the church's prime mission.

We are truly blessed—our Redeemer has paid for our sins. The Holy Spirit has convinced our dead hearts that Jesus indeed is our Savior. Our Creator has enlisted us to serve him, and he assures us that he is with us and will bless us and our efforts. As we each look to the cross and see that our beautiful Savior has died for our sins, we are motivated to do all we can to love him, please him, and serve him to the fullest with the gifts, talents, and blessings he has bestowed upon us. What a remarkable blessing it is that almighty God would permit and command us to do such important work!

The purpose of the school

Once the vitally important foundational work of setting the vision of the congregation and developing the ministry plan has been accomplished (again, an ongoing process), the role of the school can be firmly established in light of those overall congregational plans. Church and school leaders need to answer some key questions as they determine how to utilize their school. Following are examples of such questions:

- Why does our Lutheran school exist?
- What is its purpose and mission?
- Whom do we wish to serve with our Lutheran school?
- How will our Lutheran school help our congregation carry out its mission of nurture, outreach, and evangelism?
- How and where does our Lutheran school fit into the overall ministry plan of the congregation?

When these and other foundational questions are answered as part of the overall congregational planning process, leaders are much better equipped to give focused attention to determining the role of the school because it is viewed as an integral part of a congregation's ministry.

Called worker personal spiritual growth

Why wouldn't called workers demonstrate that their spiritual growth is their highest priority? We know the answers: the attacks in all of their various forms that come from the unholy trinity—our sinful nature, this sinful world, and our evil enemy. Yet, even with the relentless attacks of our enemies, we have amazing freedom in determining what it is we do with our time. We prioritize our day, weeks, months, and years with activities that we determine to be most important. To illustrate, consider how we deem sacrosanct a playoff game for our favorite sports team, a dinner engagement with dear friends, or an annually treasured week of vacation. Nothing short of an emergency would derail those plans. Yet, a daily appointment with the One who fashioned us is skipped if something better comes along—or, worse yet, isn't even on our list of things to do. Why is this? How can this be? Interestingly, though, we would not be able to find even one called worker who would say anything is more important than regular time devoted to personal spiritual growth, but then how many give evidence of that belief in their daily living? We leave this to each called worker to self-assess.

Why is this so important? Our called workers are divinely called by God himself. He has tapped each called worker for service in the public ministry. This is a great privilege and responsibility. If we are going to serve with an agape

attitude in all of our ministry activities and with all those with whom we interact, there is nothing but the Word of God itself that will provide both the proper motivation and the appropriate principles that govern our thoughts, words, and actions as we seek—motivated by the gospel—to fulfill all of our responsibilities as well as we are able. Called workers need to be spiritually healthy—yes, certainly for themselves and their families—but also so they are equipped to serve others with joy and eagerness. How hard the devil works to discourage us and to lead us to despair! How often we must be driven back to the Word!

Satan will stop at nothing to get leaders in Christ's church to falter, to give up, and to lose focus. It is imperative that we each spend regular and scheduled time in personal Bible study. Not only will we become even more solidified in our faith, but also we will be equipped to handle, with our Lord's help, the seemingly endless string of challenges, frustrations, and disappointments that arise in our work. We will more readily see the joys and privileges associated with our work. In addition, our students will be blessed through our growing Christian maturity, and the students' parents can learn from our example. We, whom God has selected to serve publicly in his kingdom, need the nourishment that can be provided only by his Word. We are motivated to stay and grow in God's Word by what he has given us in Christ. May the power of the gospel message encourage and lead us all to continue taking in God's Word during devotional times with him. And as we continue to fix God's Word in our hearts and minds, our very lives will be sacrificial and devotional.

We know it is the Holy Spirit who works through Word and sacrament to create, sustain, and grow faith; and we know his work isn't "measurable" in our human terms; this is his domain. Where we are empowered, though, is in determining what we do with our time and what level of effort we invest in our various activities and responsibilities. Stating that our spiritual well-being is our highest priority isn't enough; putting that statement into practice is our desire. May our great God, for the sake of his Son Jesus, forgive us for those times that we despise his Word and do not seek to hear and learn it. May he help us live lives in which personal spiritual growth efforts are simply "what we do." Our synod, districts, and our local congregations have many resources to assist us with these efforts.

We also encourage our called workers to connect with a colleague or layperson (at their local congregation or someone residing elsewhere) to create an accountability system regarding spiritual growth activities. Something like this might not be for everyone, but there may be those who would benefit from such a system. Maybe they—through avenues such as phone, e-mail, and video links—can plan times to discuss their thoughts and insights with each other as they grow in the Word. Knowing they have an appointment with a brother or sister in Christ could be an encouragement to help keep them focused on this most important activity.

Relationships among called workers

We rejoice that many of our congregations have called workers who work well together, who support and encourage one another, who handle conflict and issues in a God-pleasing manner, and who all pull together for the greater good of carrying out the congregation's mission and vision. We thank God for this and ask him to continue blessing them with peace and unity.

We also know that many of our congregations have unhealthy relationships among called workers. We recognize that these issues are complex, but we also know the Word is powerful and is effective. We encourage all of our struggling called worker teams to work through their issues with humility and with an evangelical spirit. We implore them to see their colleagues as those for whom Jesus died and serve them accordingly. Jesus Christ has won the war against sin, death, and Satan; yet battles for individual souls still rage. How sinful we are when we allow personality conflicts, resentment, jealousy, and self-righteousness to invade ourselves and our schools and negatively impact the very work we have been called to do! All of our called workers are bound to Christ through their baptism, and they are connected by faith with each other as well. The implication is clear—we are brothers and sisters in the family of God. Why would we not strive to live and work in harmony with one another?

Professional growth

In every profession, continuing education is important; and it is expected as well. The process and the product are blessings for the person growing in his/her field of work, as well as for everyone served by the person who is growing. Our principals, directors, and teachers must continue to grow professionally. This is especially true for our principals and directors, most of whom received no formal pre-service training in school leadership and administration. Our boards of education and congregations also need to be made aware of the importance of this, and they need encouragement in supporting their workers' professional growth efforts. The funds spent on professional growth are "investments," not "costs."

Sometimes congregations become frustrated when they invest in a called worker's professional growth efforts, and then that worker accepts a call to serve elsewhere. Some might feel cheated that a different congregation reaps the blessings of the investment they made. We would have two thoughts to share regarding this concern. First, professional growth is not just about the product (the credits, the degree, the certificate, etc.); it is also about the process. While the worker is growing professionally, the congregation is reaping blessings. That worker is energized and is applying new learning to his or her responsibilities, thereby strengthening the school. Second, as a synod—walking together to accomplish a greater mission—we consider it a blessing to our body when our workers are strengthened, regardless of how long the Lord of the Church sees fit to position them in their ministry locations.

The WELS New Teacher Induction (NTI) program, a support system for beginning teachers, principals, early childhood ministry directors, and trained instructional mentors is a recent development aimed at supporting our workers; and it is already leading to blessings for new workers, mentors, and schools. NTI was the focus of the January 2013 *WELS Connection*. We encourage congregations with schools to learn more about this program, to support it, and to utilize it.

The synod's Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee (CECW) is doing excellent work in addressing this important topic as well. It is providing resources for beginning teachers, veteran teachers, and school leaders (principals and early childhood ministry directors). We strongly recommend that every congregation with a school review the materials produced by the CECW and implement plans for the ongoing professional growth of their teachers and principal/director.

WELS schools—local autonomy or a school system (or both)?

Are we a system or not? We've often referred to ourselves as the fourth largest non-public school system in the United States. As part of their discussions about this question, we encourage congregational and school leaders to ask the great Lutheran question as a follow-up: "What does this mean?" We would suggest adding five words to this question: "... for our church and school?" What does it mean for our church and school that has local autonomy but is also part of a larger body?

Does a school system mean there should be a systemwide, structured accountability plan? If so, we are not a system. Does a school system mean that each school participates proportionately equally in the financial support of the greater organization? If so, we are not a system. Does a school system mean that each school follows an agreed upon process of ongoing improvement? If so, we are not a system. Does a school system mean that each school implements a common curriculum? If so, we are not a system.

We are systemic in that we have unity in faith and confession—the greatest blessing! We are systemic in that we agree to follow a common practice pertaining to the assignment of new teacher graduates from Martin Luther College and to the movement of called teachers from school to school throughout our synod. We are systemic in that every WELS school teaches its entire curriculum from a scriptural foundation.

Whether we are truly a system or not, we suppose, depends on each person's definition of the word. Local autonomy, a model of ministry we treasure, can have an ugly underbelly if the result is a culture that lacks appropriate accountability and lacks proactive improvement planning. A few examples:

- The congregation has a board of education that doesn't understand its role. Maybe it micromanages and therefore ties the hands of its principal. Maybe it doesn't see the need for policy creation and a process for systematic policy review. The principal is then "on an island" as he tries to manage the various issues that arise on a regular basis.
- The third-grade teacher refuses to change her curriculum in one or more subjects to conform to schoolwide curriculum improvement plans. The principal is frustrated but can do nothing about this. She's been doing it this way for twenty-plus years and won't change.
- The athletic director finds it to be a great challenge to secure coaches, so he is hesitant to hold coaches (called or lay) accountable for poor sideline behavior and/or for an obsession with winning instead of using athletics as a means to help carry out the school's mission.
- A principal doesn't believe curriculum study and improvement planning is necessary. Some teachers go "over his head" to the board, but board members do nothing. Frustration and resentment build.

Mentioned earlier is the fact that our congregations and schools cooperate related to our practice of teacher, principal, and director calls—a practice and process led and overseen by our district presidents. When congregations receive call lists, each candidate is to have a recent assessment report (one or two years old). Teachers are rated on classroom

instruction, classroom management, relationships, and professional characteristics. Principals and directors are rated on spiritual leadership, educational leadership, professional relationships, administrative characteristics, and professional characteristics. As of the writing of this report, we did not have the “turn in” statistics available for the 2012–13 school year. Here are “turn in” rates for the 2011–12 school year:

- Early childhood ministries: 10.4 percent of director assessments and 11.5 percent of teacher assessments.
- Lutheran elementary schools: 44.4 percent of principal assessments and 50.3 percent of teacher assessments.

(The preceding years show similar numbers).

Since congregations typically value these assessment reports when extending calls, one could assume that all of our schools would submit them annually, or even biannually—this is what schools in a system would do. When schools do not submit these important documents, all the Commission on Lutheran Schools can do is encourage and remind school leaders to take care of this task. The CLS has no authority to demand these forms. The Task Force on Lutheran Schools strongly encourages board members to see to it that these reports are submitted on an annual or biannual basis. The same is true with the CLS annual request for school statistics. This data is valuable in helping the CLS better serve schools. Ten percent of Lutheran elementary schools and nearly 25 percent of early childhood ministries did not turn in their statistical reports for the 2012–13 school year. We can do better at fulfilling our system expectations.

We are in no way recommending that we create a synodwide school accountability system that would take away local authority and in its wake establish a culture of a synodwide enforcement/consequence system. But what we are recommending is that each school (and, with it, the congregation) creates, implements, and sustains a system of accountability that flows from the mission and vision statements of the church and school. When role definitions and the structure of accountability are clear and agreed on by all, the proper foundation has then been laid to tackle the tough issues that do arise in carrying out the operations of the school. We would add a note here that the CLS has excellent resources for training the school’s board of education, which can be modified to fit local needs.

The WELS school as an outreach tool

Perhaps one of the most significant issues facing our schools is whether or not to use the school as a tool to assist the congregation with its outreach and evangelism efforts; or determining how to be an outreach-minded school if that is what they have determined they want to do. Most (but not all) agree that early childhood programs are appropriate outreach and evangelism tools, but there is significant debate about the role of the Lutheran elementary school in this work (and the Lutheran high school as well).

We believe that the Lutheran school can be used as an appropriate and effective tool for outreach and evangelism as part of the congregation’s overall ministry plan, but we believe there are some components that must be integral in any school’s plan for this to work well. We believe there can be disastrous results if this is implemented poorly and/or for the wrong reasons. We strongly advise against a system that enrolls children from outside of our fellowship without any “leg work” being done in advance with every interested family. From the point of view of prospective families, they’re just looking for a good school—a service (whether they’re in the invisible church or not). They want to make sure there are good academics, a safe campus, well-behaved students, healthy parent involvement, and many other attributes. If our schools don’t take the time and energy with every searching family on an individual basis, it is no wonder problems arise. Then, as these problems arise, word spreads, and the concept of using the school as an outreach tool gets a black eye. Here is a sampling of some situations that have arisen in schools that did not have a thorough pre-enrollment education process about the school’s purpose, policies, and expectations:

- A group of parents demands representation on the school board.
- A group of parents demands exemption from the Tuesday/Thursday catechism class for their children, a class that is a stated part of the curriculum.
- Students pass out flyers to their classmates for an activity at a church outside of our fellowship.

Our schools are positioned beautifully to provide educational services and settings that people in our communities are looking for. But as they spend time getting to know our schools, they must learn who we are (and who we are not). We can do this in a loving, humble, gentle, and evangelical way.

Before we go any further, here are some factors that should not be the drivers to using the school as an outreach tool:

- We are not ready to use our school as an outreach tool if we are driven by financial considerations.
- We are not ready to use our school as an outreach tool if we are driven by declining school enrollment.

- We are not ready to use our school as an outreach tool if we are driven by declining church membership.
- We are not ready to use our school as an outreach tool if it is not intentionally part of the congregation's overall outreach and evangelism plans.
- We are not ready to use our school as an outreach tool if we are driven by anything other than the desire to teach Christ and him crucified.

Here's an outline of one model that has worked extremely well, assuming the proper motivation is prompting this work and it is part of the congregation's stated plan:

1. Following a campus tour, a thorough student application is received by the school, which prompts . . .
2. . . . the principal to make phone contact to set up an initial visit. We recommend the principal make a home visit, but a visit at the school office will suffice. The principal gets to know the family, and the family gets to know him. The principal learns their story, because every family has one. Regardless of what the family might have listed on the application regarding church membership and denomination (if anything), through friendly questioning and conversation, the principal gets a sense for where they are spiritually. He uses this visit to explain the various policies and conditions for enrollment (maybe the required Bible information class so parents will learn what their children will be taught, maybe the requirement that students who enroll do so into the entire curriculum, a stated willingness by parents to support the school policies, etc.). He answers the many questions they have. He sets the tone with them, helping them to see his school is Bible based and that God's Word is the sole foundation for all that is taught at the school and for all activities, instructing them that the school works to assist parents with their God-given parental responsibilities. This visit invariably becomes an opportunity to share faith and teach Jesus. If the family is strong in their non-WELS church, the principal will have them consider that the school might not be the best fit for them, that there will be confusion for the child (which is why the Bible information class is required), that students and families can't undermine what we teach because we're inviting them into our "homes," so to speak. Maybe the family will still want to come and is willing to comply with school policies in letter and in spirit. Maybe the principal will learn that the family is part of a church roster but hasn't attended in years and is not being shepherded. Maybe he will learn the family is Christian but has no church home. Maybe he'll learn that they are not yet in the family of God. Even though we like our black and white categories and pecking order in our enrollment policies, the principal will learn that each family is unique and not so easily "slotted" into our premade categories. The principal will form an opinion about the "fit." And as the principal prepares to end that first visit, he tells the family to talk about it and to let him know at their convenience if they'd like to go to the next step in the process, which is . . .
3. . . . a similar visit with the pastor. When the principal hears from the family that they are interested in continuing the process, he gives a copy of the application to the pastor, which is the pastor's cue to contact the family to set up his visit. Here again, we recommend a home visit, but a visit at church will suffice. This, too, is a friendly visit to help the family determine if the school will be a good fit for them. It also affords the pastor an opportunity to talk a bit more about why taking the information class is so important, and it helps in starting a good relationship. As the pastor finishes his visit, he instructs the family to contact the principal if they'd like to move on to the next step, which is . . .
4. . . . having the application go before the board of education at its next meeting. The principal and pastor will have compared notes before the meeting and will have determined if they will recommend enrolling the family. At the board meeting, the pastor and principal share their thoughts, using the opportunity to reteach the board why it is they do what they do. After the board decides on the application, . . .
5. . . . the principal contacts the family to let them know of the decision. If accepted, he tells them to watch their e-mail and mail for registration materials and that the classroom teacher will be calling for a summer home visit. Following that phone call, . . .
6. . . . the principal gives a copy of the application to the school secretary and a copy to the classroom teacher. When the teacher receives that application, . . .
7. . . . he/she can be assured that all of the upfront work has been done and that he/she can focus on building relationships and talking about classroom matters. The teacher contacts the family when it comes time to set up home visits, knowing he/she won't have to deal with questions and concerns that would have already been addressed by the principal, pastor, and board.

The investment of time in the above model is significant, but in our opinion, crucial. We also need to remember that success should not be measured by how many children actually come or how many end up joining our churches. All we can control is our effort, our focus, policy/procedure creation, and the like. The Lord will send to us whom he will send, and we will joyfully teach them the truths of God's Word. We leave the creation of faith to the Holy Spirit. We

leave the correction of error to the Holy Spirit working through the Word. And, when some families are led by the Spirit to confess a faith in fellowship with ours, we gratefully and joyfully receive them into our church membership. Our work, though, is to proclaim Jesus. We can do just that through our schools extremely effectively. We are Lutheran by what we teach, not necessarily only by who sit at our desks. Some voice concern that these “outsiders” will negatively impact our WELS children and our school culture. While there could be some instances here or there (just as WELS children can negatively impact other WELS children), we believe the fear is largely unfounded, especially if thorough upfront work has been done for and with each prospective family.

Sometimes “nurture” vs. “outreach” is a topic for debate. Congregations who use their school solely to educate their own member children might call themselves “nurture” schools. Congregations who use their schools as outreach tools to create evangelism opportunities might call themselves “outreach” schools. We would challenge those who see these two purposes as either/or to instead view them as both/and. We would encourage those who think about this topic as it applies to their own situations to see the commonality between the two; that commonality is teaching. Regardless of the audience, God’s Word is taught in all of its truth and purity. Whether that child is a WELS member or not, God’s Word is used to teach, to encourage, to discipline, to comfort, and to apply in countless other situations. It is true that the non-WELS student might lack some of the background knowledge that member children have, but that highlights even more the opportunities to teach Jesus to those who don’t know him. To show that this isn’t a black and white, either/or issue, consider this scenario, which happens in schools all across our synod: An unchurched fifth-grade boy comes to your school after all of the preliminary work has been done. This child doesn’t know Jesus and what he did. While under the school’s care, the Holy Spirit gives the boy the gift of faith. Doesn’t the school now serve a nurturing role in conjunction with its reaching out role? Does our definition of “nurture,” which typically is understood as serving WELS children, leave room for children who do come to faith while in our midst and who therefore are nurtured along by our loving, Christ-centered teachers while at our school? Maybe this child joins our church; maybe he doesn’t. If he doesn’t join, has the school done its job? If the school is laden with the burden of member creation, then one might answer “no” to that question. But if the school’s role is simply to proclaim our beautiful Savior to the children who come, then “yes.” And, even if this boy had not come to faith, the school has done its job, because its teachers have proclaimed Jesus.

Some congregations who do use their schools for outreach really do struggle with how to deal with children from other Christian churches. Before digging into this topic, though, we first remember that unchurched doesn’t necessarily mean unbeliever. There are children and families who are members of the invisible church but who are not part of a visible church. And there are many unchurched people lost in spiritual darkness. But what to do about the “other-churched?” How to think about them? They are the people—because they are Christian—who are looking for excellent Christian schools; so they want to learn more about our schools. We know each congregation needs to sort this out for themselves. They need to create philosophy statements, policies, and procedures that guide them if they determine they will enroll these children. This, though, isn’t always a black and white issue either. Another scenario that happens in our schools: A little girl from another church body is enrolled in your school, again, after the pre-enrollment work has been done. She belongs to a church that teaches that God is usually angry because we’re bad; at least that’s the message she gets. She’s afraid. She doesn’t know Jesus really is her Savior and really did die for her. She learns about the real Jesus from her second-grade teacher. While in your school’s care, that little seed of faith she might have had begins to take root and grow stronger by the Spirit’s power. Or, maybe there was no faith, but the Spirit gives that precious gift as the teacher patiently and lovingly teaches Jesus and prays for the little girl. Could we now say this is a nurturing ministry even though she isn’t on our church roster? And she’s actually on another church’s roster? We suppose it depends on how one defines “nurture.”

Schools who do enroll “other-churched” children will want to be sure they are doing the important upfront work as outlined above. In wrestling with this overall topic, congregation and school leaders also need to discuss the application of fellowship principles as they relate to the school’s ministry and be prepared to convey any information to prospective parents, so it doesn’t come as a surprise later. We do want to appropriately apply those principles, but we do not want to make rules that are not supported by Scripture. It is absolutely critical that parents have a clear understanding of who our school is—and who we are not. As mentioned earlier, we believe some sort of Bible information class component is crucial for parents of all children from outside of our fellowship (unchurched and “other-churched”). Who is to say God in his providence isn’t leading a family to a place where God’s Word is proclaimed accurately, where law and gospel are taught and applied appropriately? There will be those who will remain adamant in their error; but these situations are usually discovered and handled during the principal and pastor pre-enrollment visits; and many of these families figure out for themselves that the school won’t be a good

fit for them. But there are also many families, even though they might be members somewhere else, who are really searching and struggling and wanting to learn more. When they come to a Bible information class, our pastors don't pressure them to join our churches, nor do they speak maliciously against their churches. Our pastors do what they do best: they humbly, gently, respectfully, and resolutely teach God's Word. They point to Scripture as the authority in all things. They trust the Holy Spirit to work as he sees fit. We don't believe that "sheep-stealing" is a fair accusation because these families came to our schools with their eyes wide open (because of the work done in advance by the principal and pastor) and because they have been given the rationale as to why it is so important they learn what their children will be learning (not that they will always believe or agree with what is taught; that is the Holy Spirit's realm). If we indeed have been blessed by God to see his Word as infallible, we can understand why God might lead people to us—people with all kinds of backgrounds and experiences. Our schools can be the perfect intersection points that our God uses to connect people to Truth. We acknowledge this can be a controversial issue, but we think this is a great topic for discussion and study by all of our churches with schools that will be used to assist the congregation with outreach and evangelism.

We realize many well-meaning church and school leaders refer to non-WELS children as "tuition students." We humbly suggest using a different term (whether or not these families indeed pay a fee closer to or at the actual cost of education). These are people with souls who will spend eternity either with Jesus or apart from him. As families come to learn more about our schools, we can see them as people whose paths have been directed to intersect with the path of our school—maybe "for such a time as this." If our schools are places where Jesus is proclaimed, we can see how the Lord might—in his providence—direct people to us, people who haven't had the blessing of being raised in the faith or being in a place in which the full counsel of God has been properly taught and understood.

The role of the principal

The following comes from the synod's Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee:

The school principal has a profound impact on a school's success and can account for up to one-fourth of the variation of school-level factors in student achievement (Liethwood & Riehl, 2005). At one time the principal's chief role was a resource or task manager. His primary concern was the efficient operation of the school (Shipman, Queen, & Peel, 2007). Today's principals must be visionary leaders who are held accountable for school spiritual guidance, teacher and student learning, professional development, data-driven decision making, and community relations. They provide instructional, community, and visionary leadership (Shipman et. al, 2007). To expect these abilities of a beginning teacher, or even an unprepared veteran teacher, is unrealistic.

That is why most school systems have established standards that principals must achieve before assuming the position. To achieve these standards candidates must be experienced teachers, have a degree in educational administration (36–60 credits), and complete a field experience of 320 hours. Using a graduate degree as an indicator for principal preparedness, WELS principals (21.5 percent) lag behind their peers (Public, 98.5 percent; LCMS, 69.4 percent). The CECW is focusing on supporting existing WELS principals and planning for the recruitment and training of future principals.

One of the more significant issue facing WELS schools is the definition and the role of the principal (and much of this is applicable to directors of early childhood ministries as well). Our historical model of the principalship has been defined and practiced as a male teacher who serves as principal "on the side." Considering the complexity and challenges of operating an excellent Lutheran school, the principalship needs to be viewed differently. Instead of being a teacher, who maybe gets some administrative release time to tend to principal duties, he needs to be viewed as a principal, who might also do some teaching. Principal first—not teacher first. This will rub many of our principals the wrong way because nearly all of our principals went to (Doctor) Martin Luther College with the desire of serving Jesus in the public ministry as a teacher. Teaching is their first love. As a matter of fact, a study done on the WELS principalship in 2003 showed that out of 285 respondents, 36 percent of them, if they could choose, would prefer to be teachers and forego being principals. In a 2008 study, 38 percent of 255 respondents answered the same way—"forget the principalship; let me teach." Why is that?

Before we pursue this topic further, glance below at a sampling of the responsibilities that often fall to the school principal:

- Staff development
- Curriculum development

- Promotion of the school in the congregation
- Supervision of instruction
- School budget/financial matters
- Promotion of the school in the community
- Cultivation of school prospects
- Parent communication/involvement
- Strengthen partnership with colleagues
- Development of new programs
- Long-term master planning
- Ongoing professional growth
- Campus safety
- School discipline
- Strengthen school's spiritual focus
- Strengthen school culture/climate
- Teacher care
- Work with individual students and families
- School legalities and compliance
- Policy development, review, revision
- Communication with fellow principals/school leaders
- Manage support staff
- Strengthen board of education
- Office management and organization
- Manage volunteers
- Work with pastor and congregational leaders
- Manage the "daily press" of phone calls, e-mails, visitors
- Crisis management plans
- Manage school calendar/activities
- Manage faculty issues
- Conflict resolution
- Faculty spiritual growth

Two descriptors often come from principals themselves when considering their take on the principalship: "Overwhelmed" and "Underprepared." The studies in 2003 and 2008 report that principal attitudes are deeply impacted by the reality that they don't have nearly enough time to be school leaders. The term "administrative release time" isn't a good descriptor anymore. Administrative release time implies some time here and there—away from the classroom—to do things like ordering books, filling out purchase orders, and doing many of the maintenance tasks associated with operating a school. The CLS offers a standard as part of its accreditation process that says principals should have a minimum of two hours per day of administrative release time per each group of 75 students. This standard needs to be reviewed in light of the challenges facing the principalship and our schools. We urge schools that don't meet this standard to work toward achieving it as a minimum goal.

We recommend doing a 180 on our view of the principal, seeing him first and foremost as a school leader, not as a teacher who also has been tasked with school administrative duties. Rather than saying we need to "free him" up to do some administrative work, we need to see him as being first and foremost the school leader and that he does some teaching as is necessary and appropriate. The principal must have the time resources to be able to manage well the responsibilities that fall to him and to be the forward moving servant working toward achieving the plans of the congregation as they relate to the school. If the majority of his time and energy is spent as a teacher—a calling that also has many pressures and responsibilities—how can he be effective at both? We won't get into the negative impact on health, personal well-being, and family.

Our classroom teachers need a tremendous amount of support. These dedicated and talented servants are facing many challenges in today's classrooms. This is not to minimize the very real challenges faced by the workers of yesteryear, but times have changed. Gone are the days of the traditional family. Here are the days of family strife, divorce, unrest, and dysfunction. Gone are the days of automatic support from the parents for the teacher. Here are the days of challenge and confrontation. Gone are the days in which throwing spitballs was a typical student misbehavior. Here are the days in which aggressiveness, violence, disrespect, and defiance are the common

inappropriate behaviors. Simply stated, teachers need help. If the principal himself is dealing with these same issues in his own classroom, while scrambling to tend to the press of the principalship, he will be in no position to offer meaningful support to the teachers on his staff. Principals need to grow in their awareness of the needs of their teachers; principals are there to serve them, too. But they need the time to do this. Research is clear that the school will only be as effective as the principal. The same can be said for the classroom; the classroom will only be as effective as the teacher. (In this context, we don't equate the word "effective" with its meaning when discussing the work of the Holy Spirit working through Word and sacrament. "Effective" in this context relates to professional qualities involved with education). Providing principals with the necessary time resources and a realistic position description will be a blessing to the school and congregational ministry.

As mentioned earlier, nearly 40 percent of our principals would prefer not to be principals. Besides the lack of time being a contributing factor for many, another factor is the lack of training. Systemically, we have no pre-service training in the areas of school leadership and administration. Martin Luther College (MLC) trains teachers (along with staff ministers and pre-seminary pastor track students). Because of the rigorous requirements MLC faces in producing certified teachers and in keeping their accreditation status, they simply have no room in their program for pre-service training in this area. We are thankful that MLC now offers a post-graduate degree in the area of school administration and leadership. Candidates study a core group of courses relating research to the principles of elementary education, and they choose an emphasis in one of the following areas: Instruction, Leadership, Special Education, or Educational Technology. We also commend the CLS for providing and promoting the ten Leadership Modules that have been well received by school leaders thus far. Congregations need to be willing to support the ongoing professional growth of their principals.

The Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee has also identified the role of the principal as a critical issue in WELS schools and congregations. It is encouraging the development of resources that assist with school leadership development. It has identified three key themes: 1) Strengthening principals; 2) Supporting principals; and 3) Preparing principals. We recommend that these plans come to fruition and that excellent resources are developed to assist in these efforts.

We also believe these resources need to be developed with the director of early childhood ministries in mind. As mentioned earlier, much of the information in this section is applicable to them as well as they, too, are often tasked with being lead teachers while trying to direct the entire ministry including working with licensing, financial, and staffing issues. Many of our early childhood ministries are serving as excellent tools for nurture, outreach, and evangelism. So critical is the work of serving these young parents who entrust their children to our ministries of early childhood—building relationships with them, communicating with them, supporting them, and encouraging them. Directors also need the time, resources, and training to be able to carry out well all of the many responsibilities of their ministries.

It is somewhat ironic that in most school systems, the principalship is a goal that is sought as a desired career step. The WELS system has many men who would prefer not to be principals, but who do serve as principals because they see the need and, most significantly, because the Lord of the Church himself called them to these positions. Our synod is indeed blessed in that these men see the need for their gifts to be utilized as principals. They serve knowing it is what the Lord wants them to do, for he has called them to do it. Yet, one can conclude that the principalship in WELS is not necessarily a position that is seen as desirable by many serving in the position now (or by those who might receive calls to serve as principals). It is safe to say that the lack of training creates tension and frustration, and the lack of time intensifies those issues. Another factor, frankly, is that the position is extremely challenging—even when training and time are available. One might conclude that if WELS had an improved model of principal training as well as the necessary time resources to fulfill the role well, that a greater number of our men would be more receptive to the idea of entering into and remaining in the principalship. An added blessing would be that principals were viewed by our synod and local congregations as school leaders first, who also might do some teaching.

The Conference of Presidents (COP) knows that the CLS strongly recommends that MLC graduates are not assigned into the principalship; yet, the reality is that congregations have needs, and the COP is called upon to fill those needs. Sometimes the COP needs to assign graduates into the principalship. We are thankful that they are actually placed as "principal apprentices." Congregations know upfront that if they are assigned a principal who is newly graduated, they will need to support a mentoring program that is supplied by the CLS. The current fee for that program is \$500 per year for two years. Ideally, this practice of placing graduates into the principalship would cease, since the MLC

graduate hasn't even established himself as a teacher yet; but this apprentice program is a good "in-between" step until we can avoid the practice altogether.

As a realistic definition of the WELS principal begins to emerge, the role of the principal will be viewed differently. The end goal, though, is not to elevate the perception of the principalship to gain respect for the position in and of itself. Rather, the goal is to create a scenario in which the WELS principal can be as equipped and supported as possible in carrying out the important work that his school does in support of the congregation's overall ministry plan. As the perception of the principalship begins to match reality, the need for time resources and training should become apparent.

School improvement planning

Delegates will see a memorial to the synod in convention titled "Improvement planning in WELS schools" (see p. 209). This section of our document is intended to provide a bit more background to the memorial.

We believe the best way to create and sustain a culture of ongoing improvement is through the accreditation process. Besides the overriding goal of assessing all facets of the school ministry and developing a systematic plan of improvement, the self-study process will cause school leaders to study carefully the school's purpose, philosophy, and enrollment policy. Schools will benefit not only from the product but from the process as well. A related benefit of the self-study is the widespread involvement of various segments of the congregation who will learn more about the school and take ownership of it and its ministry. The Commission on Lutheran Schools offers an accreditation program called Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation (WELSSA). Many of our schools are reaping the blessings associated with using this tool. Some schools choose to use an accreditation process offered locally, which might carry "more weight" in the eyes of the people they serve. We commend any school for undertaking the accreditation process, whether it is done using WELSSA or another appropriate accrediting agency.

On p. 63 is a document created by the Task Force for Lutheran Schools titled "Foundational principles and guiding statements for WELS schools." While the thorough self-study and accreditation process is the best format for self-analysis and improvement planning, we offer this document as a tool for discussion, study, and improvement planning as well. On the newly designed CLS Web site, this report will include "clickable" links that will point the reader to resources that we pray will be helpful. (We offer a word of thanks to the many teachers, directors, principals, and pastors who offered improvement suggestions during the development of this document.)

Another resource that has recently been unveiled is *Foundations*, which is published by Northwestern Publishing House. *Foundations* has six objectives:

1. Reestablish God's Word as the bedrock for Christian education.
2. Serve as a powerful witness for Jesus as the Lord of life and our Savior from sin.
3. Reassert the proper application of law and gospel as the basis for the motivational model used in WELS schools.
4. Reorient WELS schools to a supportive role that assists the work of parents in training their children in body, mind, and spirit.
5. Provide opportunities for non-member parents to participate in group Bible study during their children's first years in a WELS school or childcare center.
6. Embrace the parent-teacher partnership as a critical component of the Christian education model.

This is yet another tool that can be used by church and school leaders to evaluate and improve their church and school ministries.

Resources for congregations/schools

Another task we undertook was identifying and reorganizing many of the excellent resources that already exist that would help school leaders. Some resources might need the "dust blown off of them," and some will need some revision work; others need to be put into electronic format. We also identified areas for which new resources need to be developed. Identification of those areas will likely not prove to be a major challenge; the challenge will be in seeing through the process of creating these resources where none exist. This will be time and labor intensive work. The CLS plans to provide leadership in developing these resources.

Redesigned CLS Web site

Our task force worked with technology personnel at the synod office to redesign the CLS Web site, making it more interactive and user friendly. This site hosts the foundational document; a resource bank; forums for teachers,

principals, directors, board members, pastors, etc. to share ideas and resources, ask questions, get input, etc.; and other helpful items. We hope this site will be “living,” so that possibly the “another three-ring binder on the shelf” syndrome can be avoided and that many people will use it and will benefit from it.

As an aside, regarding technology: We learned that the technology used to assist the CLS personnel in developing call lists for the Conference of Presidents is limited, lacks user friendliness, and is therefore unnecessarily time intensive—even time wasting. Time, like dollars, is a limited resource and must be stewarded as efficiently as possible. We learned that efforts are underway in developing new software for this work, and we applaud those efforts. It is our prayer that work will move along quickly in this area.

Funding WELS schools

God’s people want to share all of his truths, including teaching Christian stewardship principles. As Christian stewardship principles are taught, and as the Word of God works in people’s hearts, the response of gifts of time, talents, and treasures is the fruit that appears. With that truth in mind, we also realize that operating high quality Lutheran schools is expensive; this is no secret to the many congregations who struggle with this issue on a regular basis. A logical place to begin addressing this issue would be in view of the overall ministry plans of the church. Ministry priorities arise out of ministry plans. If the school is to serve a significant role in the nurture, outreach, and evangelism efforts of the congregation, and if it is to offer excellence in Christ-centered education, then the school will be viewed as a priority. Rather than seeing the school in terms of “cost,” members will view it as an “investment.”

Many congregations practice the belief that the formal Christian education program—the school—is the responsibility of the congregation as a whole. Some have implemented “book fees” to provide some income, while retaining the spirit of the philosophy of having the school funded primarily through the congregation’s budget. Some have made this issue into “right” and “wrong.” We must be slow to judge practices that are not specified in Scripture. There is certainly wonderful rationale for the concept of a high percent of congregational support, but there is also rationale for instituting a tuition program at some level. Tradition can become a stumbling block when there is an unwillingness to review it in a God-pleasing way and in light of what the congregation would like to do.

The driving force for school tuition, though, should not be the lack of money, or money in and of itself. That is very short sighted and will likely result in increased tension. The driving force should be the ministry plans of the congregation and the allocation of resources in carrying out those plans. Church leaders will have to ask themselves some tough questions, such as:

- To what extent can the congregation carry out its ministry plans if a large portion of the ministry plan (budget) is designated for the school?
- Because of limited funds, how does it help the church or the school ministry if the large portion allocated to the school is not sufficient to run a quality school?
- How do we consider the fact that some of our families are blessed with the financial means to contribute a greater amount toward the cost of education, while other families lack the ability to do so?

Many schools must operate on a bare bones budget. It is a challenge for them to improve the effectiveness of their ministry if there are not funds for adequate teacher salaries, curriculum materials, classroom equipment, technology needs, professional growth activities, and additional staffing to allow the principal to have more time to tend to his school leadership responsibilities. One thing is obvious—education is not free. It takes strong financial resources to run a school well. How these things are paid for is a matter of adiaphora. There is no biblical mandate about how to “train a child in the way he should go” in the context of formal Christian education; however, as schools seek to cover the cost of education, it is wise to consider several biblical principles and several matters of good common sense. The task force realizes that any funding model has its positives and its areas of concern. We realize there is no one best way to fund Lutheran schools.

Perhaps one of the most important facts to understand is cost of education. The phrase itself is rather nebulous and can vary greatly in calculations, depending on how it is defined. But regardless of location or setting, there needs to be an understanding by local leadership of what it costs to educate one student in that particular school. Cost of education is not what families pay for tuition or how much a church contributes toward school expenses. The cost of education is the total actual cost per child in that particular school. In our WELS schools, there often seems to be a misunderstanding of how much education actually costs.

The following is a simplistic look at some of the funding models that exist, along with accompanying thoughts:

Assume that the average WELS classroom can hold 20 students. In that classroom you will have a called worker. That called worker has benefits such as salary, pension, insurance, and housing allowance. Then that classroom needs materials: curriculum, books, paper, art supplies, computers, etc. There are often costs involved with cleaning the room (janitor; general manpower time, cost of floor waxing/shampooing, etc.). There are also costs for utilities. With these considerations, we can do an estimated average WELS student cost of education:

WELS called teacher package:	\$55,000
Curriculum, books, supplies:	3,600
Standardized tests:	400
Insurance:	1,000
Utilities:	1,600
Mortgage (in full or shared w/church):	1,000
Administration (such as secretary):	5,000
Misc. costs:	400
Total:	\$68,000

This estimate is certainly on the very low end of cost of education. (Again, this is a simplistic example intended to help congregational leaders with the important work connected to funding the school.) So, for that particular classroom, assuming twenty students, the cost of education is \$3,400.

Now take this example to the next level of considerations. Let's assume a typical WELS Lutheran elementary school has four classrooms, but not every room is full. Perhaps the school is only at 75 percent capacity. With that scenario we can do another calculation:

Enrollment (75 percent enrollment of a capacity of 80):	60 students
Total estimated expenses for four classrooms:	\$272,000 (\$68,000 x 4 rooms)
Estimated cost of education per student:	\$4,533

Each school may differ on how it calculates cost of education; however, regardless of the setting, some costs are unavoidable in schools, such as the called worker package, the utilities, and the insurance.

Thus, we may come to a generalization as follows: Educating a student in a Lutheran elementary school generally costs \$3,500-\$5,000. But if a classroom has a called worker, then the cost per student must be at least \$3,000 just to cover the costs associated with the teacher.

Using these considerations, we'll apply them to three different funding model options, identifying some potential pros and cons of each.

1. School supported by offerings alone

Some churches may desire to support the ministry and expenses of a school only by offerings and not by any tuition. If that is the funding plan, the following should be considered:

Possible pros

- It communicates clearly a message that the church and school are one ministry.
- It communicates clearly that the congregation supports the formal Christian education of children.
- It is an opportunity for teaching and practicing firstfruits giving that support the entire ministry plan of the congregation, including the school.
- It might remove possible divisions with church vs. school mentality.

Possible cons

- It might not teach families to appreciate the actual cost of education.
- It might lead families to take for granted the education provided by the congregation.
- It might be a good practice in theory, but rarely do families of a congregation completely "make up for it" by adding the actual cost of education to their regular offerings.
- It is nearly impossible for a congregation alone to support a healthy school these days with the current cost of education.

Now assume this average congregation wants to support its average school by offerings alone. If we use the average cost of education number above of about \$4,000 per student, this would mean that in this scenario of 75 family units and 75 students, each family would have to increase offerings \$4,000 per year over and above regular offerings

to the Lord (\$333/month/family). Or in other words, such a congregation would have to increase normal church offerings by \$300,000 to support 75 students.

Thus, the intentions of funding a school by offerings alone may be good and faithful intentions. However, it may be nearly impossible with the cost of education in America today, and it may levy a burden on the congregation that is unbearable and insurmountable.

2. School supported by tuition alone

Some churches may desire to support the ministry and expenses of a school only by tuition alone and not by any church offerings. If that is the funding plan, the following should be considered:

Possible pros

- It teaches parents to appreciate the actual cost of education.
- It leads parents to truly appreciate the value of Christian education.
- It does not put added burdens on the offerings of the congregation, enabling the congregation to carry out more ministry.
- It allows for a clear and accurate cost of education to be published and recognized.

Possible cons

- In many WELS school settings, many families cannot afford the full cost of education, especially in multiple-child families.
- It might lead to divisions, such as a church vs. school mentality.
- It does not teach the congregation the value and importance of Christian education.
- It might lead a congregation to forget that the school is a ministry arm of the church.
- Though a family might have a firstfruits attitude of faithful giving to the Lord, it puts an undue burden on member families to give offerings and pay full tuition.

For illustration purposes, consider an average WELS family that earns \$60,000 a year in total income. Faithfully and joyfully, this family with two school-age children gives 8 percent or \$4,800 a year in offerings to the Lord. But in this “tuition only” scenario, this family of three would be giving more than \$12,000 a year in both offerings and tuition; this might not be doable for such an average family. In addition, in a “tuition only” scenario, there lies the potential for a great divide to take place where “the church” wonders what the purpose of “the school” is and “the church” wonders if “the school” is cutting it or worth it. The spiritual and financial ramifications of a tuition only school must be seriously considered.

3. School supported by offerings and tuition

Some churches may desire to support the ministry and expenses of a school by both offerings and tuition. If that is the funding plan, the following should be considered:

Possible pros

- It teaches parents to appreciate the actual cost of education.
- It leads parents to truly appreciate the value of Christian education.
- It does not put added burdens on the offerings of the congregation, enabling the congregation to carry out more ministry.
- It allows for a clear and accurate cost of education to be published and recognized.
- It communicates clearly a message that the church and school are one ministry.
- It communicates clearly that the congregation supports the Christian education of children.
- It is an opportunity for teaching and practicing firstfruits giving that support the entire ministry plan of the congregation, including the school.
- It might remove possible divisions between “church” and “school.”

Possible cons

- In many WELS school settings, some school families cannot afford the full cost of education, especially in multiple-child families.
- It might lead to divisions yet, such as a church vs. school mentality.
- Though a family might have a firstfruits attitude of faithful giving to the Lord, depending on the family situation, it might yet put an undue burden to give offerings and pay tuition.

Assuming once more that the average cost of education is about \$4,000 per child, a church might consider splitting the cost of education with the tuition charged each family. Or as another example, the church might contribute \$1,000 per child toward the cost of education. This would still call for firstfruits giving by the congregation in support of this important arm of its ministry (i.e. Christian education and outreach). At the same time, it would teach parents the true value of education and alleviate any undue or insurmountable burdens for the congregation.

This could be the most feasible scenario for a school to remain in operation while a church maintains “ownership” of the school. It has a good balance to it and is the most achievable scenario as the great cost of education these days is considered. The level of tuition would be developed after careful study of the entire ministry efforts of the congregation. Maybe tuition could be phased in at a low level and then increased to the desired level over time. Planned and managed properly, this tuition income would help the school increase its effectiveness, while also decreasing the pressure on the church budget, thereby allowing other ministry efforts, according to the vision of the congregation, to be carried out effectively.

Another facet of a funding model could be one in which families who have the financial ability pay a tuition fee closer to or at the actual cost of education, while the congregation establishes an annual line item for tuition assistance to help families who are unable to pay the tuition rates. Many resources are available for creating and managing a tuition assistance program. In this scenario, the congregation expends fewer dollars for the operation of the school, even with the establishment of a tuition assistance program.

Finally, no matter what plan is employed, leadership must be sure that the total contributions of the congregation per child plus the total tuition charged per child covers the actual total cost of education.

Third source funding

A debate-arousing topic in WELS is third source funding. This is another concept that can mean a lot of different things, depending on how one defines it. For the sake of this document, we will consider third source funding as any school support that is not from member offerings or school tuition.

There are many different sources of third source funding such as:

- Government-funded school choice programs
- Government-funded preschool programs
- Government aid for those needing financial assistance
- Military aid to families with active duty parents
- Grants from public or private foundations
- Gifts from members of the community
- Gifts from WELS members of other congregations
- Busing provided by the local school district
- Free/reduced lunch programs funded by the government

And there is “implied” third source funding with things like tax exempt status for property and the parsonage allowance for male called workers.

We advise against making the blanket statement: “We must accept no third source funding.” Rather, church and school leaders are to be “innocent as doves yet shrewd as serpents” when it comes to third source funding. Each scenario or source of funding needs to be considered independently. Questions need to be asked, such as:

- Will this affect our thankful offerings or could this be all the more reason to give thanks and give more to the Lord?
- Is the source of funding (e.g. government or foundation) given with any strings attached?
- If we receive government funding, will the government put any restrictions on our teachings and practice?
- Can this gift be received while still maintaining a focus that the school is supported as a ministry of the church (i.e. by offerings and/or tuition)?
- Will this funding lead to dependency upon it?

To be sure, third source funding needs to be considered very carefully and cautiously. However, to assert that all third source funding is wrong or sinful would be unwise and not supportable by Scripture. There are descriptive passages of Scripture to guide us in such manners, but not necessarily prescriptive passages of Scripture.

We urge each congregation to discuss its current funding model and rationale for using it. Analyze tradition through the lens of Scripture. If—after discussion, study, and prayer—leaders conclude that no changes are needed, they will still receive benefit from having gone through the process of self-analysis. They may find, though, that they can reshape their funding model to better serve their overall congregational ministry plan.

For some additional thoughts related to this topic, please go to <http://blogs.mlc-wels.edu/wels-educator>. This is a blog discussion at Martin Luther College’s Web site. There the reader will find an article titled *Is the Funding Model of WELS Lutheran Elementary Schools Sustainable?* The article and reader comments can be discussion resources for

congregation and school leaders as they determine what model is best in their unique setting. In time, more resources and discussion starters will be made available at the CLS Web site.

Another idea that is slowly gaining traction in some parts of our synod is the concept of association elementary and/or middle schools. We would encourage exploratory dialogue and study among church and school leaders who are located in areas that would be conducive to a joint school supported by multiple congregations (this has been the area Lutheran high school model for many years).

School governance

The typical governance model employed by our congregations places the voters assembly as the ultimate authority. The group below that is typically the church council. Reporting and accountable to the church council are usually the various boards and committees, including a board of education. The principal is typically accountable to the board of education, and the teachers are accountable to the principal. We did not locate or create a suggested new model of governance (although the synod's Congregation and Ministry Support Group might have some resources for congregations to use in implementing a new governance model). For our purposes, our encouragement is that each congregation and school study their governance system and work to improve and clarify, if necessary, the definition of the various roles. Especially important is role definition to support the members of the school board. The CLS has excellent resources to assist with these efforts.

Staffing at the office of the Commission on Lutheran Schools

The mission statement 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." Appropriate staffing levels at the CLS are vital in leading, supporting, and serving a large and diverse system such as ours. In light of the CLS mission statement and considering the critical issues and ministry opportunities that lie before our schools, the Task Force on Lutheran Schools has determined that the CLS office needs additional staffing. The CLS, currently staffed by talented and dedicated servants, lacks the personnel infrastructure to meet the needs of our congregations and synod as a whole. We believe an additional associate director is not a luxury but rather a necessity. The task force has submitted a memorial to the synod requesting an additional associate director for the CLS (see p. 208). The floor committee dealing with our work will be provided a detailed document that shares the many functions, duties, and responsibilities being carried out by the personnel at the CLS office. That document will also share important ministry that is not being carried out because of the lack of sufficient staffing.

Voluntary Supplemental Contribution program

Beginning in July 2007 all WELS Lutheran schools (early childhood, elementary, and high school) were asked to provide an enrollment-based contribution to support the work of the WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools. Financial challenges faced by WELS resulted in severe budget cutbacks across every WELS ministry division from 2003–10. The new program was established to ensure full staffing of the CLS office and restoration of defunded support services. A synodwide feasibility study was conducted to explore alternative funding sources. Input from local leaders in every district led to the proposal of an enrollment-based fee system. The plan was presented at district conventions. Based on feedback from the districts, the fee system was replaced with a voluntary contribution plan, which makes all CLS programs accessible to every school but features a two-tiered pricing plan where contributing schools receive significant discounts on subscription services.

The most important benefit you can claim by means of your school's contribution is the satisfaction of knowing you are making a difference by contributing to the greater good of WELS schools. Your contribution helps to preserve and strengthen support for an important form of gospel proclamation in our world—WELS schools. The CLS Voluntary Supplemental Contribution program is an opportunity for WELS schools to demonstrate their commitment to walk together as a school system. WELS budgetary support for the CLS is no longer sufficient to cover the salaries of our office staff and basic office operations. Your school's contribution is vital to ensure the most basic and assumed synod services for Lutheran schools such as call list development, the Team Ministry Process, New Teacher Induction, the testing program, the Common Core Task Force, resource partners, general resources, training, personal assistance, and district coordinator services continue into the future. Your school's contribution will ensure that basic and important services are available for all WELS schools and will establish the opportunity for such services to grow and be strengthened.

Contributing schools receive tangible benefits such as a complimentary electronic subscription to the quarterly newsletter *Parents Crosslink* (currently \$3.75 per copy); a complimentary subscription to Learn360—the new online library of education videos; one annual onsite visit from your school counselor; and preferred rates on all CLS

services, subscriptions, and event registrations. Some schools may find their overall costs will actually be reduced by contributing to CLS. For any questions or concerns about the CLS Voluntary Supplemental Contribution program, e-mail clsoffice@wels.net.

The following chart displays statistics from the five-year history of the program:

Year	Budgeted	Support received	Contributing schools
2008-09	\$170,000	\$166,892	255 (out of 526 schools—48.4 percent)
2009-10	\$140,000	\$138,000	205 (out of 521 schools—39.3 percent)
2010-11	\$140,000	\$149,008	203 (out of 516 schools—39.3 percent)
2011-12	\$142,000	\$145,321	207 (out of 515 schools—40.2 percent)
2012-13	\$148,000	*\$149,954	*201 (out of 521 schools—38.5 percent)

*As of Jan. 21, 2013

The contribution amount per student is the same as it was the last four school years (\$7.50 for Lutheran elementary schools and early childhood ministries and \$4 for Lutheran high schools).

Below is a summary of the 2012-13 supplemental contributions by district (reported as of January 2013). “Total schools” means total educational units—ECM (without LES), LES (with or without ECM), and LHS.

District	Total schools in district	Percent of schools that participated in the program
Arizona-California	36	36.1 (45.7 in 2012)
Dakota-Montana	11	45.4 (33.3 in 2012)
Michigan	56	28.5 (26.3 in 2012)
Minnesota	76	30.2 (37.6 in 2012)
Nebraska	36	44.4 (50.0 in 2012)
Northern Wisconsin	69	44.9 (50.7 in 2012)
Pacific Northwest	20	30.0 (31.5 in 2012)
Southeastern Wisconsin	97	46.3 (51.6 in 2012)
Western Wisconsin	69	42.0 (37.6 in 2012)
South Atlantic	34	29.4 (23.6 in 2012)
South Central	13	46.1 (64.2 in 2012)
North Atlantic	4	25.0 (20.0 in 2012)
Total	521	38.5 (41.1 in 2012)

In the spirit of “walking together” as a synod, and as schools that share a common mission and confession, the task force recommends that every WELS school participates in this Voluntary Supplemental Contribution Program. We don’t believe the per student cost to be exorbitant, and we believe the increased funding supporting CLS ministries will result in blessings to all of our schools.

In closing

To close, we reiterate what we stated at the beginning. We pray this document and accompanying resources will stimulate discussion, study, and improvement plans as we work together to serve our Savior Jesus and the children and families entrusted to our care in our schools.

Teacher Stephen Granberg, reporter

Teacher Stephen Granberg, chairman

Teacher Dawn Aswege

Rev. Philip Huebner

Teacher Robert Klindworth

Teacher Linda Martens

Rev. Timothy Mueller

Teacher Scott Schmudlach

Rev. Phillip Sievert

Advisory:

Teacher Cindi Holman, national coordinator of early childhood ministries

Teacher Greg Schmill, director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools

Appendix 1:

Foundational principles and guiding statements for WELS schools

Every WELS school embraces a culture of ongoing improvement because each school ministry serves Jesus, who is to be honored and glorified in all things; we intend this document to be a tool to that end. We can't claim to know what plans are best for each school and congregation, but we pray this document can serve as a framework for discussion, study, and improvement planning. May the Lord of the Church bless the efforts of all who serve to carry out the mission and vision of our schools.

Foundational principle #1

WELS schools proclaim Jesus Christ for the salvation of souls.

1 John 4:9: "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him."

Guiding statements

a. WELS schools are founded upon and teach the full counsel of God in its truth and purity.

This guiding statement reflects the truth that a ministry's foundation must be God's inspired Word as revealed to us in the Bible. If our schools are built upon or teach anything that is not in harmony with God's Word, they will fail in their ultimate purpose—the spiritual growth and development of the students and their families.

- Deuteronomy 6:6-9: "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."
- 2 Timothy 3:15-17: "From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

b. WELS schools have clear, biblically-based statements of mission and vision that reflect Christ's mission for the Church.

This guiding statement implies that congregational and school leaders will develop, regularly review, and communicate clearly written mission and vision statements. These statements will flow from the written mission and vision statements of the congregation and drive the planning and practice of the school.

- Psalm 37:5,6: "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun."
- Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

c. WELS schools permeate their entire educational program with the Word of God.

This guiding statement highlights a significant blessing unique to our Lutheran schools. God's Word is the foundation upon which all instruction, programs, and activities are grounded.

- Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise."
- 2 Corinthians 10:5: "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Foundational principle #2

WELS schools proclaim Jesus Christ to equip children for lives of gospel-motivated service.

Ephesians 2:10: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Guiding statements

a. WELS schools prepare students for their Christian lives with curricula, programs, and activities that serve the whole child.

This guiding statement affirms that our Lutheran schools will offer curricula, programs, and activities that serve students according to the five domains of child development: spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social. While all five domains are important, spiritual development is given the highest priority.

- Ephesians 5:15-17: “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.”
 - Colossians 2:2-4: “My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.”
- b. WELS schools equip students to share the love of Jesus with others.
This guiding statement reminds us that part of the spiritual training we provide our students will include preparing them to be witnesses for our Savior.
- Acts 1:8: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Foundational principle #3

WELS schools partner with parents and with the congregation.

Psalm 78:4: “We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.”

Guiding statements

- a. WELS schools partner with parents and caregivers in the God-given responsibility to train their children in the truths of God’s Word.
This guiding statement embraces the truth that God has given parents and caregivers the primary responsibility to train their children in the Lord. We consider it a joy to work with the families the Lord sends to us from diverse backgrounds and home situations. As we carry out this ministry, our goal is to serve their spiritual needs.
- Proverbs 1:8: “Listen, my son, to your father’s instruction and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.”
 - Proverbs 22:6: “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”
 - Ephesians 6:4: “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”
- b. WELS schools help to carry out the mission and vision of the congregation by nurturing those in the faith and reaching out to those in spiritual darkness.
This guiding statement builds upon the Great Commission as foundational for the ministry of our congregations and schools. Our Lutheran schools teach those who are members of our congregation and reach out into the community.
- Matthew 28:18-20: “Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”
 - Luke 19:10: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”
- c. WELS schools develop and implement written outreach and evangelism plans as part of the congregation’s mission and vision.
This guiding statement asserts that the school has an important role in helping the congregation achieve its mission to reach out with the gospel. A well thought out written plan assists school leaders in working through the many issues that arise when we intentionally use our schools for outreach and evangelism. This plan is rooted in the congregation’s mission as drawn from God’s Word, consists of clear policies, and contains specific procedures that encompass every aspect of this work.
- 1 Peter 3:15: “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

Foundational principle #4

WELS schools are concerned with the quality of and care for called workers.

1 Corinthians 4:1,2: “So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.”

Guiding statements

- a. WELS schools have called workers who understand that the Word of God is living and active.
- Hebrews 4:12: “The word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edge sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”

- b. WELS schools have called workers who demonstrate that personal spiritual growth is their highest priority. This guiding statement is built upon the truth that the Word of God is the means through which God works in our lives. By the Word of God, the Holy Spirit creates and strengthens faith, imparts knowledge, and equips his people for works of service.
- 1 Peter 2:2,3: “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.”
- c. WELS schools have called workers who regularly gather together around the Word of God. This guiding statement emphasizes the importance of unity within the ministry team as they live the love of God they are preaching and teaching. This unity is demonstrated by joint devotions, Bible studies, and worship. This love and unity will also be demonstrated by building up, encouraging, and strengthening each other. They will season their words and actions in ways that reflect their gospel-filled hearts.
- Acts 2:42: “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:11: “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”
 - Hebrews 10:24,25: “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”
- d. WELS schools have called workers who correctly teach and apply law and gospel. This guiding statement affirms that called workers are equipped to apply God’s Word to their own lives and the lives of the parents and students they serve. Called workers will regularly study God’s Word so they can apply law and gospel properly. Students are blessed as they are served by called workers who understand and properly apply law and gospel.
- 2 Timothy 4:2: “Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.”
- e. WELS schools have called workers who model Christian living. This guiding statement emphasizes that the gospel produces fruit in people’s lives. Called workers show the love of Christ and put their faith into practice as they interact with students, parents, congregational members, and the people in the community.
- Philippians 2:5: “Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.”
 - 1 Timothy 4:12: “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.”
 - 1 Timothy 4:16: “Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.”
 - James 2:18: “But someone will say, ‘You have faith; I have deeds.’ Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.”
- f. WELS schools have called workers who demonstrate Christian love as they serve their students. This guiding statement reminds us that the children of our schools are not products in a system, but are precious souls redeemed by Jesus’ blood. It is our God-given privilege and responsibility to care for the children entrusted to our care.
- John 21:15: “ ‘Yes, Lord,’ [Simon Peter] said, ‘you know that I love you.’ Jesus said, ‘Feed my lambs.’ ”
- g. WELS schools have called workers who demonstrate Christian love in all of their personal and professional relationships. This guiding statement reminds us that God places us alongside fellow Christians to serve his people. Jesus’ love motivates us to reflect his love to one another. Satan sows the seeds of hatred, jealousy, and discord in order to undermine the work of the church. The Holy Spirit equips us to demonstrate Christ-like love in all our relationships.
- John 13:34: “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.”
 - Galatians 5:22-24: “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.”
 - Ephesians 4:15,16: “Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”
 - 1 John 4:7,11: “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

h. WELS schools have called workers who develop and carry out written ministry development plans that include professional growth.

This guiding statement stresses the importance of ongoing professional growth for teachers. Research shows that the teacher is the key component in determining student success. Methods and trends in education are constantly evolving. The teacher utilizes current, research-based educational theories and methods that help carry out the school's mission.

- 1 Corinthians 10:31: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."
- Ephesians 2:10: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."
- Matthew 10:16: "Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves."

i. WELS schools have called workers who are professionally accountable.

This guiding statement acknowledges that as professionals, called workers will welcome feedback related to their performance. Called workers reap blessings when they receive input related both to their strengths upon which to build and areas that need attention and improvement. As a result, the students and families will also benefit from a school that has a culture of accountability.

- Proverbs 27:17: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."
- 1 Corinthians 4:2: "Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."

j. WELS schools financially support the ongoing professional development of their called workers.

This guiding statement encourages calling bodies to foster a professional growth culture in their schools. Students and families are blessed by the ongoing professional growth efforts of their teachers. Calling bodies also provide the necessary resources of time and financial support for teachers to grow professionally. Calling bodies consider recommendations of the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee in determining a minimum level of support.

k. WELS schools recognize the significant role served by the school principal/director and provide funding for training in educational leadership and an appropriate amount of time devoted to school leadership and administration.

This guiding statement highlights the research-based findings that (apart from our Savior's guidance and direction) the principal/director has direct impact on a school's climate, teacher quality, and instructional excellence. Our traditional leadership model for the role of the principal/director is no longer able to meet the demands involved with leading a school ministry. Inadequate training and insufficient school leadership and administration time and support are at the crux of many issues and challenges facing our school system. It is imperative that schools provide training, time, and financial support for their school leaders.

- 1 Timothy 5:18: "For the Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,' and 'The worker deserves his wages.'"

Foundational principle #5

WELS schools conduct all aspects of their ministry to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31: "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

Guiding statements

a. WELS schools strive for ongoing, systematic improvement in all aspects of their ministry operations.

This guiding statement makes it the stated goal of every Lutheran school to meet or exceed established and accepted standards of excellence. The accreditation process is a valuable tool in creating and sustaining a culture of ongoing improvement, and it provides the means and standards to assess and strengthen all aspects of school ministry. WELS schools will strongly consider seeking and maintaining accreditation.

b. WELS schools have clearly defined enrollment policies and procedures.

This guiding statement identifies the need for carefully crafted policies and procedures related to enrollment that are in harmony with the mission and vision of the school. These policies and procedures assist school leaders in fostering a Christian atmosphere and maintaining good order in the school.

- 1 Corinthians 14:40: "Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way."

c. WELS schools employ sustainable funding models.

This guiding statement emphasizes the need for the congregation to approve an annual budget that is in keeping with good stewardship principles, is fiscally sound, and is sufficient to meet the school's mission, vision, and objectives. The funding model includes an appropriate balance of congregational support, tuition, and other sources of income.

- 2 Corinthians 8:7: “But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.”
 - 2 Corinthians 9:7: “Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”
- d. WELS schools use current, research-based educational materials and resources.
This guiding statement encourages schools and teachers to pursue academic excellence. Current, research-based materials and resources, including the appropriate use of technology, provide teachers with excellent tools to serve the children.
- e. WELS schools have attractive, well-maintained buildings and grounds that reflect our attitude toward Christ and his mission.
This guiding statement recognizes the importance of exercising God-pleasing stewardship of our God-given facilities. Keeping our buildings and grounds attractive and in good repair sends a strong message to the members of our congregation and community that we care about our ministry. This honors our Savior, who deserves our best in all things.
- f. WELS schools value and utilize the resources of our synod and participate in ministry with our brothers and sisters in WELS.
This guiding statement underscores that our schools are stronger “walking together” than we are operating solely as individual entities. While our congregations and schools are autonomous, blessings are realized when schools work together, sharing resources and supporting the common mission of all of our schools. WELS schools strongly consider participation in the synod’s Voluntary Supplemental Contribution program, which will help strengthen our entire school system.
- Ecclesiastes 4:12: “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”
 - Ephesians 4:3,4: “Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace.”
- g. WELS schools employ governance models that facilitate carrying out the school’s mission and vision.
This guiding statement implies that a variety of school governance models exist. Congregation and school leaders will analyze how their school is governed as it pertains to the established mission and vision statements of the school. If they determine improvements are necessary, they will create a governance system that best serves the mission and vision of the school.
- To conclude, we pray with the Psalmist: “May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendor to their children. May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us—yes, establish the work of our hands” (Psalm 90:16,17).

Task Force on Lutheran Schools

Appendix 2:

Commission on Lutheran Schools associate director

Position description for leading Forward with Lutheran Schools/Second Wind

The Forward with Lutheran Schools/Second Wind consultant will work as a school consultant within the ministry of the Commission on Lutheran Schools with the dual focus of: (1) helping congregations start new schools and (2) helping congregations revitalize their existing schools.

Qualifications:

1. Has a Kingdom focus with a heart for reaching the lost and nurturing the saved
2. Is teacher trained, experienced in Lutheran schools, and respected
3. Has the ability to think analytically and creatively
4. Has demonstrated an ability to serve as a consultant
5. Is a good listener with strong people skills
6. Has the ability to communicate effectively and write clearly
7. Is a continuous learner
8. Is willing and able to travel
9. Is a self starter and able to manage time well
10. Possesses broad experience within the church
11. Has a positive, encouraging spirit and is flexible, adaptive, and patient
12. Is able to work with and through others and is a capable organizer and coordinator

Relationships:

1. Is ultimately responsible to the Commission on Lutheran Schools and operates within its policies.
2. Works under and reports to the director of the Commission on Lutheran Schools.
3. Serves congregations of WELS, especially those desiring to establish or revitalize early childhood, elementary, or high school ministries.

Responsibilities:

1. Provides systematic and comprehensive fee-based assistance to congregations in establishing and/or revitalizing their school and other outreach/nurture ministries
2. Provides or secures appropriate help for congregations in carrying out their mission
3. Provides Forward with Lutheran Schools reports and calendar updates as requested by the director
4. Assists with developing and improving the Forward with Lutheran Schools/Second Wind consulting ministry so that it becomes the best possible instrument in helping congregations, their schools, and their leaders to resolve issues and do their Father's business
5. Provides training for church and school leaders who seek Forward with Lutheran Schools/Second Wind services
6. Provides mentoring and coaching for called workers as opportunities arise
7. Assists with training current and additional part-time Forward with Lutheran Schools/Second Wind consultants
8. Serves the Commission on Lutheran Schools and WELS in ways appropriate to his gifts

Task Force on Lutheran Schools

Translation Evaluation Committee

Floor Committee #21

1 **History from 2009–2012**

2 *Formation of the Translation Evaluation Committee (TEC) and initial work*

3 In 2009, our synod, through faculty members at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) and
4 Martin Luther College (MLC) and editors at Northwestern Publishing House (NPH), became
5 aware of a revision that was being planned for the New International Version (NIV) Bible. This
6 major revision was slated to be released in early 2011, the 400th anniversary of the completion
7 of the King James (Authorized) translation of the Bible. Zondervan, the publisher of the NIV,
8 indicated that this 2011 NIV revision would replace the 1984 NIV edition of the Bible and that
9 shortly after its release the 1984 edition would no longer be available for use.

10 Since it was believed that the 2011 edition of the NIV might be based on the rather controversial
11 TNIV (Today's New International Version) that had been released in 2005, the Conference of
12 Presidents (COP) felt it wise to establish a committee to begin looking at other available
13 translations to see if they might serve as the WELS publication translation if the NIV2011 would
14 not be acceptable to us. In April 2010, the COP through President Mark Schroeder appointed a
15 committee to carry out that task. As the committee began to formulate its guiding principles and
16 map out its course of action in the fall of 2010, it was surprised by the early release of the text of
17 the NIV2011 via the Internet on Nov. 1, 2010. Since the committee felt it would be wise, now
18 that the text was available, to find out first whether or not the NIV2011 would be acceptable to
19 WELS, the focus of the committee was shifted to a review of the NIV2011 and a comparison of
20 this new version to the NIV1984 which had been in use by WELS as its publication translation
21 for more than 30 years.

22 It is important to reiterate that neither the synod nor the Translation Evaluation Committee
23 (TEC) can mandate the use of any translation in our congregations, because our congregations
24 are independent and are free to make decisions on local matters. The TEC, therefore, has always
25 and only been concerned with which translation would be appropriate for use in the
26 publications that we use together as a synod and that are distributed to those outside our synod.

27 *Review of NIV2011 changes*

28 In the two months after the text of the NIV2011 became available online, the TEC did a
29 preliminary evaluation of the passages that might affect the doctrine of the roles of man and
30 woman and other passages that would especially be of concern in the *Christ-Light*® curriculum
31 or catechetical instruction. Following this brief review, the committee submitted its initial
32 report in January 2011 for publication in the Spring 2011 issue of the *Wisconsin Lutheran*
33 *Quarterly*. This report, also available online and in the 2011 *Book of Reports and Memorials*,
34 stated: "The committee's preliminary opinion is that the new revision may be a possibility for
35 WELS, but they would like the input of more WELS theologians. The committee is coordinating a
36 review of all the changes in the NIV2011, involving faculty members of WLS and MLC, NPH
37 editors, and COP members, beginning in January 2011." That report concluded with these
38 sentiments, "Rather than cursing the multiplicity of choices in the modern English-speaking
39 world and denouncing the translations we don't prefer . . . we should be thankful that God has

40 provided his Word to us in such abundance. We should work together in carefully evaluating our
41 choices, and pray that God guide us to a wise decision in this important matter."

42 About 40 scholars in our fellowship participated in the above-referenced comparative review of
43 the NIV1984/NIV2011. Their evaluations and observations were included in a supplemental
44 report presented by the TEC to the July 2011 WELS convention held in Watertown, Wis. Another
45 part of that supplemental report was the TEC's brief reaction to five other translations: An
46 American Translation (AAT), the English Standard Version (ESV), the Holman Christian
47 Standard Bible (HCSB), the New American Standard Bible (NASB), and the New King James
48 Version (NKJV). The TEC also presented in that supplemental report the six criteria that had
49 become their working document for evaluating translations. They are as follows:

- 50 1. We expect a translation to conform to the presuppositions of faith. These include a firm
51 conviction that we are dealing with God's verbally-inspired, inerrant Word. Though speaking
52 through many different human authors, one single divine Author addresses us in every word.
53 The Scriptures find their center and beating heart in Jesus Christ, our Savior. The whole Bible
54 testifies of him and in his name proclaims repentance and remission of sins.
- 55 2. We expect, with Luther, that a translation will communicate in the language of the people,
56 using idioms and expressions that are understandable and in common, current use.
- 57 3. We expect that a translation will understand itself as a "direct quotation" of an ancient
58 document, rather than merely supplying the "gist" of the original's meaning in a
59 contemporizing paraphrase.
- 60 4. We expect, with Luther, that when theologically necessary a translation will adhere closely to
61 the exact wording of the original.
- 62 5. We expect that the translation will be aimed at native English speakers who can handle
63 Standard American English at a late-primary school or early high school level, people who are
64 neither professional theologians nor biblical illiterates. They can appreciate the difference
65 between texts that don't aim at literary beauty and those that do, and they have some
66 appreciation for the latter.
- 67 6. We expect that the primary way in which most WELS people experience most of the Bible
68 most of the time is by hearing it read—in the context of the public worship service.
69 Consideration must therefore be given to a translation's suitability for being read aloud.

70 The committee concluded, "As we have considered all these matters, the committee has become
71 firmer in its consensus regarding the new NIV. We believe it could be used as a translation for
72 our synod's publications." It cited three reasons for that conclusion: 1) "While there are some
73 notable weaknesses, there are also even more notable improvements;" 2) "We believe that no
74 other current translation would be a significant improvement over the NIV, one that addresses
75 all the NIV's weaknesses without adding its own new ones to the mix;" and 3) "Our synod is used
76 to the NIV. To continue using it in its revised form would provide the greatest continuity and
77 cause the fewest disruptions among us."

78 *After the 2011 synod convention*

79 Not everyone agreed with the committee's conclusions. The synod in convention understood
80 that not everyone agreed. While the delegates approved the TEC's work, they asked the
81 committee to help develop consensus going forward on the issue of which translation to use in
82 our publications. They also introduced a procedure for making a decision. The 2012 district
83 conventions would vote on a publication translation. If two-thirds of the vote were recorded for
84 any translation, the matter would be settled. If the districts could not arrive at a two-thirds
85 majority, the matter would be placed on the agenda for the 2013 synod convention.

86 The TEC made efforts to present the issues to pastoral conferences and congregations
87 throughout the synod. They produced a four-part Bible study for congregational use to help
88 laypeople become more familiar with translation issues. In addition, they chose to conduct a
89 translation symposium in January 2012. Two representatives from each district were invited to
90 attend the symposium at WLS along with the committee and other scholars the committee
91 deemed helpful for the discussion. The goal was to bring participants together who held
92 different opinions and to seek some way to arrive at a consensus. A few of the participants
93 remained unconvinced that the NIV2011 was acceptable for use in our publications.

94 Following the symposium, the TEC focused on three translations that had risen to the fore as
95 possible candidates for use as the publication translation of WELS: the ESV, the HCSB, and the
96 NIV2011. The AAT was not included because it is not readily available in electronic format, is
97 somewhat colloquial and idiosyncratic, and would need extensive revision. The NKJV was not
98 considered since those who would appreciate this translation would probably be happy with the
99 ESV which comes from the same translation family. It also uses a textual base that is not
100 commonly used by most modern translations and is limited to one manuscript tradition. The
101 NASB was eliminated because it was passed over by WELS in 1970 and even though a revised
102 edition has been available since 1995, it is still lacking in idiomatic English and inclusive
103 language in salvation passages.

104 *"Review of the 102"*

105 The TEC then organized a comparative review of the three preferred translations by a wider and
106 more diverse group. They chose to ask 102 of the synod's professors, administrators, and
107 pastors to compare the ESV, the HCSB, and the NIV2011. The entire text of the Old and New
108 Testaments was divided into 34 sections, and the 102 men were divided into three groups of 34
109 reviewers. Each reviewer was assigned a section so that three different reviewers would
110 evaluate each of the 34 Scripture sections.

111 After comparing the three translations for their section, reviewers were asked to list the five
112 best passages in their section and the five weakest passages in their section for each of the three
113 translations. Then they were to evaluate on a scale of 1-10 the appropriateness of the English
114 style for each translation and its overall acceptability for WELS as a publication translation. In
115 this way the TEC was hoping to uncover useful data about the doctrinal reliability of each

116 translation, which was our primary concern. The TEC was hoping also to learn about the clarity
117 and readability of each translation, which was an important secondary concern.

118 Because this evaluation could not be completed by the time the districts met in the summer of
119 2012, the presidium of the synod suggested that one of the options on the ballot for the district
120 conventions should be to delay the decision until the synod convention in 2013. The districts
121 overwhelmingly approved. Now the time for the decision is approaching and the remainder of
122 this report is intended to help delegates come to a final conclusion on the best publication
123 translation for our synod.

124 **TEC activities since the 2012 district conventions**

125 *Writing and speaking*

126 In the past year the TEC has continued to write and speak, as circumstances have warranted and
127 as we have been invited. TEC member Ken Cherney wrote a short article responding to the
128 statements of the ELS Doctrine Committee and the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church
129 Relations about the NIV2011. TEC member Thomas Nass added an "Addendum" to his paper
130 about messianic prophecy.

131 Of special note is the paper written by TEC chairman Paul Wendland on the topic of translation
132 theory for the Reformation Lectures at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minn. His paper,
133 "Bible Translations for the 21st Century," is in many respects a summary of the thinking of the
134 TEC on the topic of Bible translation. It can be recommended for newcomers to the translation
135 issue, as well as for those who have been studying the issue for some time.

136 All of these articles have been posted on the TEC Web site. We have also posted some other
137 articles that we thought would be useful to our synodical discussion. We have tried to be
138 transparent about our thoughts and willing to share the viewpoints of others.

139 *Completing the "Review of the 102"*

140 Our main activity in the past year has been the completion of the "Review of the 102." The last
141 individual review was received on Oct. 18, 2012, and by the end of October, all of the unedited
142 results were posted on the TEC Web site, along with an "Introduction" and some summary
143 charts. The TEC sincerely thanks all the reviewers for the considerable effort they invested in
144 the project and for the many useful insights uncovered by them. We hope that the large amount
145 of data presented by them will be useful to many people, as it has benefitted us on the TEC.

146 **TEC conclusions from the "Review of the 102"**

147 As we on the TEC have worked through the 102 reviews with a view toward our synodical
148 translation decision, we have come upon six main observations or conclusions, which are
149 summarized below. For those who are interested, we have also prepared a list of examples
150 drawn from the 102 reviews to support our conclusions. This list of examples can be seen on the
151 TEC Web site under "Examples from the 'Review of the 102' to Support the TEC Conclusions."

152 1) WELS pastors do not always agree on translation decisions.

153 It is obvious that WELS pastors do not always agree on what constitutes a good translation.
154 We observed a good number of passages where one reviewer gave a positive evaluation of a
155 specific translation decision and another reviewer gave a negative evaluation of the very
156 same decision. We noticed that it was very rare that all three reviewers commented on the
157 same verse as an obvious strength or weakness. Even in the sections where the NIV2011 had
158 its greatest critics, there was always at least one reviewer who rated the NIV2011 as the best
159 (cf. Genesis, Psalms 1–72, Isaiah 40–66, Romans, Hebrews). This diversity of opinion about
160 Bible translation, incidentally, is one reason why the TEC has not been enthusiastic about the
161 prospect of WELS trying to produce its own Bible translation.

162 2) Each of the three translations has some generally recognized strengths.

163 Though the opinions of the 102 reviewers differed on a good number of specific issues, there
164 was a general consensus about the overall strengths of each translation. The reviewers
165 recognized that the ESV, as a more literal translation coming from the KJV tradition, could be
166 a useful study Bible or a Bible for people accustomed to the KJV. A number of reviewers
167 commented on how the HCSB often has a fresh and insightful rendering. The NIV2011 was
168 frequently mentioned as the most polished of the three translations and the one that
169 communicates in the smoothest and clearest way. The TEC remains convinced that the
170 Christian faith could be taught with any of these three translations, and they all have value
171 and usefulness.

172 3) Each of the three translations has some generally recognized weaknesses.

173 Our study of the 102 reviews reinforced for us very emphatically that all three translations
174 have weaknesses. The reviewers pointed out weaknesses that we already knew about, as well
175 as additional weaknesses. For a fuller listing of examples, we invite you to look at our
176 "Examples from the 'Review of the 102'" on our TEC Web site.

177 Though most weaknesses deal with translational preference and not doctrine, a few passages
178 can be found in all three translations that could be doctrinally misleading. The ESV weakens 1
179 Corinthians 11:3 by limiting the headship to husbands, it makes Exodus 7:13 and Proverbs
180 16:4 sound as though God may be responsible for evil, and it weakens Genesis 49:10 and
181 Daniel 9:25 as messianic prophecies. The HCSB sounds legalistic in many places by inserting
182 the word "must," it downplays baptism as a means of grace in Acts 22:16, and it has a number
183 of undesirable footnotes (cf. Genesis 1:1, Psalm 45:6, Matthew 3:11, Ephesians 4:10, and
184 other places). The NIV2011 blurs the messianic prophecy in Psalm 8, it weakens gender
185 related passages in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 2:12, and it also has a number of undesirable
186 footnotes (cf. Genesis 22:18, Psalm 45:6, Isaiah 7:14, Romans 3:22, and other places).

187 The question can be raised: In which translation are the weaknesses the most damaging and
188 the most dangerous? We don't see that there is a simple, uniformly accepted answer to that
189 question. Opinions differ. One thing that we can all agree upon is this: There is no perfect
190 translation. No matter which translation we use, we need well-trained Lutheran pastors to

191 teach the Bible properly in our congregations—pastors grounded in Lutheran doctrine and
192 able to work with the original languages of Scripture.

193 **4) Because of the ESV's widely recognized weaknesses in English style, it should not be**
194 **considered as the exclusive publication translation of WELS.**

195 Based on the widespread consensus of the 102 reviewers about the ESV's weaknesses in
196 regard to English style and readability, we conclude that it would not be wise for WELS to
197 make the ESV the translation that is used exclusively in WELS publications. We notice that 93
198 percent of the 102 reviewers rated the ESV as "weakest or tied for weakest" in the
199 "appropriateness of the English style" for the section they reviewed. Reviewer after reviewer
200 made comments about readability issues with the ESV. We also notice that 82 percent of the
201 102 reviewers rated the ESV as "weakest or tied for weakest" in "overall acceptability" for the
202 section they reviewed. This is not to say that the ESV isn't useful. Numerous reviewers
203 commented that the ESV could serve well as a study Bible, especially with the appearance of
204 *The Lutheran Study Bible*. There also may be congregations for whom the ESV is a good fit. If
205 we decide to have an eclectic approach toward translations, the ESV could be one of the
206 translations in the mix. But given the overall negative evaluation of the ESV, we don't see that
207 the ESV should be put forward as an option to be the exclusive publication translation for
208 WELS.

209 **5) We don't see that the HCSB is gaining widespread acceptance as a compromise**
210 **translation among us.**

211 The HCSB has been considered to be a possible compromise translation among us. It tries to
212 have the readability of the NIV, but its handling of messianic prophecy and gender language
213 is less controversial. The reaction of the 102 reviewers toward the HCSB, however, was
214 ambivalent. Some reviewers were quite enthusiastic about the HCSB. But others considered
215 the HCSB to be in need of further revision and polishing. We noted that 26 percent of the
216 reviewers rated the HCSB as best or tied for best in overall acceptability for the section they
217 reviewed, and 20 percent rated it as weakest or tied for weakest. Several of the strong
218 opponents of the NIV2011 were also strongly opposed to the HCSB. As with the ESV, the
219 HCSB may be a good fit for some congregations and it could be in the mix if we decide to go
220 with an eclectic approach. But if we decide to use the HCSB exclusively as our publication
221 translation, a high percentage of WELS pastors and congregations would see a translation
222 that is not their first choice. We fail to see a groundswell of enthusiasm for the HCSB.

223 **6) In spite of its generally recognized weaknesses, the NIV2011 is still considered the**
224 **best option for WELS publications by most.**

225 Seven out of the 102 reviewers were very strong in their criticism of the NIV2011 (Genesis
226 #2; Joshua #2; Isaiah 40–66 #2; Romans #2, #3; Hebrews #1; Revelation #2). Their full
227 comments may be read online, and selected quotes are included in our TEC "Examples."
228 Three of these seven regarded the ESV as best (Genesis #2, Joshua #2, Revelation #2) and
229 three regarded the HCSB as best (Romans #2, #3; Hebrews #1). One rated both ESV and
230 HCSB highly (Isaiah 40–66 #2).

231 Otherwise, the majority of reviewers preferred the NIV2011. We noticed that 86 percent of
232 the reviewers rated the NIV2011 higher than the ESV in overall acceptability for their section,
233 and 70 percent rated the NIV2011 higher than the HCSB. In all of the 34 sections, at least one
234 reviewer rated NIV2011 the best.

235 **Recommendation of the TEC**

236 From the "Review of the 102," our own findings, and literally hundreds of conversations in
237 which we have participated in various forums around our synod, two options have emerged,
238 given as Option 1 and Option 2 below. Each has advantages and disadvantages, but the TEC sees
239 either as entirely defensible and viable. Our recommendation is that the synod would discuss
240 the matter thoroughly in the coming months, and then choose either Option 1 or Option 2 at the
241 synod convention.

242 **Option 1: WELS adopts NIV2011 for use in materials produced by Northwestern** 243 **Publishing House.**

244 **Advantages:**

245 In our view, there is much to be said for uniformity—for having a single version of the Bible in
246 use both across our church body and across different NPH publications. There is benefit, for
247 example, in letting confirmands hear a passage read from the lectern in the same wording in
248 which they memorized it, or in not expecting them to relearn passages every time their family
249 moves. There is also benefit in choosing a version that communicates in idiomatic English to
250 those who are new to our congregations and publications and have little or no biblical
251 background. To the question, "Which version should this be?" the answer seems clear. The
252 NIV2011 was the strong preference of the majority of the 102 reviewers. 82 percent rated it as
253 best or tied for best in overall acceptability, and no other version really emerged from the
254 review process as a viable candidate. We should also mention the more than 30 years of history
255 that WELS has with this version. In practical terms, this would make the transition to NIV2011
256 relatively seamless; in some respects the transition is already underway in a number of our
257 congregations.

258 **Disadvantages:**

259 Like every Bible translation, the NIV2011 has its acknowledged weaknesses. Over the course of
260 this discussion there have been pastors and others who have expressed strong opinions on this
261 subject, including the opinion that its weaknesses are so serious that NIV2011 should not be
262 used. While those who hold this opinion are in the minority, it may be that our church body
263 simply cannot achieve the level of consensus about NIV2011 that will enable us to continue to
264 "walk together" in important areas of our work. There is value in translation uniformity, but it is
265 not more important than God-pleasing unity among us.

266 **Option 2: WELS does not adopt a single Bible version for use in its publications at this**
267 **time. NPH uses whichever version of these three (ESV, HCSB, NIV2011⁴) seems best for**
268 **the passage cited and the publication in which the biblical text will appear ("eclectic**
269 **approach").**

270 **Advantages:**

271 **An obvious advantage to an eclectic approach is that a weak (in an author's or editor's opinion)**
272 **rendering from NIV2011 could be replaced with the text from another version. This approach**
273 **would also allow NPH to choose the version that best suits the purpose for a particular**
274 **publication, since versions of the Bible suit some purposes better than others. A case can be**
275 **made that an eclectic approach reflects today's reality. Web sites, apps, and programs for Bible**
276 **study now put several versions at a reader's fingertips (in addition to the Hebrew and Greek**
277 **source texts), and the proliferation of electronic resources means that a translational "mix-and-**
278 **match" approach to producing materials would be easier today than ever before. For us to adopt**
279 **an intentionally eclectic approach might not only reflect the kind of Bible-reading environment**
280 **in which our members increasingly live. It might also help us teach them to navigate that**
281 **environment effectively. Finally, with an eclectic approach pastors and congregations who have**
282 **strong feelings about a translation will be able to avoid the use of that translation more easily.**
283 **Individual preference has a higher priority in this approach.**

284 **Disadvantages:**

285 **We would lose the benefits of uniformity referred to above. We could expect the wording of**
286 **Bible verses in our synod publications to be different sometimes from the wording in our**
287 **congregation. When traveling or moving, we could encounter a different version. The matter of**
288 **Bible translation might become an issue when pastors receive calls and move. NPH can be asked**
289 **about the implications for their work. It would certainly not make their work easier, although**
290 **they have expressed a willingness to do whatever the synod directs them to do. Finally, we**
291 **harbor no illusions that an eclectic approach—or any other decision—will lead to a new reign of**
292 **peace and harmony among us, all by itself. Regardless of our decision, it will remain necessary to**
293 **defend the truth of God's Word. It will remain just as necessary to recognize when we have left**
294 **the realm of "right" and "wrong" and entered the realm of "good," "better," and "best"—and to**
295 **speak thoughtfully and charitably about those whose decisions might be different from our own.**

296 **Final thoughts**

297 **Regardless of our decision, this is a time for an extra measure of charity and understanding on**
298 **the part of all in order to preserve harmony in our fellowship. It is evident that we have**
299 **differences of opinion in our fellowship regarding both translational philosophy and the merit of**
300 **individual translations. We are not all agreed on whether a more word-for-word or a more**

⁴ The NIV84 is also still available for limited use under fair use copyright laws. While the Bible itself will no longer be published, small portions of it may be able to be quoted in a limited range of publications such as *Meditations*, where only small portions of it are needed.

301 sense-for-sense approach is better for translating the Bible. We are not all agreed on which
302 translation has the greatest strengths and weaknesses.

303 As we go forward, we need to remember not to read hearts nor question motives. We should try
304 to characterize fairly and accurately the views of those who come to conclusions that vary from
305 our own. These are issues over which godly people can honestly disagree—and for valid
306 reasons. To give one obvious example: sometimes our differences may be influenced by location
307 and ministry setting. WELS is no longer a Lutheran synod located primarily in the upper
308 Midwest, but rather is made up of congregations of various sizes and types throughout the
309 length and breadth of North America. These different settings may lead people to different
310 conclusions regarding the advisability of one translation over another.

311 As a committee we are convinced that all the precious truths of our faith are clearly taught in all
312 the translations we have considered. They have all been translated by people who have a high
313 view of Scripture and who see the Bible's message centering in Christ. What differences exist
314 have more to do with translational preference. That is why the committee's earnest prayer and
315 fervent hope is that we can live with one another in peace, without passing judgment on each
316 other's preferences. Let us not speak ill of another's good!

317 In this connection permit us to share some concerns that have been growing in our minds over
318 the last few years. Our synod's deep love for God's Word has been the primary reason why we
319 have been engaged in this discussion. No one would say that a love for God's Word is a bad thing.
320 When the translation of God's Word is the subject, lively debate can be a sign of spiritual health.
321 It is infinitely to be preferred to a spirit of indifference.

322 However, it is also important to bear in mind that, over time, God's people can be adversely
323 affected by the vigor of the discussion in a number of ways. They may begin to wonder, for
324 instance, whether or not they can trust a particular version of the Scriptures—wondering if it is
325 really God's Word and not some falsification of it. They may begin to have doubts in a general
326 way about their access to God's Word in any version. Finally, they may be convinced that only
327 one version has the proper authority and that all other versions are to be rejected. Given the
328 general mobility of our society, one can readily see the practical and pastoral problems that
329 could arise here, especially if we decide to use a variety of translations in the synod. We must be
330 careful not to drive a wedge between God's people and the Scriptures.

331 Needless concerns over the "correct" version of the Bible can also lead to needless concerns
332 regarding the work of Northwestern Publishing House (NPH). From the very beginning of this
333 discussion, NPH has consistently demonstrated that it is a servant institution, eager to carry out
334 the will of the synod and to provide wholesome, biblically reliable materials for all our
335 congregations and members to use. NPH does not have a large market outside of our synod. It
336 relies on widespread WELS support to remain viable. Whatever decision is made, NPH should be
337 able to continue to count on that support.

338 Finally, we also believe that there have been many lessons we have learned over the course of
339 the translation discussion. Perhaps in the past we have been overly centered on using a single
340 version in every setting rather than recognizing the usefulness of different versions in different
341 settings. Having many versions to choose from—rather than being seen as cause for concern and
342 controversy—can in reality be evidence of God's constant generosity and grace in giving us
343 more than we could ask or imagine. For instance, in a Bible class, it may be extremely valuable to
344 have more than one type of translation ready at hand. One version might be more useful to us in
345 public reading, in personal reading, and in memorization; another might be more suitable for
346 careful study and close reading of the text. One size does not have to fit all.

347 When questions arise as we compare one translation with another—as they inevitably will—we
348 will discover one more reason for thanking our gracious God. He has put us into a church body
349 that expends a great deal of time and treasure into training pastors who are equipped to study
350 and expound the Scripture on the basis of the original languages. We do not have to scour the
351 Internet or merely sit and wonder when one of these questions comes up. We can simply go to
352 our pastor. We will find in him a faithful shepherd who is able to "bring out of his storeroom
353 treasures old and new" (Matthew 13:52).

354 No translation is perfect. No translational approach is, either. One thing is sure. Old translations
355 will pass away. New ones will come to take their place. All people are like grass, and all their
356 glory is like the flowers of the field. A translation—to the extent that it is a product of human
357 skill and effort—is also one of these flowers. It springs up, is lovely for a time, but in the end it,
358 too, must wither and fall. Let us rather fix our hearts on this one unshakable truth: the Word of
359 our God endures forever!

360 *Pres. Paul A. Wendland, reporter*

361 *Pres. Paul A. Wendland, chairman*

362 *Prof. Thomas P. Nass, secretary*

363 *Rev. John A. Braun*

364 *Prof. Kenneth A. Cherney Jr.*

365 *Pres. Joel V. Petermann*

Translation Feasibility Committee

Floor Committee #22

Our calling

The Translation Feasibility Committee was appointed by the synod's praesidium following the 2011 synod convention. The committee was asked to "study the feasibility of producing a confessional Lutheran Bible translation and/or study Bible with notes to accompany whatever Bible translation is chosen" by the synod. We understand "feasible" to mean "capable of being done or carried out" (merriam-webster.com).

Creating a confessional Lutheran Bible translation

As our committee noted in the preliminary report to last year's district conventions, the production of a confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible is not a short-term solution to the need to choose a Bible translation for use in our synod's publications. A Bible translation is a ten- to fifteen-year project. Though some believe that revising an existing Bible translation could shorten the process, others are convinced that a revision would require nearly as much time as starting from scratch.

In our preliminary report, we stated that we intended to examine the Bible translation project in terms of legal, technical, and economic feasibility. Legally and ethically we could not do a slight revision of an existing translation without the publisher's permission. It's highly unlikely that the publisher of a major translation would give us that permission. It may be possible to gain permission to revise a lesser known Bible translation, but it would be necessary to determine how much revising would need to be done to make it a translation that could gain broad acceptance in WELS churches. There is a Web-based translation of the Bible, the World English Bible (WEB), which is not copyrighted and could be used as a base translation, as long as the name of the translation is changed if any revisions are made to it.

Our committee experimented with working from a base translation to produce a new translation of various chapters of the Bible. This small-scale experiment showed us that a translation of the selected chapters could be produced but that it would be necessary to come together on translation philosophy and principles, as well as on translation rubrics, if the work of various teams of translators were to result in a translation of the entire Bible that's philosophically and stylistically consistent. We also recognize that translating a few chapters of the Bible is nothing like the enormous task of translating the entire Bible.

A subcommittee of our group worked to develop translation process models. As they imagined what the producing of a new Bible translation might look like, different members of the group came up with different process models. While much within these different models is similar, it is also fair to say that the different models represent a spectrum of possibilities.

Toward one side of the spectrum is a model that involves as few as 20-22 translators and editors. We might call this the lower manpower model. Toward the other side of the spectrum is a model that involves as many as 40-45 translators and editors. We might call this the higher manpower model.

The lower manpower model includes a plan for translators also serving as editors, while the higher manpower model calls for men to serve as one or the other but not both.

The lower manpower model suggests that a larger group of pastors, teachers, and laypeople serve as reading consultants, while the higher manpower model does not.

The lower manpower model does not necessarily call for salaried commissions, while the higher manpower model does. For this reason, the higher manpower model is estimated to cost \$1.3 million over 15 years.

We do not see these two different models as extremes on the translation process spectrum. Reasonable people could come up with translation processes that stand outside these models on the spectrum. In other words, "lower than lower manpower models" and "higher than higher manpower models" may be suggested, but we would see them as less desirable. Reasonable people could also come up with translation processes that stand between these models on the spectrum, representing a blending of the lower and higher manpower models.

In the two models there are differences in qualifications seen as necessary for translators and editors. The lower manpower model calls for worker training professors to be involved in various editorial levels, but the translators would not necessarily be professors who teach the biblical languages and could include pastors.

The higher manpower model requires translators to have taught their section of Scripture on the college or seminary level. It requires the same qualification for editors. Thus, in this model, all translators and editors would have to be current or former worker training professors.

We did not develop a list of qualifications for pastors who would be asked to serve as translators or editors in the lower manpower model. Obviously, these men would have to have excellent gifts in the biblical languages. It has not been determined whether having participated in translation projects in the past is necessary for consideration. Nor has it been determined how exactly we would identify these pastors. Those who lean more toward the lower manpower model are confident an adequate number of pastors and/or retired pastors could be found to do the translating and editing work.

While both of the models described above would have an impact on those who serve as teachers of Hebrew and Greek in our ministerial education schools, the impact would be greater if the higher manpower model were chosen. This would require careful evaluation, lest the work of educating future pastors suffer because their professors are overloaded with work or taken away from the classroom entirely. Our committee received several letters from current and former language professors, as well as from the chairman of the seminary's governing board, expressing precisely this concern. A major challenge in deciding to go forward with a confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible is that many of the men we'd depend on to lead the way in this effort, professors of biblical languages at our ministerial education schools, don't think it's wise—for a variety of reasons—for us to produce our own Bible translation. They could be put into the position of being asked to work for years on a project they do not support.

The resolution approved at the 2011 synod convention calls for investigating the feasibility of producing "a confessional Lutheran" translation of the Bible. Our committee understood that to mean that we should not limit our investigation to determining whether the resources for producing a new translation exist only in WELS, but among other confessional Lutherans. Our committee did some very preliminary checking on the possibility of enlisting Bible scholars from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) and from the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. The president of the ELS seminary indicated a willingness to assist in a Bible translation project. No Missouri Synod Bible scholars were asked in so many words whether they would be willing to assist in such a project. However, the Missouri Synod has moved strongly in the direction of using the English Standard Version and is in the midst of working on the Concordia Commentary Series. If we were lacking significant contributions to the translation work by scholars from outside our synod, the translation would likely be seen as the WELS Bible.

In regard to economic feasibility, we pointed out in our preliminary report that the Holman Christian Standard Bible took 15 years to produce at a cost of \$10 million. The English Standard Version, which is a revision of an existing translation, took 10 years to produce and cost \$2.5 million. The higher manpower model described above was estimated to cost \$1.3 million. (This is a conservative estimate only of the cost paying commissions to translators and editors, without any other production costs.) This money would be needed over a period of years before a single copy of the new translation could be sold to recover the costs. It's possible that if the New Testament were completed first, profits from selling it could be used to finance the translation of the Old Testament. If the lower manpower model were chosen, the cost could go down, but there would still be the need for money for travel, meetings, and, at the very least, a project director. It also seems reasonable to expect that the time necessary to complete the translation would increase if those working on it were volunteering their efforts in their free time. If we were not able to identify a non-budgetary source of funding for the translation project, it would also be necessary to evaluate the need for the translation project over against other synodical priorities, such as mission work and ministerial education.

A concern that was addressed to our committee several times is that even if we are capable of producing a new Bible translation, it may not be wise to do so because it could be perceived as a sectarian Bible, akin to the New World Translation of the Jehovah's Witnesses. The Roman Catholic Church has its approved Bible translations and the Holman Christian Standard Bible is closely associated with the Southern Baptist Convention, but it's difficult to think of another Christian denomination that has its own translation of the Bible. This raises the possibility that having our own translation of the Bible would cause people to wonder whether we're not capable of teaching our doctrine from any other translation. If we were to produce a good, accurate, non-idiosyncratic translation, we would have a ready answer to accusations that the translation is sectarian. The perception that the translation is sectarian, however, may linger, if all of the translators are Lutherans.

It's necessary to acknowledge, too, that a confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible may not be widely accepted by WELS congregations. The assumption that there would be near universal acceptance of a WELS or confessional Lutheran translation may be a hazardous one, given the limited use of Lutheran translations of the Bible (William Beck's *An American Translation* and Julian Anderson's translation, for example) in WELS congregations. The reasons for the limited use of these translations may include not only a general satisfaction with the NIV84, but also a concern about the translation philosophy employed by these Bibles, as well as the reluctance to use a "Lutheran" Bible.

Creating a study Bible

The suggestion that WELS produce a study Bible was originally offered as a way by which some of the perceived weaknesses in the NIV2011 could be addressed and corrected. While it may seem that producing a study Bible might be more feasible than producing a new translation of the Bible, we found that there would be some significant obstacles here as well.

Our committee asked Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) to provide estimates of the time and the cost of producing such a study Bible. NPH estimated that it would take 15 years to complete a study Bible. NPH also calculated that it would need a subsidy of \$1.5 million to fund the development of a study Bible and could not expect to recover these costs later through sales of the book. (The \$1.5 million includes all costs for developing the study Bible, but does not include the cost of printing and royalties.) Therefore, it would be necessary to identify a source for this \$1.5 million so that the development of the study Bible could go forward. NPH does not have that amount of seed money available.

There would be an additional challenge in using the text of the NIV2011 in a study Bible. The royalties charged by Zondervan, the publisher of the NIV2011, would be significantly higher than those charged either by Crossway (publisher of the English Standard Version) or Holman (publisher of the Holman Christian Standard Bible). Zondervan's royalty would be 10 percent of full retail price, compared to 2 percent of wholesale discount price for Crossway and 3 to 5 percent of wholesale discount price for Holman. In addition, Zondervan would charge an even higher royalty (25 percent of full retail price) on sales of a digital version of such a study Bible. At a time when sales of e-books are growing rapidly, the high royalties charged by Zondervan would make it very difficult for NPH to publish an economically viable digital version of the study Bible.

If our synod were to choose the English Standard Version for use in our publications, it would not seem to be wise or necessary to produce a study Bible, since the Lutheran Study Bible (published by Concordia on the basis of the ESV text) already exists.

If our synod were to opt for the Holman Christian Standard Bible, a study Bible project may be more economically feasible, though there would still be the need to find funds for the \$1.5 million of production costs.

If we choose to produce a confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible, work on a study Bible based on that translation might be able to begin while the translating work is being done, but the study Bible could probably not be published until after the new translation has been completed, 10 to 15 years after the project begins.

It may be possible to produce a translation-neutral study Bible, that is, a study Bible that's not tied to one particular translation, though this would not address the original concern, which is to have a study Bible that provides notes on some of the passages in the NIV2011 that are perceived to be poorly translated.

In conclusion

In the end, there is disagreement on whether it is feasible to produce a confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible. Many believe that we simply do not have the resources to carry it out on our own. That was the initial conclusion of the Translation Evaluation Committee: "We came to the firm consensus that producing a WELS translation would not be feasible" (Translation Evaluation Committee, Supplemental Report for the 2011 WELS Convention, p. 2).

It's undeniable that producing a confessional Lutheran translation of the Bible would take an enormous amount of time. It would require a large amount of money at a time when funds for mission work and ministerial education are in short supply. Some of the men we'd rely upon most heavily to produce this translation have expressed their doubts about the wisdom of the project. At this point, we aren't even able to imagine all of the ramifications that undertaking a project of this size might have.

In light of all this, perhaps the question should not be, "Can we do it?" but, "Must we do it?" If the people of our synod believe that there is no existing translation of the Bible that can serve our preaching, teaching, and publishing needs,

then we'd trust that the Lord would help us find the resources and overcome the obstacles to carry out what is sure to be a very challenging project. But if an existing translation or translations can serve our needs, it would save the time and expense, not to mention the potential disruption to our ministerial education system, to use an existing translation.

Rev. Paul Janke, reporter

Rev. Paul Janke, chairman

Prof. John Brug

Rev. Phil Hirsch

Rev. Curtis Jahn

Rev. Michael Jensen

Rev. John Koelpin

Prof. Daniel Leyrer

Rev. Jonathan Schroeder

Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee Floor Committee #23

They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor" (Isaiah 61:3). With these words our Lord Jesus pictures the fruit of his redeeming work in the lives of every child of God. While apart from Jesus we are nothing but dead twigs (John 15:5-6), fed by the Son-shine of his grace and watered by his mercy, every child of God is "a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor." As we continue to grow and thrive in that grace, each of us is a spiritually living display before the world of the splendor of our LORD's saving grace.

While growing up strong as oaks of righteousness is the goal for every believer, there is a special application we can make to our called workers. Since public ministers are charged with leading and feeding eternal souls, it is especially critical that pastors, teachers, and staff ministers be growing up strong in every way God intended for them to grow.

The most important growth for every called worker is the same. Just as every tree grows as it takes in the light of the sun through its leaves and draws through its roots the nourishment from the soil, so every called worker needs the same Son-light of God's grace, the water of life that is the gospel, to grow strong as oaks of righteousness. The heart and core of the growth we pray all our called workers experience is such spiritual growth through daily contact with the gospel. No oak of righteousness can thrive in an environment in which the Son-light of his grace is not abundant and the water of life is not richly available. It is not by accident that a common scriptural picture of the growing believer is of a tree planted near a stream of water (Psalm 1, Jeremiah 17). For the sake of our called workers' own souls, and the souls in their care, it is vital for every worker to be growing in that grace of God.

But even though each called worker has that common need of growing up in God's grace as an oak of righteousness, there is also much that is unique about each worker's growth. Just as no two mature trees are ever identical, nor are they planted in the exact same spot, so too our called workers are uniquely gifted by God for service in the unique places to which he calls them. How each worker will grow professionally is impacted significantly by the interplay between the unique ministry gifts they have been given and the unique needs of their calling body. As oaks of righteousness, called workers grow to maturity as they cultivate their First Article gifts—their minds and all their abilities—so that they can carry out gospel ministry in ways that display most clearly the splendor of the LORD.

But there is another comparison we can make from Scripture's analogy of the tree as we consider helping called workers grow into sturdy oaks of righteousness. The root system, unseen beneath the ground, is critical to the growth of that tree as it supplies the water and nutrients needed by the tree to grow and thrive. So too, our called worker oaks of righteousness are blessed in our synod with a root system of those who support their growth in ministry.

Each worker's calling body can supply regular encouragement toward growth, including providing time and financial resources. Beyond the congregation, there are many in our synod charged with being part of this root system that supports called worker growth. The district presidia, circuit pastors, and mission counselors form a part of that root system. Our synod's Congregation and Ministry Support Group (CMSG) is another vital part of that root system. Our two terminal schools, Martin Luther College (MLC) and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS), form another part of that root system. As calling bodies and these synodical resources work together, the goal is to provide a broad and strong root system that can support each worker's path toward ministry-long spiritual and professional growth.

In order to help this supporting root system be as strong as possible, our synod has established the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee (CECW). This committee works under the Conference of Presidents (COP) to encourage congregations to invest in the spiritual and professional growth of their current workers. The CECW also coordinates the continuing education efforts that take place through district presidia (including circuit pastors and mission counselors) as well as through the CMSG, MLC, and WLS. This report summarizes the continuing education work that is being coordinated first for our teachers/staff ministers and then for our pastors. In addition to this report, the committee is also submitting two memorials to the convention (see pp. 215-218). The committee first presented these memorials to the Conference of Presidents, which expressed general support of these recommendations but adopted no formal resolutions about them.

Continuing education for our teachers and staff ministers

Continuing education for WELS teachers, and for staff ministers to a lesser degree, is available from a variety of public, private, synodical, and parasynodical organizations and institutions. However, the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee's focus is to encourage ministry specific spiritual and professional development opportunities primarily through the CMSG, MLC, and WLS. Increasing partnerships, especially between the Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) and MLC, are resulting in coordinated efforts to support WELS teachers at all levels (Pre-12) and stages of ministry.

What follows is a report of what these partners are currently doing to support beginning teachers, veteran teachers, and school leaders, and what, as God wills, is planned for the future.

Beginning teachers

Goal: Every WELS beginning teacher will develop into a strong educator both spiritually and professionally through instructional coaching by an experienced, trained WELS mentor.

The 2011 synod convention resolved "that the assignment of Martin Luther College (MLC) teacher candidates be accompanied by a system of new teacher induction" (2011 *Proceedings*, p. 60). New Teacher Induction is the name of the synod's new initiative to guide beginning WELS teachers through their first two years of teaching. A trained mentor is assigned to each teacher receiving his/her first call into the ministry. The trained mentor closely guides the development of the new teacher, helping him/her to connect practice to undergraduate preparation, reflect on practice according to teacher standards, and grow both spiritually and professionally. The mentor is accountable for weekly contacts, monthly face-to-face communications, and two or more classroom observations per semester as agreed upon with the new teacher.

New Teacher Induction began as a pilot initiative in the Milwaukee area under the direction of the CLS. It was approved for use synodwide by the 2011 synod convention. In 2012 it was expanded to all three Wisconsin districts with plans to add the Minnesota and South Atlantic Districts in 2013. In cooperation with MLC, the New Teacher Induction initiative hopes to expand to all districts in 2014 under direction of a new professor at MLC. Schools calling beginning teachers contribute \$1,000 each of the two years of mentoring to help absorb the costs of training mentors, observing new teachers, and program coordination.

Work being done:

- a. The New Teacher Induction (NTI) through the CLS office expanded from the Southeastern Wisconsin District to all three Wisconsin districts in 2012-13.
- b. MLC called a New Teacher Induction professor to assist the CLS in providing mentoring synodwide.
- c. Here are the numbers of beginning teachers currently being mentored through NTI:

School year	1st-year teachers	2nd-year teachers
2012-13	36	9

Work yet to be done, Lord willing:

- a. The CLS and MLC will continue to collaborate on planning for synodwide NTI roll out in May 2014.
- b. NTI expands to provide mentors for new teachers in the Minnesota and South Atlantic Districts during the 2013–14 school year.
- c. Here are the estimated number of beginning teachers to be mentored through NTI during the next two school years:

School year	1st-year teachers	2nd-year teachers
2013–14	45	36
2014–15	90	45

Veteran teacher development

Goal: Every WELS teacher will continually grow spiritually and professionally in their ability to serve God’s people.

Education in the 21st century changes constantly, and the WELS teacher faithfully prepares to meet today’s classroom challenges by continued spiritual and professional growth. The 2011 synod convention resolved 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),” and “that MDPs include goals for spiritual and professional growth through formal and informal activities” (2011 *Proceedings*, pp. 59,60).

Present planning recognizes that a meaningful Ministry Development Plan is part of a larger process of formative (to improve teaching) and summative (to evaluate teaching) assessment based upon WELS teaching standards. Implementation of Ministry Development Plans will need to include training for WELS leaders and teachers so that formative assessment becomes a meaningful process for advancing ministry and summative assessments are based upon evidence rather than opinion. Ministry Development Plans will have focused goals associated with teaching standards and offer diverse means for teachers to pursue and attain their ministry goals.

At this time, our goal is to begin implementation of Ministry Development Plans as part of a larger process of standards-based formative and summative assessment in select schools in the 2013–14 school year so that the process, procedures, and supporting materials can be assessed and revised prior to more synodwide training and rollout. In the meantime, efforts are being made to increase the synod-provided opportunities for WELS teachers to grow spiritually and professionally.

Work being done:

- a. Teacher James Henrickson continues to work with the CLS and MLC to spearhead the teacher Ministry Development Plan process.
- b. MLC and the CLS provide a number of continuing education services to WELS teachers and staff ministers including a national leadership conference, master’s program, certificate programs, courses, seminars, Webinars, and faculty in-services.
- c. A continuing education needs analysis of WELS PreK–12 teachers has been conducted by MLC.

Work yet to be done, Lord willing:

- a. Training will be developed and implemented for leaders and teachers on the WELS teaching standards and their proper use for teacher assessment and growth.
- b. A process will be created and piloted to help experienced teachers work with a Ministry Development Plan.

School leadership development

Goal: Every WELS school leader will meet or exceed the knowledge and skills for spiritual and educational leadership.

Though not included in the 2011 synod convention resolutions, the Task Force on Lutheran Schools and previous synod studies identified the principal position as a key to strong WELS schools. The school principal has a profound impact on a school’s success and can account for up to one-fourth of the variation of school-level factors in student achievement (Liethwood & Riehl, 2005). At one time the principal’s chief role was a resource or task manager. His primary concern was the efficient operation of the school (Shipman, Queen, & Peel, 2007). Today’s principals must be visionary leaders who are held accountable for school spiritual guidance, teacher and student learning, professional development, data-driven decision making, and community relations. They provide instructional, community, and

visionary leadership (Shipman et. al, 2007). To expect these abilities of a beginning teacher, or even an unprepared veteran teacher, is unrealistic.

That is why most school systems have established standards that principals must achieve before assuming the position. To achieve these standards candidates must be experienced teachers, have a degree in educational administration (36–60 credits), and complete a field experience of 320 hours. Using a graduate degree as an indicator for principal preparedness, WELS principals (21.5 percent) lag behind their peers (public, 98.5 percent; Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, 69.4 percent). The CECW is focusing on supporting existing WELS principals and planning for the recruitment and training of future principals.

Work being done:

- a. The CLS is providing a series of 10 Leadership Institute Modules. An 11th module is envisioned focusing on *Foundations*.
- b. A pilot initiative to strengthen principal mentoring is being done with two newly assigned principal apprentices.
- c. The CLS is exploring options for providing coaching (spiritual, emotional, physical, and professional) to existing principals.
- d. WELS principal standards have been developed to guide a Master of Science in Educational Administration degree at MLC that is designed specifically for preparing WELS principals.
- e. The CLS has applied for a grant to help address three areas of leadership needs: strengthening existing principals, supporting existing principals, and preparing new principals.

Work yet to be done, Lord willing:

- a. A Master of Science in Educational Administration degree at MLC is developed and then approved by the Higher Learning Commission.
- b. A process is implemented in the synod for recruiting and training teachers who can begin service as principals.
- c. All WELS principals and directors are afforded the training, time, and compensation that reflect their responsibilities.

Continuing education for our pastors

While many avenues for continuing education for our pastors are available, the CECW focuses on continuing education opportunities for our synod's pastors primarily through the work of the CMSG and WLS.

While the CMSG group has as its primary goal providing training and resources to strengthen the gospel ministry of our congregations through their lay leaders, there is much reported elsewhere in the *Book of Reports and Memorials* under the various units of the CMSG that provides ministry impacting growth opportunities for our synod's pastors. Here is a brief sampling of such opportunities for growth for our synod's pastors provided by the CMSG:

- National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts sponsored by the Commission on Worship;
- Adult Bible study workshops presented by the Commission on Adult Discipleship;
- Chaplaincy training courses developed by the Commission on Special Ministries;
- Schools of Outreach organized by the Commission on Evangelism; and
- Ministry evaluation tools provided by the Commission on Congregational Counseling.

At WLS, the work of providing continuing education opportunities for WELS pastors has been a part of the seminary's assigned task for more than a century. For example, for 110 years the faculty has produced *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, a professional journal aimed at providing spiritual and professional growth for pastors. In addition, the seminary has for 40 years held an annual summer quarter on its campus in Mequon as well as sent out its professors upon request all around the synod to teach and make presentations at gatherings of pastors and other called workers.

In 2010, the seminary sought to signal a renewed emphasis on providing such continuing education resources for our synod's pastors by establishing Grow in Grace: the Institute for Continuing Education at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The seminary's continuing education work through Grow in Grace has been able to move ahead through several generous grants received from foundations and other agencies.

The vision of Grow in Grace is that pastors in fellowship with WELS will find Grow in Grace a welcome partner in planning and implementing their pursuit of personal spiritual growth and professional lifelong learning.

The mission of Grow in Grace is to advance the cause of the gospel in the 21st century by making ministry impacting continuing education resources available and accessible and by connecting pastors with partners who will encourage them in their spiritual and professional growth.

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

Curricular resources

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

- WLS currently offers for-credit courses on campus (during Summer Quarter and Winterim), online (fall, spring, and summer semesters), and at satellite locations around the synod.
- While long-term funding still remains a challenge, WLS currently offers a scholarship program that matches dollar for dollar whatever a calling body contributes toward tuition for any for-credit course taken on campus, online, or at a satellite location.
- Seminary professors also offer shorter presentations (called pastors institutes) by request to circuits, conferences, and districts.

A study is currently underway to strengthen offerings so as to offer courses and degree programs that do even better at addressing spiritual and professional growth needs.

Mentoring for new pastors and continued support (Pastor Partners)

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

- This part of the work of Grow in Grace goes by the name Pastor Partners. There are two key emphases of Pastor Partners. The first is providing mentors/coaches for individual pastors. The other is providing celebrations of ministry that assist pastors and their spouses to celebrate key ministry milestones.
- To help newly graduated pastors make the most of their first three years of ministry, a mentoring initiative was developed in 2010. For the first three years of ministry, trained pastors/mentors seek to help new pastors develop strong patterns for spiritual and professional growth that can prove a blessing throughout every year of ministry. The final goal as mentoring draws to a close is to assist the young pastor to strengthen relationships with his circuit pastor and other ministry peers.
- Once the mentoring initiative is well established, the focus will expand to providing trained coaches for experienced pastors who would like to work with a pastor who is trained in coaching.
- In April 2013, the second celebration of ministry retreat was held in San Antonio, Texas. This retreat, entitled *Renewed in Grace*, focused on pastors (and spouses) who have recently celebrated 10 years in ministry. The retreat is built around Bible studies and workshops designed to strengthen joy in ministry for those serving God's people.
- In addition to the 10-year retreat, the long-term goal is to provide three other annual retreats for pastors and spouses: at the conclusion of mentoring (*Begun in Grace*—scheduled to begin in 2016), at 25 years of ministry (*Finishing Well in Grace*—scheduled to begin in 2014), and at retirement (*Completed in Grace*—scheduled to begin in 2018).

Evaluating ministry

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

- In 2011 an essay and resource packet was developed entitled *Ordained for a Life of Growth*. This packet was distributed to all circuit pastors. The circuit pastors were encouraged to study and discuss the essay (and the accompanying planning resources) with the pastors of their circuit. The goal was to help more pastors develop an annual pattern of planning for spiritual and professional growth. As of this writing 82 percent of WELS pastoral circuits have either discussed the paper and resources or plan to do so.
- In 2012 an essay with accompanying resources was developed entitled *Reclaiming Our Christ-Centered Lutheran Devotional Heritage*. This packet sought to help pastors (and other called workers) to strengthen their personal devotional life of Word and prayer by emphasizing devotional life primarily as a gift of God's grace in which he serves us.

- Both of the first two essays and resource packets have also been turned into workshops that can be scheduled by circuits, conferences, or districts. The first workshop is entitled *Guarding What Has Been Entrusted to Your Care*. The second workshop bears the same title as the second essay and resources, *Reclaiming Our Christ-Centered Lutheran Devotional Heritage*.
- In 2013 the packet being developed seeks to help pastors to understand the unique ways each of them learns best as well as assisting pastors in making even more intentional use of ministry peers and spiritually mature lay leaders for support and encouragement.
- The goal is to continue producing essays and related resource materials that assist pastors in planning for and pursuing ministry-long spiritual and professional growth.

Encouraging informal learning

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

- The vast majority of opportunities for spiritual and professional growth have nothing to do with credits and classrooms, degrees or diplomas (the more “formal” side of learning). More informal growth opportunities appear regularly in pastors’ daily schedules as well as arise as particular challenges of ministry confronting pastors and their congregations. These growth opportunities are also found whenever ministry peers gather for study. Such gatherings range from less structured study groups of two or three pastors to the more structured gatherings of circuits, conferences, and districts. It is a goal of Grow in Grace to help pastors make the most of all such opportunities. Three particular encouragements for such informal learning are presently being pursued.
 1. Each month one WELS pastoral circuit becomes the “featured circuit” on the Grow in Grace Web site. As study plans and meeting agendas are shared, the goal is to develop month by month a clearing house of ideas for how pastoral circuits can pursue spiritual and professional growth.
 2. Each week a new book review is posted in PDF and MP3 format on the Web site. These book reviews, called *The Shepherd’s Study*, are put together by a group of pastors who have organized themselves so as to produce reviews of books in every area of theological study.
 3. Every other month, as a new issue of *Preach the Word* (a bimonthly preaching newsletter produced by the Commission on Worship) arrives in pastors’ mailboxes, the Grow in Grace Web site hosts an online discussion that enables pastors to pursue further the preaching topic that was the focus of that issue of *Preach the Word*.
- This spring Grow in Grace hosted its second Think Tank. During the Think Tank, a group of called workers, lay leaders, and synodical leaders assist in providing direction for the future for Grow in Grace. While the Think Tank provides direction for all four of Grow in Grace’s goals, it is especially in the area of supporting informal learning that many ideas are generated.

Closing thoughts

In all that has been described under the work of the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee, it is the prayer of this committee that God will bless these efforts to assist all our called workers in growing as oaks of righteousness. The ultimate goal of such growth is to display the splendor of Jesus’ gospel to sheep already in the fold and to sheep not yet in Jesus’ flock. Strengthening of gospel ministry to eternal souls is the heart of what spiritual and professional growth is all about.

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

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

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

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

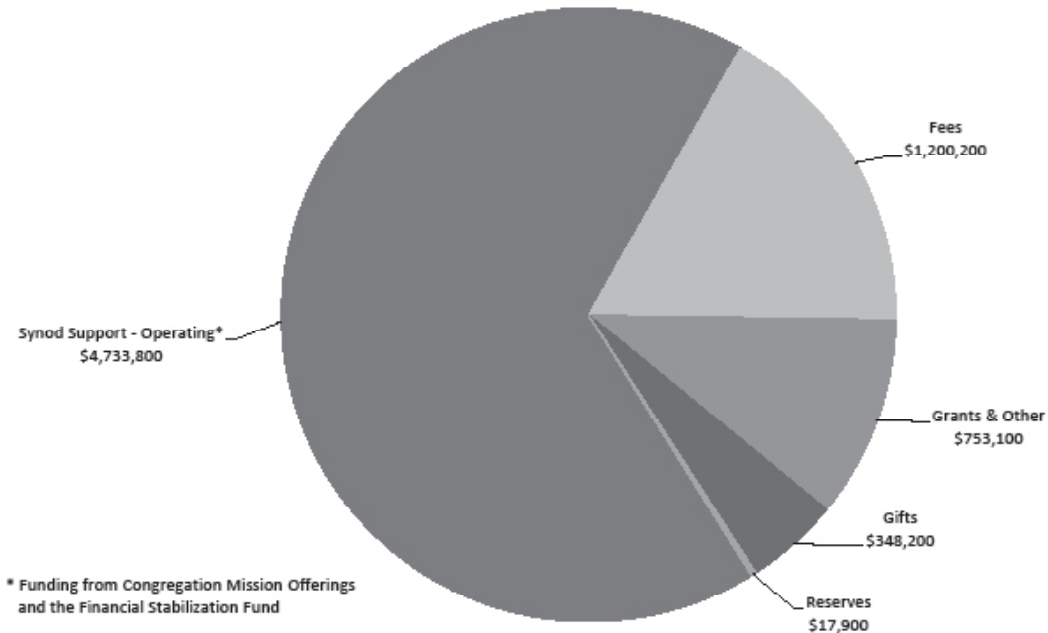
Rev. Peter Kruschel, mission counselor

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

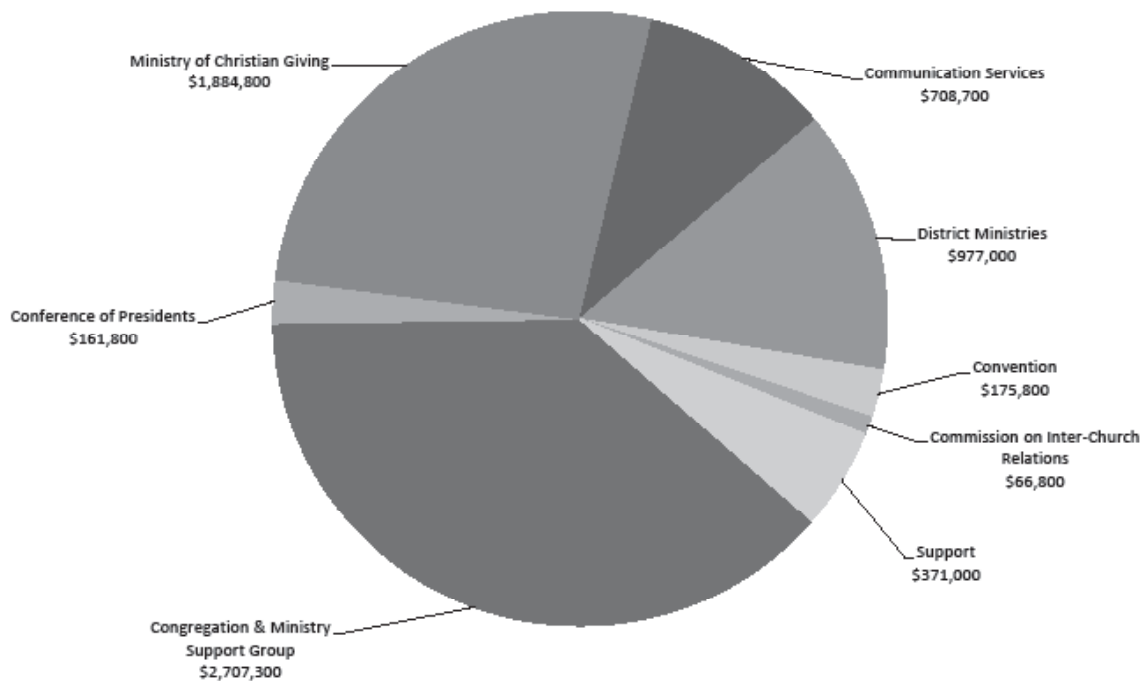
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education

Teacher Greg Schmill, director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools

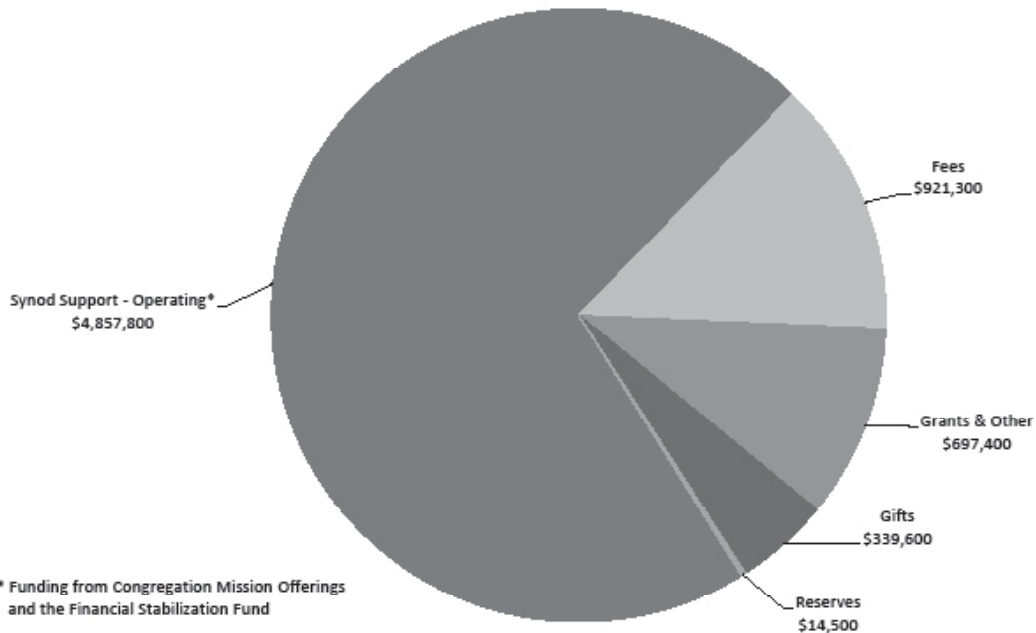
**FY 2013–14 Support
Congregation & District Ministry
\$7,053,200**



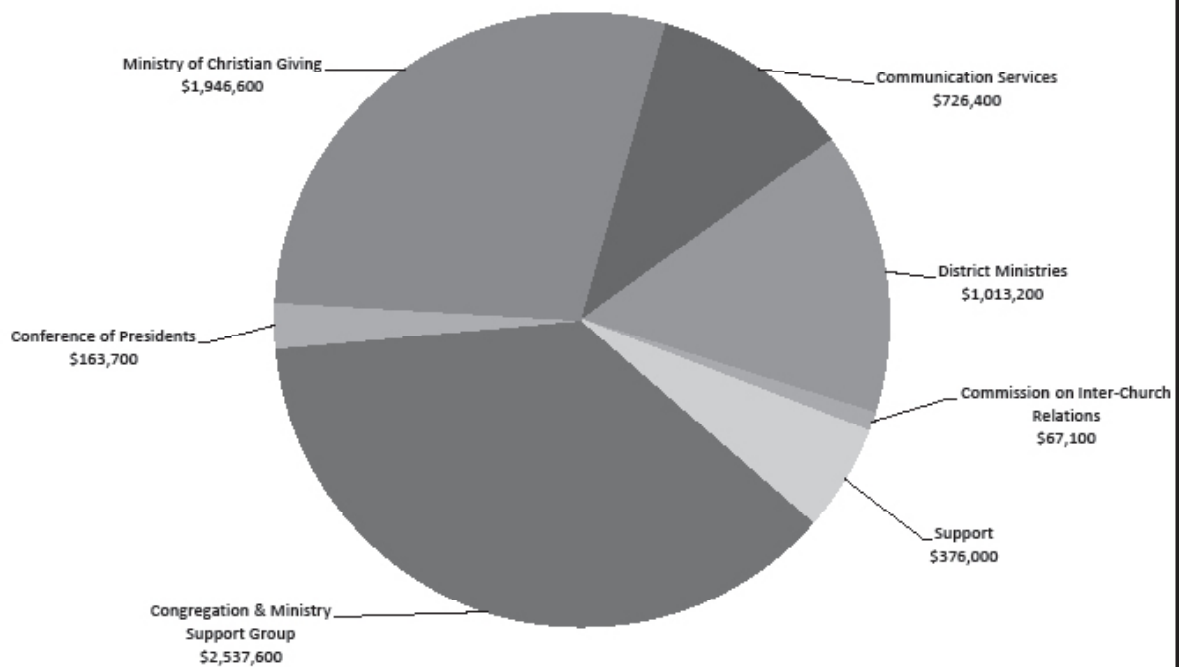
**FY 2013–14 Expenses
Congregation & District Ministry
\$7,053,200**



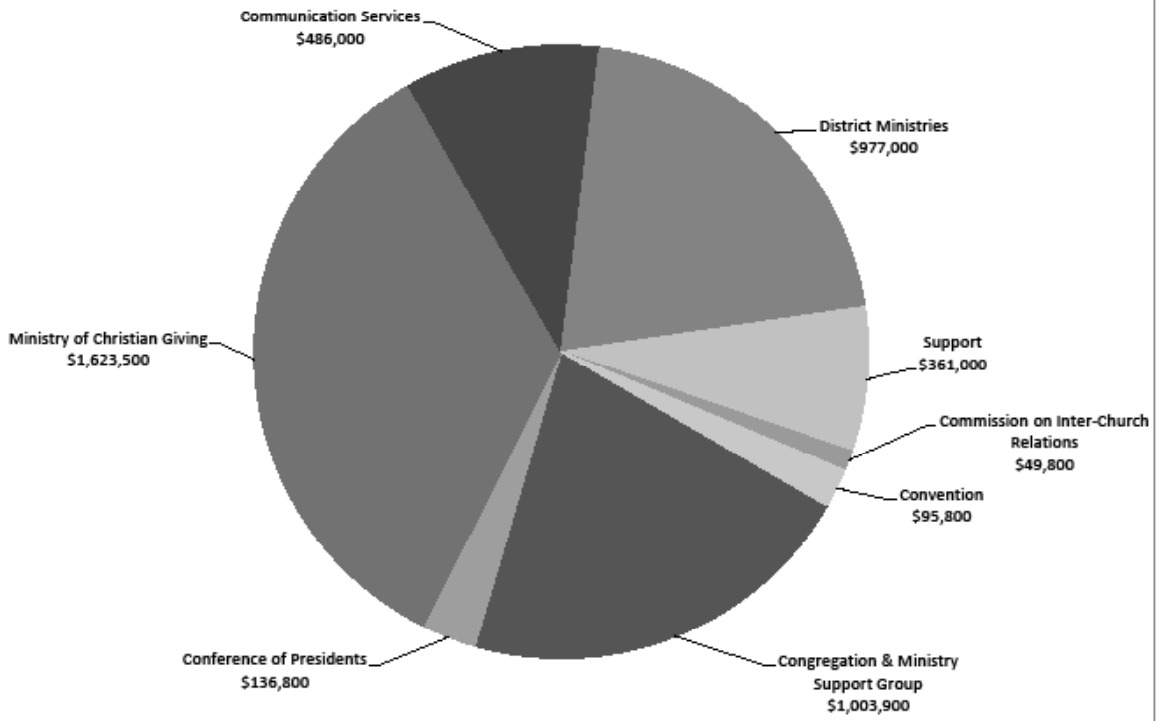
**FY 2014–15 Support
Congregation & District Ministry
\$6,830,600**



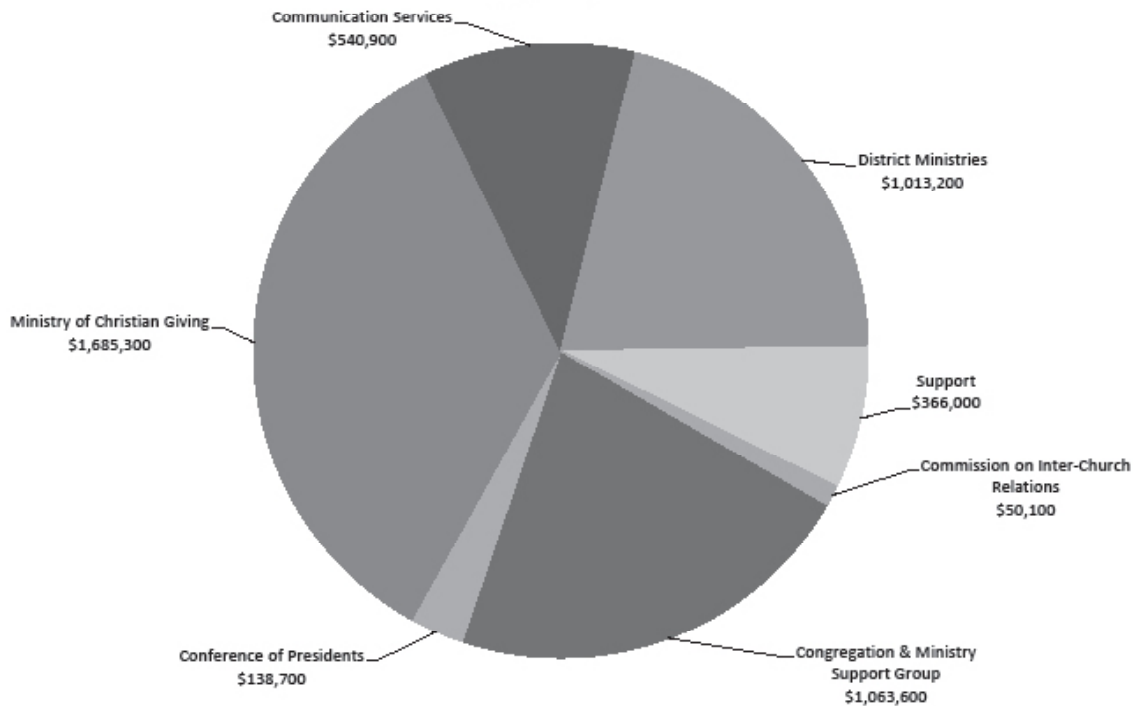
**FY 2014–15 Expenses
Congregation & District Ministry
\$6,830,600**



**FY 2013–14 Synod Operating Support Allocation
Congregation & District Ministry
\$4,733,800**



**FY 2014–15 Synod Operating Support Allocation
Congregation & District Ministry
\$4,857,800**



Ministry Support

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

Synodical Council

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

President's Office

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

Facilities

All expenses related to the maintenance and operation of the Synod Administration Building, including insurance and utilities

Synod Archives

WELS Historical Institute (see p. 191)

Publication Coordinating Commission

WELS Christian Aid and Relief

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

Technology Services

Financial Services

Human Resources

Synodical Council

Floor Committee #2

The Synodical Council (SC) is composed of the following 21 members: one lay member elected by each of the twelve districts, three district presidents elected by the Conference of Presidents, and six at-large members elected by the synod in convention (two pastors, one teacher, and the chairmen of the boards for World Missions, Home Missions, and Ministerial Education). The synod president serves as chairman and votes only in cases of a tie. Advisory members include the two synod vice presidents; the administrators of the three areas of ministry; the coordinator of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group; the chief financial officer; the chief technology officer; and the directors of the Ministry of Christian Giving, Missions Operations, Communication Services, and Human Resources.

The SC is organized into three standing committees: Administration, Ministry, and Finance. According to the synod's bylaws, the SC has the following responsibilities:

- It shall be responsible for all activities of the synod in pursuit of its mission, other than those specifically conferred on the Conference of Presidents.
- It has the authority to act on behalf of the synod between conventions in keeping with the directives and resolutions of the convention.
- It is responsible for overseeing and evaluating all programs of ministry carried out by the synod and coordinating the execution of all decisions made by the synod in convention.
- It prepares and submits for approval a ministry plan (along with a budget) to the synod. The budget for the ministry plan is required to be balanced, based on the Support Forecast adopted by the SC. The budget is to reflect fiscal integrity, sound planning, and faithful stewardship.
- It is responsible for the management of all synodical property, funds, and investments.
- It oversees and implements a process of long-range planning approved by the convention and carried out by the areas of ministry and other departments of the synod.

The SC meets regularly in face-to-face meetings three times annually as it works to carry out its broad responsibilities. Special face-to-face meetings and teleconferences are held as necessary.

Long-range plan

After receiving input from all areas of ministry and departments of the synod as well as from the Conference of Presidents, the WELS Long-Range Plan, "In Christ Alone," was presented and approved at the 2011 synod convention. From the beginning of its development, the plan was designed to be a broad outline of the direction of the synod and a description of where the synod, under God, hopes to be by 2017. This broad "road map" was not intended to be a detailed strategic plan; rather, it is to guide those entrusted with carrying out the plan (the areas of ministry, departments, and auxiliary organizations of the synod) as they develop and implement specific strategies to reach the adopted goals.

The plan calls for aggressive, but careful, expansion in all areas of the synod's work. It sets goals for increased efforts in world missions and increased establishment of new home mission congregations. It calls for continued recruitment and training of a sufficient number of well-trained workers. It addresses the need for strengthening congregations and creating a culture of lifelong learning among called workers. The plan recognizes that there are more opportunities for kingdom expansion than we would begin to meet, but raises the sights of our members to seize as many opportunities as our resources enable us. The name of the plan ("In Christ Alone") has been chosen as the theme of this convention in order to focus the synod's attention on the plan and, more importantly, on the one who alone can bless and prosper the work that we do in his name.

The plan is included as an appendix to the report of the Synodical Council on pp. 96-101.

Refinement of the ministry financial plan (budget) process

A new process for developing the ministry financial plan was implemented in 2009, refined in 2011, and continued in 2013. Notable features of that process are:

- The support forecast is a comprehensive estimate of the financial resources from all sources that will be available to carry out the synod's mission and ministry. The forecast considers past trends, the latest information regarding Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO), and the balance in the Financial Stabilization Fund.
- The establishment of the Financial Stabilization Fund (FSF) has proven to be very beneficial in budget planning. Prior to 2009, the support forecast estimated the financial support that would be available from such sources as individual gifts, bequests, and grants from foundations. The budget was then crafted based on gifts that were anticipated in the coming year. These sources of financial support are highly unpredictable and subject to sudden change. That often resulted in sudden shortfalls of financial support requiring immediate adjustments to the budget and sudden, unplanned reductions in ministry. The Financial Stabilization Fund was established to receive gifts from these sources and to enable the synod to spend these dollars only in the year after they were actually received. With the FSF in place for four years, it is functioning exactly as it was designed, enabling the support forecast to be made with a much higher degree of accuracy and providing planning time if shortfalls do, in fact, occur. Another feature of the FSF was the expectation that this fund could grow over time, providing funding for one-time projects and

programs, as well as providing additional funding in the event of reduced expectations in CMO (as is the case with the plan for 2013–15).

- On the basis of the general goals outlined in the “In Christ Alone” plan, the SC assigned initial support allocations for the areas of ministry and other synodical departments.
- Throughout the summer and fall of 2012, the areas of ministry outlined their plans and determined the level of special funds (in both new gifts and reserves) that they would prudently use to supplement the synod support that had been allocated.
- The President’s Advisory Committee (PAC) served as a program and budget committee to analyze the various plans and to craft a comprehensive spending proposal that reflected both operating dollars and special funds.

The proposed ministry plan was initially presented to the SC in November 2012, refined in the following months as new information became available, and approved by the SC in February 2013. This is the ministry plan that is now being recommended by the SC to the synod convention.

Throughout the development of the ministry plan, there has been excellent cooperation among the areas of ministry, a careful and transparent use of special funds, and a growing confidence in the accuracy and dependability of the support forecast.

Specific details of the ministry plan can be found on pp. 121-132. Detailed financial results from the 2011–12 fiscal year can be found on pp. 222-225.

Synodical capital debt

In 2007 various non-operational debts of the synod were combined into a single capital debt of \$22.4 million. A special offering in 2008–09, continuing gifts from individuals and congregations, and annual amortization payments of \$1.6 million have combined to reduce the total outstanding debt to less than \$9 million. As this annual payment is made, the debt is scheduled to be fully eliminated by October 2018. In a desire to eliminate the debt earlier (thus making the annual amount of \$1.6 million available for missions and ministry), the Conference of Presidents is recommending a special offering in 2015 with the goal of completely eliminating the debt three years ahead of schedule.

We thank God for the remarkable blessings that he has shown on the effort to eliminate the debt, even in difficult economic times.

Synod administration relocation

The Synodical Council has continued to work at resolving the question of the relocation of the synod administrative offices. A complete report is included in the Facility Services report, which begins on p. 113.

Implementation of convention resolutions

The SC is responsible for overseeing the implementation of convention decisions. A convention compliance listing accompanies this report and can be found on p. 102. The listing provides a status report on the efforts to carry out the resolutions of the 2011 convention. All issues have been addressed; some have been fully carried out while others involve ongoing efforts.

Subsidiary organizations

Although the subsidiary organizations of WELS operate with a good measure of independence and are directed by their respective boards, all are under the general supervision and oversight of the SC and are ultimately accountable to it. These subsidiary organizations are Benefit Plans—VEBA and pension (report on p. 198), Northwestern Publishing House (report on p. 189), WELS Investment Funds (report on p. 196), WELS Foundation (report on p. 194), and the Church Extension Fund, Inc. (report on p. 192).

Compensation Review Committee

The Compensation Review Committee is a standing sub-committee of the SC. This group reviews all matters of compensation for synodical workers and makes its recommendations to the SC. The compensation levels adopted by the SC then become part of the overall synodical ministry plan presented to the convention. The compensation for workers is outlined on pp. 130-132.

Parsonage sale

The SC approved the sale of the final remaining parsonage owned by the synod for synod administration workers. Located in Brookfield, Wis., the house was sold for \$336,000, with the proceeds placed into the Facilities Fund. All synod administrators now receive cash housing allowances as outlined in the compensation guidelines.

Master facilities capital plan

During the past year, Martin Luther College and the Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) have piloted a closer working relationship with the “Let the Children Come” project, helping donors to give toward the construction of the Early Childhood Learning Center and financial assistance for MLC students in the early childhood program.

As part of the biennial budget process, the SC anticipates a similar partnership between Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) and the MCG to address larger capital needs at WLS as a part of its 150th anniversary celebration in 2013–14.

All four ministerial education schools are currently using a percentage of their budget for smaller programmed maintenance projects. However, there is currently no established mechanism or process for funding larger capital projects at the schools and throughout the synod.

The SC has asked the schools to develop a facilities capital plan that can be a part of the next long-range plan beginning in 2017. The SC has also asked the chief financial officer to integrate other synodical capital needs into this plan, also for inclusion in the next long-range plan.

Membership

Several individuals have completed their faithful service as members of the SC. Mr. Kurt Austad, Mr. Seth Hansen, and Mr. Tom Schlittenhart completed their second term. Mr. Charles Fiedler moved to another district and could no longer serve as lay member from that district. Mr. John Tappe completed one term and chose not to stand for re-election. Advisory member Pastor James D. Liggett (director of the Ministry of Christian Giving) has retired. We thank all of these men for their service and thank the Lord of the Church for using their gifts to his glory.

Rev. Mark Schroeder, reporter

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

Advisory:

Rev. Keith Free, administrator of WELS Board for Home Missions
Rev. Bryan Gerlach, coordinator of the Congregation and Ministry Support Group
Mr. Lee Hitter, director of communications
Rev. James Huebner, WELS first vice president
Rev. Dan Koelpin, administrator of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, director of the Ministry of Christian Giving
Mr. Todd J. Poppe, chief financial officer

Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Mr. Todd Scott, director of human resources
Mr. Martin Spriggs, chief technology officer
Rev. Joel Voss, WELS second vice president
Mr. Sean Young, director of WELS Missions Operations

Appendix: WELS Long-Range Plan

“In Christ Alone” Underlying principles

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"In Christ Alone My Hope Is Found"

Long-range plans—the picture in 2017

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

Worldwide identity as confessional Lutherans

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

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

World Missions

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

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

Home Missions

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

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

Ministerial Education

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

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

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

Congregation and District Ministry

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

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

Publishing

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

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

Resources

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

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

Resource allocation

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

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

“In Christ Alone, Jesus Commands My Destiny”

Strategies to reach long-range plans

Worldwide identity as confessional Lutherans

In the years leading up to 2017, WELS will:

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

World Missions

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

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

Home Missions

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

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

Ministerial Education

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

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

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

Congregation and District Ministry

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

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

Publishing

In the years leading up to 2017, NPH will:

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

Resources

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

Leadership

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

- 9.1.1 - reviewing church governance issues (process and function of synod conventions, boards, size of the SC, etc.).
- 9.2.1 - reviewing the size and number of districts, the size of circuits, possible term limits for district officials.
- 9.3.1 - reviewing the size and efficiency of synod technology, communication, and fiscal support offices.

- 9.4.1 - emphasizing continuing education for all called workers.
- 9.5.1 - encouraging collaboration in synodical support and ministerial endeavors.
- 9.6.1 - continuously updating the strategic plan so that the process continues beyond 2017.

2011 WELS convention compliance listing

Committee, resolution	Responsible group	Resolution description	Due by/states
1-03	COP	Plan 2013 convention at Martin Luther College	Completed
1-08, 1-08	COP	Develop process for elective ending of divine calls; encourage congregations to follow adopted procedures; encourage ongoing study	Process developed; encouragement continuing
1-07	COP	Appoint Task Force on Lutheran Schools	Completed
4-02	SC	Continue to use Financial Stabilization Fund	Ongoing
6-01	COP, MCG	Encourage faithfulness in CMO and the study of Christian stewardship	Ongoing
7-01	President	Appoint committee to advise Communications	Completed Fall 2012
7-02	SC, COP	Encourage and provide funding for efforts to expand external communications efforts	Addressed in budget process for 2013-15
12-01	COP	Consider filling vacant CMSG director positions as funding becomes available	Call for CCC position extended in January 2013; other positions considered in budget planning process
13-01	SC	Consider replenishment of \$300,000 funding for the Publications Coordinating Committee	Addressed in budget process; no funding available
17-01	Christian Aid and Relief	Encourage member support and develop increasing cooperation with other WELS entities	Ongoing
18-01	SC, areas of ministry	Implement "In Christ Alone" long-range plan, adopt measuring criteria, communicate plan's details	Long-range plan guided budget priorities; details outlined in 2013-15 ministry plan
18-01	COP, Translation Evaluation Committee	Communicate translation evaluation principles, address concerns about gender usage and prophecy passages	Reports made to districts; final report to convention in 2013
18-02	Præsidium	Appoint committee to evaluate feasibility of a confessional Lutheran translation; report to districts in 2012	October 2011 begun; report to districts in 2012; final report to convention in 2013
18-03	COP, TEC	Final report of the TEC to the district conventions; prepare ballot for district convention voting on translation issue	Ballot used in 2012 district conventions
20-01	COP, SC, CLS, CECW	Develop program for continuing education for teachers, with process for tracking; progress report to the districts	Ongoing; progress report to the 2013 convention
20-02	COP, SC, CECW	Develop program for continuing education for pastors, with process for tracking; progress report to the districts	Ongoing; progress report to the 2013 convention
21-01	SEW District Præsidium	Report to the COP regarding Time of Grace	Initial report given in October 2011; resolved in October 2012; RSO status with LCMS ended

Accounting Oversight Committee

Floor Committee #2

Our calling

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

Our current situation

The committee engaged the independent audit firm of CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP (CLA), to conduct the annual audit of the consolidated financial statements of the synod, its schools, and its subsidiaries for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2012. The audits were completed within five months of year-end and all entities received an unqualified opinion, the highest form of assurance auditors provide on the financial statement's compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. In addition, the auditors identified no significant deficiencies or material weaknesses during the execution of their audit procedures and reporting process. Copies of the annual financial statements, quarterly consolidated financial statements, and quarterly budget reports are available on the Financial Services Connect site.

In addition to the annual synod financial statement audits, the committee also engaged CLA to audit the WELS VEBA Group Health Plan and WELS Pension Plan for 2011 and for 2012. The financial statements of these plans for 2011 also received unqualified opinions, and the auditors did not identify any significant deficiencies or material weakness in their control environments. At the time of this writing, the audit for 2012 was ongoing.

A look ahead

We continue to believe significant opportunities exist to reduce administrative costs, drive out administrative inefficiency, and improve the quality of support services through centralized leadership of certain ministry support functions. As a result, more funds will be available for gospel ministry. Our belief has been repeatedly confirmed by our independent auditors, and the SC has resolved to have the synod president initiate the investigation of duplication of services and functions. At the heart of our concerns about inefficient services and functions is the synodical governance structure. The synodical governance structure calls for independent governance boards and management for each synodical entity. Rightly, these boards and management are focused on the ministries they have been called to serve. They have not been and should not be burdened with designing and managing efficient and effective support services across all synodical entities, nor could they, since their vision and scope of oversight is limited to one entity. As a result, duplicate and inefficient support resources exist across synodical entities.

To increase funds available for gospel ministry and achieve the cost savings and other benefits described above, we strongly believe that the leadership talent at the synodical level in the areas of finance, technology, human resources, communication, and mission advancement should oversee their respective functions and services at the schools and other synod entities. We are confident this can be accomplished in harmony with the governance boards and management of each entity to ensure that the mission and purpose of each entity is fully supported—all to the glory of Christ our Lord. We are hopeful that with the synod president's leadership on this initiative, progress will continue to be made to increase efficiency through reduced duplication of services and functions across all synodical entities.

Mr. Tom Walters, reporter

Mr. Tom Walters, chairman

Mr. Jim Freer

Mr. Paul Holzhueter, Synodical Council liaison

Mr. Carl Rudolph

Advisory:

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

Publication Coordinating Commission

Floor Committee #15

Our calling

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

Our current situation

In the current struggles of WELS, most of the financial resources in the Publication Fund of the Publication Coordinating Commission were moved to the Financial Stabilization Fund in order to help other areas of ministry weather financial challenges. All the projects that were approved in the past have been completed or have sufficient funds to cover their completion. The commission is not able to fund new projects because of the depleted Publication Fund.

A few of these projects are already in development with authors or committees working on them. These projects received funding from the Publication Fund before the transfer of the fund's resources to the Financial Stabilization Fund. Others still await an author and time to develop. Additional projects may exist in the imagination and creativity of others. The committee is not aware of them and cannot pursue discussions that will bring them to light because of the lack of funds.

A PCC proposal was endorsed by the Synodical Council and by the synod in convention to continue funding of worthy projects, but funding remains unavailable. Among those projects are several professional books to be written by WLS professors for the training and professional growth of pastors, books and materials prepared for the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, a new video that is a sequel to *Road to Emmaus*, and a possible translation of the Bible and/or creation of a study Bible. Some of the projects that were on the PCC's agenda have found other sources of funding. For example, the new hymnal proposed by the Commission on Worship received development funding from Northwestern Publishing House; funds to create a sequel for *Road to Emmaus* have come from special gifts; and Multi-Language Publications projects have been covered by the Board for World Missions' budget and special gifts. Other projects on the agenda await proposals, direction, and discussion.

The PCC has discussed the use of electronic delivery for some of the projects being considered. At this time, we still need the funds to initiate and carry through the preparation of the material no matter what the distribution method. We have not met since January 2012 because we have no funds to use in the development of new material.

A look ahead

The commission is grateful for the contributions of past members of the PCC: Pastor Wayne Schulz, whom the Lord called home, and Teacher Jeff Inniger, who accepted a call to other work.

Although the commission lacks sufficient funds for publication of projects, we still believe that publishing plans of the boards and committees of the synod should be channeled through the Publication Coordinating Commission in order to maintain some coordination and consistency. The future may not be clear at this point, but we simply rely on the Lord's blessing so that we can continue to proclaim his gospel with quality materials that reflect our scriptural and confessional standards.

Rev. John Braun, reporter

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

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, Congregation and Ministry Support Group

Rev. Paul Hartman, WELS Multi-Language Publications

Rev. Curtis Jahn, Northwestern Publishing House

Rev. Brian Keller

Rev. Harlyn Kuschel

WELS Archives

Floor Committee #16

Our calling

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

Our current situation

The archives space at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, although full, is well organized. Materials are accessible to researchers. The contents of the boxes of unprocessed materials are known, and the boxes are shelved. Many remember the archives when disposing of documents, and the archives receives new materials on a regular basis. But the shelves are full, and new items coming into the archives are again being stacked up wherever room can be found. Very soon this will make accessing the organized materials difficult, if not impossible.

We are thankful that the materials in the archives at present are accessible. However it must be noted that crucial tasks such as preserving gathered items, systematic collecting of documents into the archives, advising areas of ministry and congregations on how to manage and preserve records, managing electronic records, and disaster planning, for example, are not being done. It is also to be noted that the current archives space is not only insufficient in size but because its climate cannot be controlled it is also unsuitable for proper preservation of the historical record of our synod.

A look ahead

Already in 1995 the synod in convention recognized that the archival program needed full-time staffing to operate effectively and recommended the hiring of a full-time archivist and support staff. However, to date funds have not been allocated and the positions of synod archivist and synod historian remain vacant since the 1999 retirement of Prof. Martin Westerhaus, who had served in both capacities.

In 2010 a committee appointed by President Schroeder studied the archives situation yet again, this time in consultation with a trained archivist. That committee submitted yet another report along with a resolution that urged the immediate hiring of an archivist. To date that position is not funded. It is hoped that space will be available for archives in the new synod headquarters should that come to pass.

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

Prof. John P. Hartwig, reporter

Christian Aid and Relief

Floor Committee #20

Our calling

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

personalize our efforts by distributing funds through our churches and missions, with whom we partner to encourage local relief efforts on behalf of their members and community. We bring in volunteers to assist when appropriate.

Our current situation

Christian Aid and Relief is not funded in the WELS budget but relies on the special gifts of WELS members.

From July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012, our total expenditures were \$423,721 with \$174,575 designated for domestic relief efforts and \$249,146 for foreign relief efforts. From July 1, 2012, to Dec. 30, 2012, our expenditures were \$229,211 total with \$87,100 designated for domestic and \$142,111 for foreign.

Major opportunities to provide relief in the past two years were centered in Japan where \$350,000 was granted for earthquake relief. \$47,000 was granted for Hurricane Sandy relief efforts on the East Coast. These efforts are ongoing. \$5,000 was granted for emergency medical relief through our mission in Malawi. \$12,000 was granted for flood relief in Nigeria. \$9,000 was granted in support of our Central Africa Medical Mission. We also provided a \$10,000 grant to Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Service, which makes counseling available to our called workers in time of need.

Other domestic relief activities were directed toward Colorado Springs wildfires; Tropical Storm Debby in Holiday, Fla.; tornadoes in Alabama and Joplin, Mo.; and general aid to food pantries, inner city relief, and general aid for called workers and congregational members. Other world relief activities included \$12,000 for Ukraine general aid and \$15,000 for Hurricane Ernesto in Mahahual, Mexico.

In addition, many thousands of dollars were also given to support areas of humanitarian aid through home and world missionaries. These projects offer opportunities to show how much we care by bridging gospel proclamation with acts of compassion. In many cases humanitarian aid is what opens the door for us to do mission work in certain foreign countries. \$269,000 was granted for humanitarian aid projects for 2010–11 and \$295,693 was granted for 2011–12. Major items include borehole drilling to provide clean water, community centers, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, home based care for the chronically ill and dying, food assistance to the needy, food and nutrition to orphans in Haiti, midwife training classes, and medical equipment and clinics. Humanitarian aid projects are being supported in Cameroon, Malawi, Nigeria, Zambia, Bulgaria, Russia, Haiti, Mexico, India, Nepal, and Pakistan.

Christian Aid and Relief also continues to provide help for families with catastrophic personal and medical difficulties.

We thank our gracious Lord for moving the hearts of WELS members to show how much they care with their prayers and gifts of love. We thank outgoing member Mr. Sam Izzat for his many years of faithful service on this committee.

A look ahead

Annually, Christian Aid and Relief reviews humanitarian aid grant requests forwarded from the Board for World Missions. These projects provide our missionaries with a vital tool to help them build bridges to proclaim the gospel to the precious souls they serve in our mission fields. Our world mission fields continue to bring us additional humanitarian aid opportunities.

WELS Christian Aid and Relief continually looks for ways to improve its communication to the members of the synod. *Lifeline* videos are regularly being produced so that those who support our work can see firsthand how their gifts are being used. Our Web page, www.wels.net/relief, and Facebook site continue to offer timely information and a convenient way to donate online for Christian Aid and Relief projects. Committee members also make presentations to various groups to “tell our stories,” letting WELS members know about the needs and opportunities to help people through Christian Aid and Relief. We are partnering with other WELS agencies, such as WELS Kingdom Workers and the WELS Nurses Association to coordinate volunteers to assist in relief efforts when appropriate.

Rev. Robert Hein, reporter

Rev. Robert Hein, chairman

Staff Minister Tom Hering, secretary

Rev. Harmon Lewis

Teacher Gary Thoma

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

Mr. Steven Wright

Support Services

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

Technology Floor Committee #8

Our calling

WELS Technology is a service group that provides support and technical leadership to areas of ministry, synod schools, and subsidiaries, as well as guidance to congregations, schools, and other synod organizations. Software Services, Information Services, and Administrative Services comprise the group and are staffed with dedicated Christian men and women with gifts in the areas of project management, technical support, software and Web development, training, and enterprise network management. Currently WELS Technology is made up of 12 full-time employees and one part-time employee. The department is privileged to provide the following services:

Technology administration

- Policy and procedure development and management, which includes audit compliance, information security, network usage, and software/hardware acquisition
- Financial management of all WELS technology expenditures, which includes cost controls, budget planning/reporting, accounting, invoicing, and collections
- Strategic planning for the effective use of technology across WELS, which includes buy versus build analysis; ministry needs mapping; research and development; technology guidance to churches, schools, and other WELS organizations requesting assistance
- Vendor management, which includes licensing of all software/hardware, service and product evaluation, engagement management, contract management
- Project management for internal and external organizations as requested, which includes managing day-to-day project activities for all projects within WELS, portfolio management, project methodologies development, and engagement management of all external vendors
- Business analysis for each ministry to determine project needs and matching requirements
- Training to synod employees on all technical systems, which includes producing training content, promoting effective use of technology, and developing training programs
- Test applications and processes, including writing technical documentation

Information Services

- Maintenance of hardware, software, and computer peripherals, which includes repairing hardware used by synod employees, subsidiaries, and virtual knowledge workers; peripheral installation and maintenance; software installation and upgrades
- Asset tracking and inventory (more than 2,000 technology assets owned by synod)
- Backup systems for all core synod applications and databases, which includes providing a virtual infrastructure for inexpensive redundancy and failover technologies that allow automated and semi-automated switchovers
- Planning ongoing needs to support business continuity efforts, which includes network analysis to detect single points of failure, security breaches, etc., and capacity planning to predict future storage needs
- Hardware setup and configuration for all synod servers (currently the synod requires approximately 50 servers to maintain current operations including e-mail, spam and virus control, accounting systems, donor management systems, file storage, printer services, Intranet, synodwide database/yearbook, call system, banking applications for WELS Church Extension Fund, member databases for WELS VEBA, security monitoring, www.wels.net and affiliate Web sites, etc.)

- Helpdesk services on all technical systems and Web sites, which includes troubleshooting, account maintenance, equipment setup, and telephony support
- Antivirus and spam protection for users making use of network resources, the Internet, and e-mail, which includes the security of all data residing on synod networks and servers
- Provisioning of all telephony infrastructure
- Active monitoring of network for violations, breeches, stress, and intrusion detection.

Software services

- Design, coding, testing, and deployment of applications that support the business processes of the synod, which includes information architecture, database development and tuning, usability testing, and performance testing.
- Web site development, which includes www.wels.net, www.WhatAboutJesus.com, WELS.net University, Connect, and approximately 50 other sites
- Applications supported include: Yearbook data management, VEBA benefits eligibility, call system, synod certification management, statistical reports for churches/schools, CMO submissions, church and school statistics, electronic newsletter distribution (including “Together”), forms (military referral, gifts/donations, events like Youth Rally, School of Outreach, synod convention, subscription systems like call reports), and eCommerce (Commission on Lutheran Schools’ subscription system and ShopWELS)

A look back

Over the past two years WELS Technology worked together to provide needed upgrades to the synod’s Intranet platform called Connect. This series of Web sites houses almost all synod produced documents and other content in a safe and searchable environment. The platform, built on Microsoft’s industry standard SharePoint technologies, also serves as the destination for common synod forms like Congregation Mission Offering submissions, church and school annual statistic surveys, and event registrations like the one used for synod convention. The upgrades to the system made the end user experience more intuitive and synod workers more efficient as they needed to enter far less data by hand. The recent relaunch of the Lutheran Schools Web site further demonstrates some of the updates as significant resources are now available that had been difficult to find previously.

Working together with the Ministry of Christian Giving and the four synod schools, new online donations Web sites were launched. The five sites (community.wels.net, community.wls.wels.net, community.mlc-wels.edu, community.lps.wels.net, community.mlsem.org) are integrated with the synod’s central donor database management system and allow donors to track their giving, research different funds to contribute to, and even set up recurring gifts via credit card or EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer). The schools and Christian Giving staffs benefit from more information in the database on each donor and a more seamless gift entry and receipting process.

WELSource is the name of the new synod database application that supports all called worker, congregation, and school profile information. The launch of the first phase allows Web access to update information, run reports, and provide easy forms for called workers and organizations to maintain certain aspects of their own data. Phase two, which is currently underway, will provide a new and improved approach to requesting, developing, and tracking call lists and activity.

The synod launched its first outreach-focused foreign language Web site—this one for Spanish speakers—at www.elmensajeroluterano.com. The site is maintained by staff at Multi-Language Publications and offers written, audio, and video content created for those who do not know Christ. It is also meant to be an outreach resource center for Spanish speakers wishing to reach out to friends and family. Currently work is underway to create the synod’s second foreign language outreach site, this one as a resource for our workers in Pakistan. This project will be more challenging as the team has not dealt with non-Roman character sets before.

As the world is becoming more mobile, so is the synod. WELS Mobile was released in three formats, a mobile Web app version, an Android version, and an iOS version. To date the application has been installed on more than 3,000 devices and more users access the application via mobile browsers at <http://m.wels.net>. Content includes daily devotions (text, audio), Bible readings (text, audio), *WELS Connection* (video), blogs, call reports, and the “Together” e-newsletter. A church and school locator function helps users find WELS or ELS locations. Learn more at www.wels.net/mobile.

ShopWELS, the synod’s cooperative buying program, continues to expand with new vendors, including Enterprise Rental Car, IHG Hotels, Playworld Systems, and School Specialty. The program helps WELS organizations and

members to find discounted prices on many products from office supplies/copiers to computers to mobile phones. To take advantage, go to www.shopwels.net.

Internal technology audits were conducted at each of the four synod schools for the first time. During the audit, WELS Chief Technology Officer Martin Spriggs worked with the technology directors to do a self-assessment and provided feedback to help improve the security, infrastructure, and processes at each school. This will become a yearly process and will be followed by regular strategic planning reviews.

Finally, a new Voice-Over-IP (VoIP) telephony system was installed. This more modern approach uses Internet data lines to transport voice traffic versus the old “copper wire” approach. The new system integrates with Microsoft Outlook and allows workers to use their computers as “soft phones.” This permits a more flexible and virtual workforce. Significant cost savings over the old PBX phone switch were realized.

A look ahead

The complete WELS Technology strategic plan for 2013–15 is available at connect.wels.net/techstrategy. In the next biennium our three primary areas of focus will be 1) Continued expansion of mobile products and access, 2) Future phases of WELSource, and 3) Additional services provided to World Missions/Multi-Language Publications.

Mobile products

The recent release of WELS Mobile was well accepted. Users continue to provide many feature requests that could be implemented. Future features could include a full WELS Yearbook application, additional social media components, offline playback, Windows Phone and Blackberry versions, and better tablet design. Plans are also underway to rollout a similar app for WELS Evangelism with content from www.WhatAboutJesus.com. The purpose of the application will be more evangelistic in its focus.

WELSource

The final phases of WELSource will require significant time and resources. Phase two will provide an improved call system that will be used by the President’s office, Commission on Lutheran Schools, and the Conference of Presidents. The WELS Benefit Plans Pension program module will also be rolled out in this phase. Finally, the remainder of external facing forms will be digitized. This will allow teacher and principal evaluation/self-evaluation submissions, Home and World Missions request and reporting forms, as well as other self-service data updating requests.

Services to World Missions/Multi-Language Publications

As the world “gets smaller” and synod ministries answer God’s call to spread the gospel to all nations, technology becomes an increasingly important tool to enable that message. Foreign language Web sites focusing on outreach, mobile and digital products using translated content, and distance learning technologies will be explored. Missionaries, national pastors, and church leaders have consistently requested more digital resources in native languages. Their guidance and assistance in these projects will be extremely beneficial.

Conclusion

The dedicated Christian men and women of the WELS Technology team are honored to serve the synod. Their long hours and devotion to the spread of the gospel are evident in every project, conversation, and task. While much of their work is behind the scenes, the fruits of their labor extend to many people all over the world. It is our prayer that our continuing service in his name is a blessing to the synod, its people, and all those who have yet to call Jesus Lord.

Mr. Martin Spriggs, reporter

Financial Services

Floor Committee #8

Our calling

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

- providing timely, accurate, and complete financial statements, reports, and analyses that facilitate ministry;

- providing God-pleasing, efficient, and effective financial services and operations that are in accordance with policies, procedures, and regulations; and
- installing and maintaining internal control systems that safeguard the assets God has provided.

The services carried out by Financial Services include audit, accounting and financial statement preparation for the synod and its three subsidiaries located at the Synod Administration Building, gift processing, accounts payable, accounts receivable, unclaimed property, special funds accounting, payroll, budgeting and forecasting, risk management, insurance, records retention, cash management and investments, contract review, corporate credit card program, tax advisory services, legal services coordination, and preferred vendor contracting.

Human Resources and Facility Services report to the chief financial officer and, as the synod president's designate, the chief financial officer serves as advisor to Northwestern Publishing House, WELS Church Extension Fund, WELS Foundation, WELS Investment Funds, WELS Pension Commission, and WELS VEBA Commission. Also, Financial Services provides accounting and financial expertise and advisory services to the four ministerial education schools.

Our current situation

The synod support for Financial Services was decreased nearly \$400,000 from the prior biennium. As a result, Financial Services is operating with four fewer positions, the important but not critical internal audit function has been eliminated along with other consulting services, and virtually every line item in the budget has been reduced.

In spring 2012, the director of risk management and assistant treasurer retired, and this position has not yet been filled. While replacement of the position is included in the plan, staff will continue to pick up the position responsibilities over the short term. In spring 2013, the director of planning and analysis retired. A replacement for this position is currently being sought.

In light of the reductions, the area is focusing on maintaining day-to-day operations, such as accounts payable, payroll, and gift processing. Although the area budget has been reduced, efficiency and effectiveness gains continue to be realized. Recently, the following occurred:

- Completed all audits within five months of year end
- Coordinated the synod's request for proposal to provide audit services to the synod, its schools, its subsidiaries, and to WELS VEBA and WELS Pension Plan, which resulted in a significant decrease in fees
- Implemented electronic image processing of bank lock box receipts to speed up gift recording
- Developed, in collaboration with WELS World Missions, foreign bank account creation, funds transfer protocols, and a utilization and monitoring program to reduce risks and enhance controls; implemented policies and procedures for compliance with Foreign Bank Account Reporting (FBAR) requirements
- Collaborated with WELS Technology and Communication Services on the implementation of enhanced online and text message gifting and giving solutions for the synod and its schools
- Developed and implemented policies governing intermediate term investments and debt compliance
- Coordinated implementation of the corporate credit card program by all synodical entities
- Automated the creation and delivery of period financial reports for areas of ministry
- Reviewed, reconciled, and developed procedures governing health savings accounts and life insurance billings
- Provided payroll processing services to Michigan Lutheran Seminary
- Developed a long-range synod support forecast in support of WELS' long-range ministry plan
- Developed a planning template to measure resource alignment within and across areas of ministry to facilitate planning and resource allocation

A look ahead

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

- Implement, in collaboration with the synod's schools and Northwestern Publishing House, a request for proposal for the provision of banking services
- Collaborate with WELS Technology, the synod's schools, and Northwestern Publishing House on the evaluation, selection, and implementation of an integrated synodwide human resources and payroll software
- Continue evaluation of processes, systems, and talent to identify efficiency and effectiveness opportunities
- Evaluate adequacy of the synod's self-insurance reserve and consider expansion of the program

- Collaborate with WELS Technology on the development and implementation of a comprehensive records management and retention plan
- Leverage purchasing power through negotiated contracts for goods and services
- Create an automated consolidated financial reporting model to facilitate unaudited quarterly financial statements and annual audited financial statements

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

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, reporter

Human Resources Floor Committee #8

Our calling

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

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

Our current situation

WELS Human Resources has new faces as a result of the replacement of both the Human Resources director, due to his retirement, and the Human Resources advisor.

The new Human Resources director is Mr. Todd Scott. Scott is a member at Peace, Hartford, Wis. He has more than 20 years of experience working in human resources, both in leadership and operations. Scott started his service for WELS in March 2012.

The new Human Resources generalist serving WELS is Ms. Sharon Plautz. Plautz is a member at Good Shepherd, Downers Grove, Ill. Her experience comes from Sears, where Sharon served in multiple capacities including human resources. Sharon began employment at the synod in September 2012.

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

- The Human Resources Advisory Committee (HRAC) is in place and operating to assist the HR function in ensuring policies and procedures are established and applied across all synodical entities. Further, the HRAC ensures that these systems are efficient and effective, that HR is staffed appropriately to include the requisite training and experience, and that any issue related to HR is investigated and reviewed. See p. 112 for a full report from the HRAC.
- After review and acceptance of the WELS Handbook by the Synodical Council, a new handbook was implemented at all WELS synod entities. This new handbook allows for consistent policies and practices at all of our synod operations (Synod Administration Building, Northwestern Publishing House, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Martin Luther College, Luther Preparatory School, Michigan Lutheran Seminary).
- Requests for proposals have been collected and are being reviewed for the administration of the synod-sponsored tax sheltered annuity program, the WELS Shepherd Plan, under section 403(b) of the internal revenue code.
- Requests for proposals have been collected and are being reviewed to evaluate the payroll/HR management systems. This system enables payroll and HR to support all synodical operations in the matters of payroll, personnel

data management, regulatory compliance, and budget analysis. Further the system can increase individual and synodwide efficiency and effectiveness.

- An audit has been completed on internal and external compliance within human resources policies and procedures. Improvements are being implemented to ensure all activities are completed promptly.
- Staffed the following roles within the last 9 months:
 - Director, Communication Services (SAB)
 - Director, Missions Operations (SAB)
 - Executive director, Church Extension Fund, Inc. (SAB)
 - Human resources generalist (SAB)
 - Graphic designer (SAB)
 - Software developer (SAB)
 - Food services worker (MLS)
 - Maintenance technician (MLS)
- Updated human resource materials on www.wels.net for WELS organizations including compensation worksheets to assist WELS organizations in budgeting compensation and benefits for called workers.

A look ahead

As the HR team is new, a key area of focus will be to look at current operations and then identify where efficiencies can be implemented, while maintaining effectiveness. Over the next biennium HR will, with God's guidance and blessings:

- Modify and implement a performance review process for the synod entities. This process will be one that will allow staff at the synod to receive feedback related to how they are doing but also to ensure goals are established and measured, assisting in effective operations.
- Establish an HR model where volunteers will be available to provide assistance on an as-needed basis for both needs within the synod entities, as well as congregation support.
- Implement learning and development programs for the management and staff of the synod entities.
- Update and maintain the WELS and Connect sites to ensure information and details provided assist members from both an information as well as practical aspect.
- Perform due diligence on the vendors and systems in place within the HR structure. This will be an important step to ensure both the outcomes provided, as well as the cost, are appropriate and expected.

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

Mr. Todd Scott, reporter

Human Resources Advisory Committee

Floor Committee #8

Our calling

The Human Resources Advisory Committee has been in existence since early 2010. The committee consists of three lay members with Human Resources expertise (Mr. Robert Bullens, Mr. Len Kasten, and Mr. Tom Plath), a member of the Synodical Council (Pastor Earle Treptow), the director of WELS Human Resources (Mr. Todd Scott), and the WELS chief financial officer (Mr. Todd Poppe). The committee had been meeting face to face on a quarterly basis and, until recently, members were also having monthly conference calls.

During the first two years, the team worked through a time-consuming process of understanding the overall WELS organization and WELS Human Resources (HR), determining the best future for the HR function, and then assessing WELS' capability to get to that future. A critical accomplishment was the team's defining an HR operating model for WELS. As we've shared that model with our WELS leadership, it is becoming more and more apparent that this new approach will assist in organizing the function, optimizing resources, and improving HR effectiveness.

The committee has also worked through staffing transitions in both of the HR roles in WELS' headquarters. God has brought a very capable HR director to us in Mr. Todd Scott. In addition, Ms. Sharon Plautz has had a strong start as the

new HR generalist. Scott's leadership and Plautz's contributions have allowed us to start functioning in the way that the HR operating model intended.

Our current situation

The role of the Human Resources Advisory Committee (HRAC) has shifted dramatically since Scott and Plautz have started from reviewing current operation to one of counsel, oversight, and planning.

Committee members continue to work on the implementation of increasing the level of collaboration within the WELS HR community. Scott has initiated frequent contact with HR and business managers from our schools, Northwestern Publishing House, Wisconsin Lutheran College, and WELS Benefit Plans. We look to build on this in the future. We haven't made significant progress on identifying other HR resources from within WELS that we could use on a volunteer basis to help us. We will focus on this in 2013.

A look ahead

At our last meeting in Milwaukee in January, we heard Scott's HR plan for 2013. Critical items include:

- HRIS/Payroll plans and efficiencies
- Implementation of the new HR model
- Establishment of a new performance review process
- Management training
- HR newsletter
- Update www.wels.net HR site
- Update/Clean up Connect HR home page
- Clean-up and compliance of all facets of HR practices and processes

In addition, the HRAC brainstormed and prioritized future focus areas for the WELS HR organization to include some of the key topics such as improving the availability of self-service capabilities for WELS leaders on HR topics, integrating key HR tools across WELS, providing congregational leaders with leadership development and basic HR tools/education, and driving a culture of positive and improvement-oriented feedback.

In conclusion

The members of the HRAC have invested countless hours in this effort over the course of the last three years. As a team, we are excited about the future of HR in WELS. We are confident in the leadership team. We have sincerely appreciated the support of the Synodical Council, WELS President Mark Schroeder, and Chief Financial Officer Todd Poppe in our efforts. We look forward to continuing to serve WELS.

Mr. Thomas J. Plath, reporter

Mr. Thomas J. Plath, chairman

Mr. Robert Bullens

Mr. Len Kasten

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, chief financial officer

Mr. Todd Scott, director of human resources

Rev. Earle Treptow, Synodical Council liaison

Facility Services Floor Committee #2

Our calling

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

Our current situation

The synod owns two properties comprising more than 100,000 square feet of space but needs only one property and 30,000-35,000 square feet.

One property is located on Mayfair Road in Milwaukee, Wis., and is commonly referred to as the Synod Administration Building (SAB). The SAB consists of two connected 1970s-era buildings on about 2.4 acres with a total of 69,000 square feet. Areas of ministry, Financial Services, Human Resources, Technology, Communication Services, and Ministry of Christian Giving occupy about 90 percent of the 30,000-square-foot south building. WELS Benefit Plans, WELS Church Extension Fund, WELS Foundation, and WELS Investment Funds occupy about 25 percent of the 39,000-square-foot north building. Previously, the north building leased space to WELS affiliates such as Christian Life Resources and Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries and to secular not-for-profit and for-profit entities.

In early 2011, the synod accepted an unsolicited offer to purchase the SAB and placed earnest money in escrow. The developer planned to raze the buildings and construct a large, upscale apartment complex on the site. The purchase offer provided the developer until November 2011 to complete his due diligence, secure financing, and obtain the necessary municipality approvals and zoning change. In late October 2011, the developer informed the synod that the proposed project was not feasible and the purchase contract was cancelled. As customary in commercial real estate transactions, the earnest money was fully refundable to the purchaser until the end of the due diligence period, so the synod received no compensation for the late cancellation of the purchase contract.

Following acceptance of the sale of the SAB, the synod endeavored to relocate the synod corporate headquarters without the use of mission offerings. After a thorough review of the synod's space requirements and geographical preference, a relocation property with 33,000 square feet was identified in the Milwaukee suburb of Waukesha, Wis. The property was under the control of a financial institution that had recently been acquired, so the property owner and financier were both under pressure to sell the property. Thus, the synod was able to acquire the property at a substantial discount, but to receive the discount the offer could not contain contingencies, such as the sale of the SAB, and the sale needed to close quickly. In early August 2011 the synod purchased the property and agreed to lease the space to the seller through October.

Upon learning of the canceled SAB sale contract, the Synodical Council resolved that both properties be offered for sale to reduce the risks and costs associated with owning two properties. The SAB has an asking price of \$3.4 million with the goal of selling the building to an owner occupant. If a developer is again interested in the property, the sale price could be about half the listing price. The Waukesha property has an asking price of \$3.9 million with the goal of selling to an investor or owner occupant.

The synod received a letter of intent for the purchase of the Mayfair Road property in November 2012. Multiple discussions with the potential purchaser have occurred. Those discussions focused on the purchase of only the north building and on the value of the property. In January 2013, the Synodical Council authorized the administration to accept the letter of intent and contract for the sale of the buildings at \$2.0 million. At the time of this writing, the contract was under negotiation. The purchase terms under consideration include a provision for a sale closing in early spring and the synod vacating the properties by the end of June 2013.

In addition, the synod received a letter of intent for the purchase of the Waukesha property in January 2013. The price, contingencies, and terms of the letter of intent could not be met or were unacceptable. Negotiations with the potential purchaser are ongoing and the Synodical Council has not considered the purchase terms at the time of this writing.

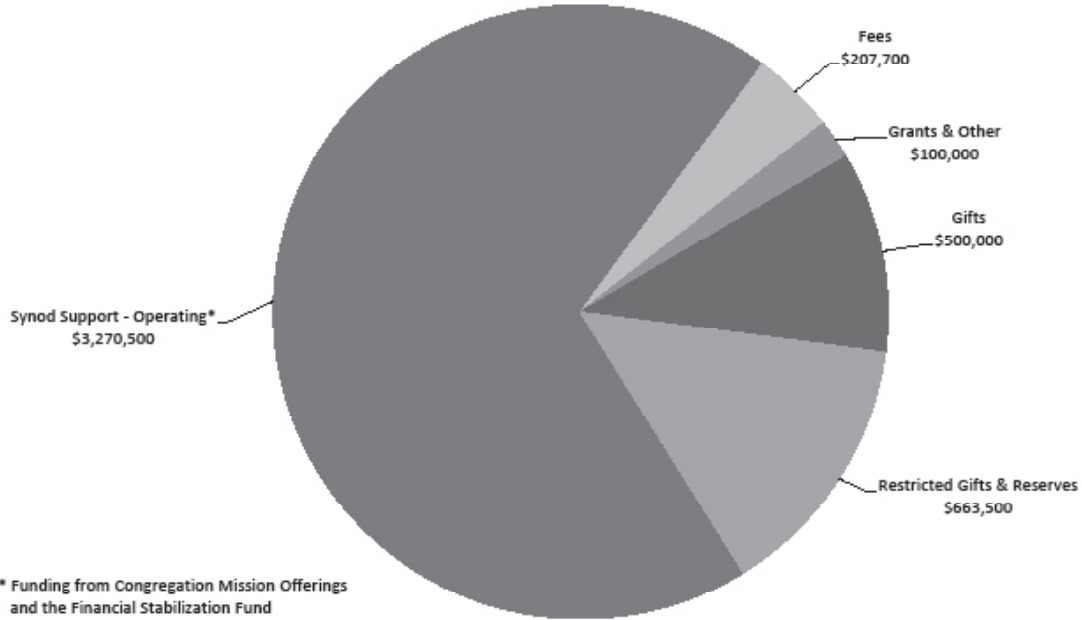
A look ahead

Because the information in this report was provided in January and the situation is a constantly changing one, some of the information in the report will likely have changed significantly by the time of the synod convention. News on the buildings will continue to be reported in "Together," and an updated report will be provided to the synod convention in July 2013.

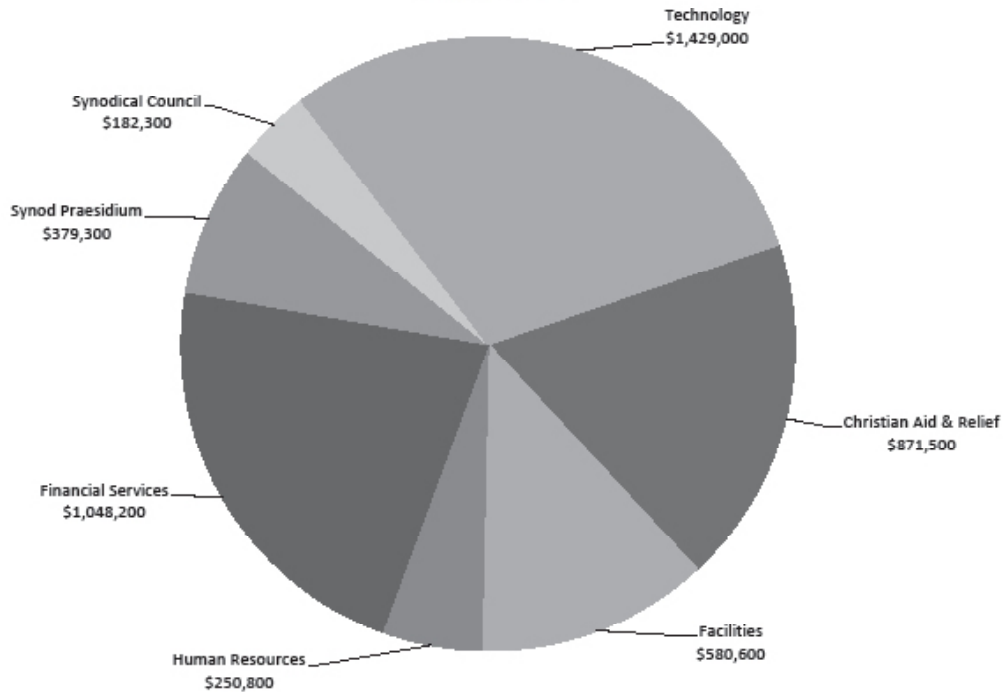
Facility Services will continue to work diligently on the maintenance and operations of both the SAB and Waukesha properties until one them is sold. As disposition of the properties becomes clearer, Facility Services will coordinate the remodeling, reorganization, or relocation and do its best to ensure that the impact on ministry is minimized.

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, reporter

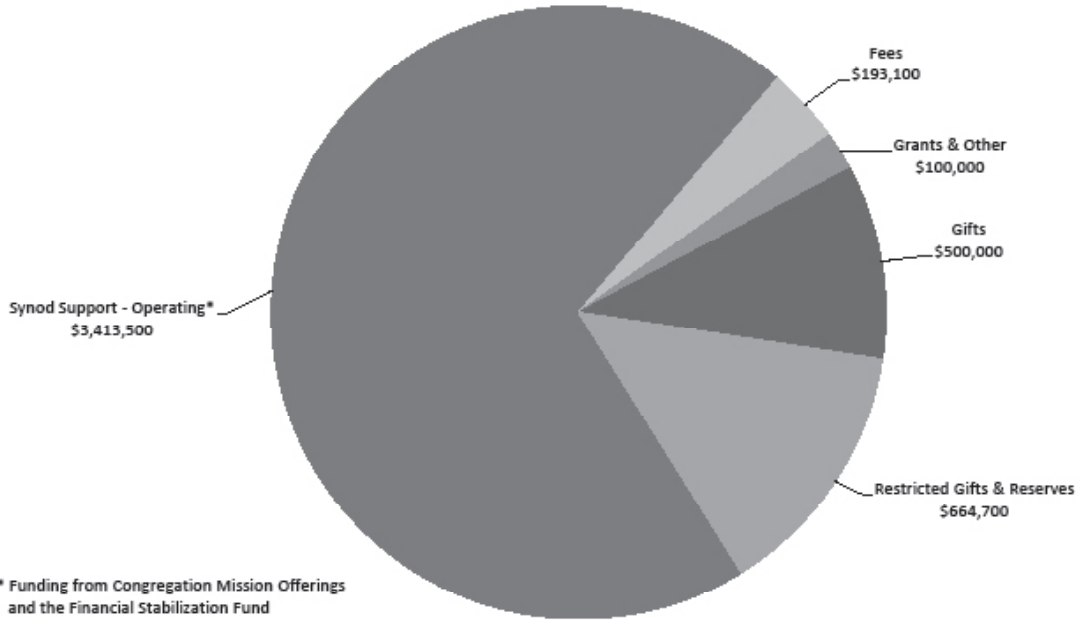
**FY 2013–14 Support
Ministry Support
\$4,741,700**



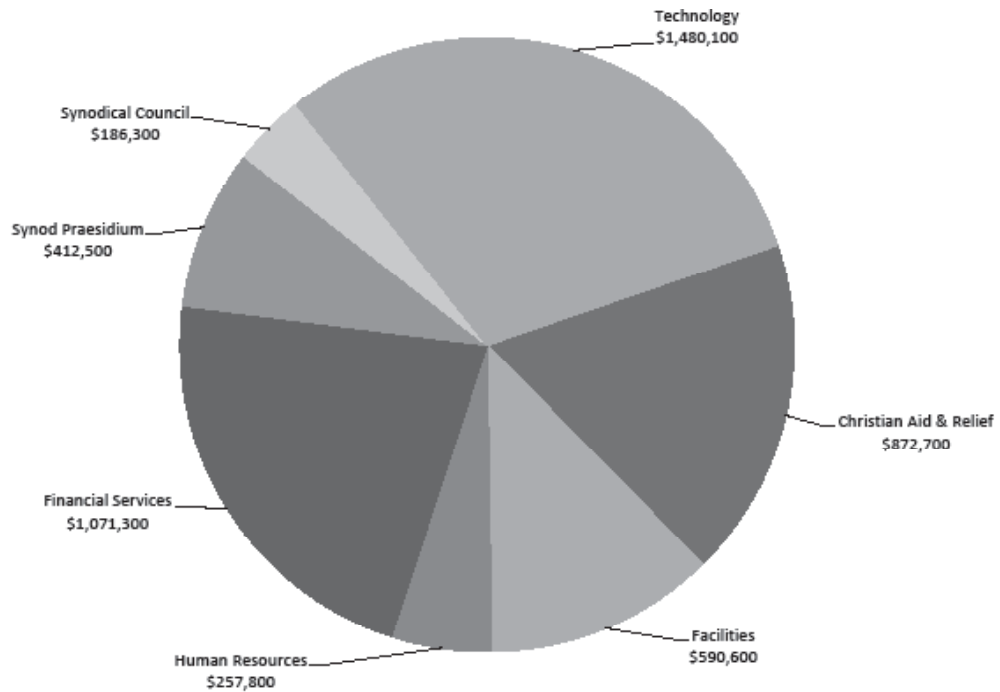
**FY 2013–14 Expenses
Ministry Support
\$4,741,700**



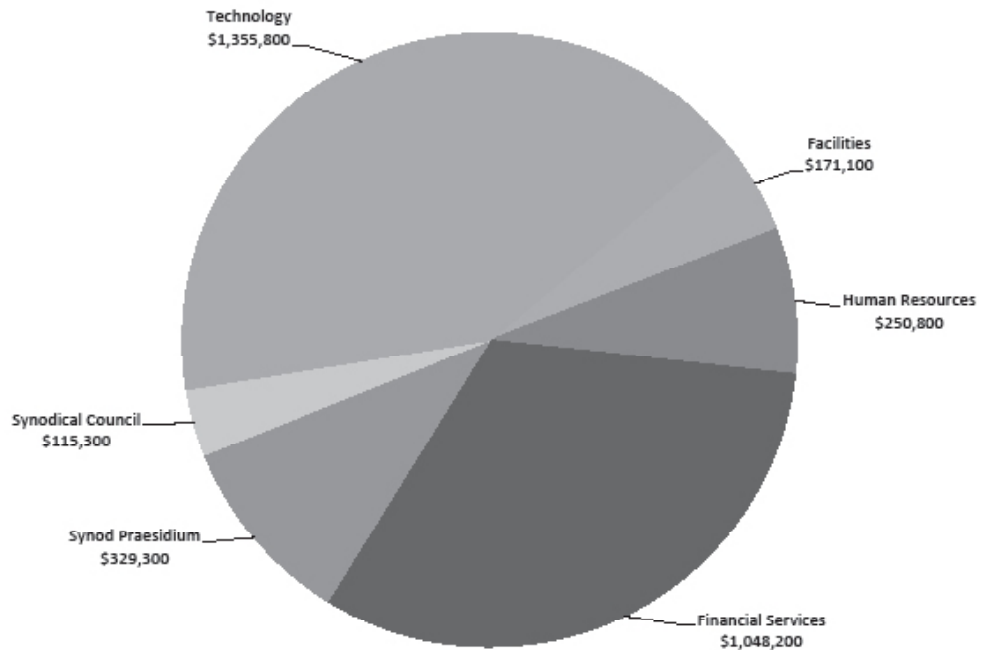
**FY 2014–15 Support
Ministry Support
\$4,871,300**



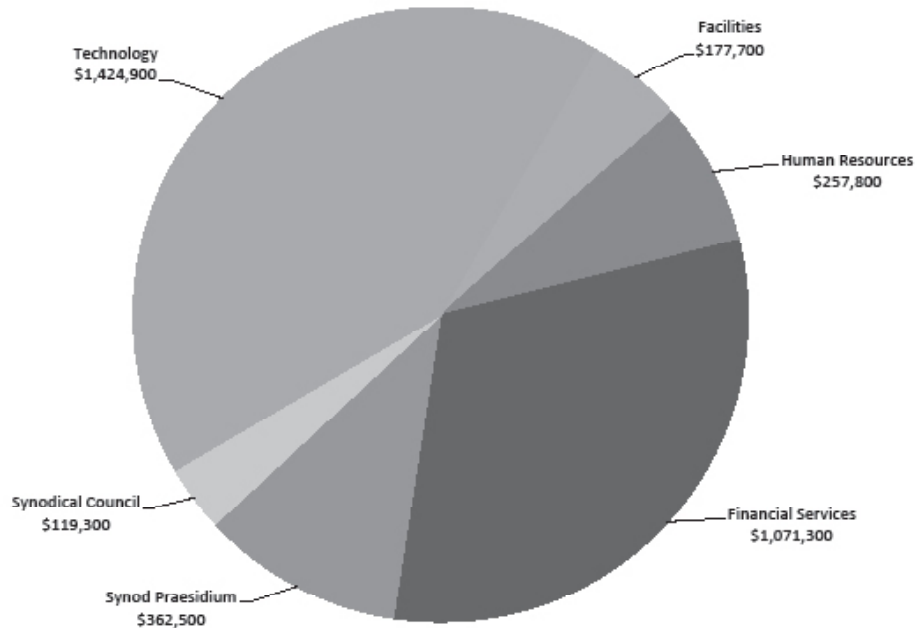
**FY 2014–15 Expenses
Ministry Support
\$4,871,300**



**FY 2013–14 Synod Operating Support Allocation
Ministry Support
\$3,270,500**



**FY 2014–15 Synod Operating Support Allocation
Ministry Support
\$3,413,500**



Finance and budget

Floor Committee #4

Financial results and ministry financial plan

Overview

Our heavenly Father continues to bless missions, ministerial education, and support to districts, congregations, and ministries.

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

In addition to transparency improvements, the predictability of support for the ministry financial plan was enhanced by the establishment of the Financial Stabilization Fund (FSF). The FSF holds all non-CMO (Congregation Mission Offering) sources of support until the year after receipt. Establishment of this fund has worked as hoped; as a result, mid-year plan adjustments due to support decreases have not been necessary during the last four years.

Fiscal year 2011–12

Collectively, the operating fund, special funds, and schools ended FY 2011–12 with an unrestricted surplus of \$1.3 million on stronger-than-planned support from higher enrollments, investment gains, and lower costs for ministry support services. Although the year ended positively, support from CMO was less than planned. The plan assumed that congregations would meet their 2011 subscriptions and increase their support by 3.0 percent for 2012. Actual receipts for 2011 were 1.6 percent less than subscriptions and 2012 subscriptions represented a slight decrease from 2011 receipts.

The FSF was tremendously blessed during FY 2011–12. A bequest of \$3.2 million and higher-than-forecasted receipts from a family foundation resulted in an ending balance in the FSF of \$14.1 million or \$3.7 million more than planned.

A comprehensive report on the synod operating fund, special funds, the schools, and the FSF results for FY2011–12 can be found online at <https://connect.wels.net> on the “Financial Services” site under “Financial Reports.”

Fiscal year 2012–13

Overall, financial stability is also projected for FY 2012–13 based on results through December 2012. Collectively, the operating fund, special funds, and schools are projecting to end the year with a smaller-than-planned use of reserves. Similar to the prior year, the positive financial performance is attributed to higher than planned enrollments, investment gains, and lower costs for ministry support services.

The ministry financial plan for FY 2012–13 continued to be based on growing support for synod ministries from CMO. The plan assumed that CMO would grow by 3.0 percent. While receipts for 2012 were 3.5 percent more than 2011, they were not enough to make up a decline in 2011; and 2013 subscriptions indicate a decrease of 2.0 percent over 2012. Accordingly, CMO for FY 2012–13 is projected to be \$715,000 less than planned. This shortfall will be made up by an increased transfer from the FSF and lower costs for ministry support services.

OPERATING FUND

	Actual FY 2011-12	Plan FY 2011-12	Variance		Forecast FY 2012-13	Plan FY 2012-13	Variance	
			Favorable/Unfavorable Amount	Percent			Favorable/Unfavorable Amount	Percent
Support								
Calls Team Compensation	\$ 20,943,236	\$ 21,113,000	\$ (169,764)	-0.8%	\$ 21,050,000	\$ 21,346,000	\$ (296,000)	-3.3%
Financial Stabilization Fund	6,620,159	7,107,000	(486,841)	-6.8%	7,112,000	6,225,000	887,000	14.2%
Total Salary Support	27,563,395	28,220,000	(656,605)	-2.3%	28,162,000	27,571,000	591,000	2.1%
Support Support or								
Home Missions	5,400,200	5,400,200	0	0.0%	5,553,000	5,553,000	0	0.0%
World Missions	5,146,400	5,154,500	8,100	0.2%	5,177,000	5,260,100	(83,100)	-1.6%
Ministerial Education	6,380,694	6,362,500	1,706	0.0%	6,178,000	6,178,000	0	0.0%
Compassion & Deeded Ministry	4,318,452	4,351,500	33,048	0.8%	4,261,000	4,554,000	293,000	6.5%
Ministry Support	2,937,478	3,250,500	313,022	9.6%	3,251,000	3,352,000	101,000	3.0%
Debt Repayment	1,600,000	1,600,000	0	0.0%	1,600,000	1,600,000	0	0.0%
Total Expenses	27,763,324	28,120,000	(356,676)	-1.3%	28,142,000	28,470,000	(328,000)	-1.2%
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-

FINANCIAL STABILIZATION FUND

	Actual FY 2011-12	Plan FY 2011-12	Variance		Forecast FY 2012-13	Plan FY 2012-13	Variance	
			Favorable/Unfavorable Amount	Percent			Favorable/Unfavorable Amount	Percent
Beginning Balance								
Additional:								
Financial Grants	4,534,372	3,750,000	776,372	20.7%	3,120,000	3,570,000	(442,000)	-12.4%
Willing Together	285,584	500,000	(214,416)	-42.9%	250,000	585,000	(335,000)	-57.3%
Mission Partners	287,258	-	287,258	-	150,000	-	150,000	-
Calls and Materials	900,775	1,055,000	(154,225)	-14.6%	950,000	1,000,000	(50,000)	-5.0%
Calls Team Incentives	1,414,857	1,555,000	(140,143)	-9.0%	1,350,000	1,585,000	(235,000)	-14.8%
Unrestricted Expenses	4,223,859	1,600,000	2,623,859	164.0%	1,500,000	1,600,000	(100,000)	-6.3%
Investment Income	482,658	200,000	282,658	141.3%	550,000	250,000	300,000	120.0%
Equipment Distribution	36,946	-	36,946	-	40,000	-	40,000	-
Other Revenue	9,643	60,000	(50,357)	-83.9%	75,000	60,000	15,000	25.0%
Total Additions	10,701,475	7,173,000	3,528,475	49.2%	6,543,000	7,065,000	(522,000)	-7.4%
Transfer Out - Building	-	-	-	-	(600,000)	-	600,000	-
Transfer Out - Operating	(6,620,159)	(7,107,000)	486,841	6.8%	(7,112,000)	(6,225,000)	887,000	14.2%
Ending Balance	\$ 14,116,821	\$ 11,498,674	\$ 2,715,347	23.7%	\$ 12,846,821	\$ 15,740,174	\$ 2,893,353	18.4%

Proposed ministry financial plan for 2013–15 biennium

Planning for the 2013–15 biennium was initiated in spring of 2012, about 15 months before the start of the biennium. The Synodical Council used the minimum synod support funding levels from the long-range ministry plan to allocate synod support to areas of ministry. The Synodical Council asked the synod president to work with the areas of ministry to draft an initial ministry financial plan within these allocations for review at its fall 2012 meeting. With this general direction by the Synodical Council, working with their boards or commissions, the areas of ministry proceeded to develop their ministry plans with the goal of maintaining or carefully expanding ministry.

It became clear early in the planning phase that the desire to increase wages 2.5 percent would result in ministry reductions. After two years of wage freezes followed by modest increases and a reduction in health care benefits, the Synodical Council wanted to provide at least a minimal increase in wages for synodical workers. Accordingly, the Synodical Council established an average wage increase of 1.75 percent for both fiscal years.

In fall 2012, the synod president presented a preliminary proposed financial plan to the Synodical Council for consideration. The plan not only maintained ministry but also provided for careful growth while maintaining a three-tiered, four-school ministerial education system. The proposed financial plan again relies on areas of ministry and schools using reserves or other one-time funds to sustain ongoing ministries.

Please refer to the area of ministry reports contained elsewhere in BORAM for the ministry financial plans for each area. Following is a summary of the support forecast and the proposed financial plan for each year of the biennium along with comparative information for the current biennium.

Support forecast for 2013–15 biennium

The support forecast for the biennium is based on the following trends and assumptions.

1. Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO)—congregations will meet their calendar year 2013 subscriptions, which are 2.0 percent less than 2012 receipts. CMO will increase 4.0 percent for calendar years 2014 and 2015.
2. Financial Stabilization Fund (FSF)—holds all unrestricted non-CMO support for the year or years after receipt.
 - a. Schwan Foundation: Based on a \$2.2 million grant for 2013 and an increase of 5.0 percent for 2014 and 2015.
 - b. Gifts from individuals: Includes Walking Together, Mission Partners, and other gifts from individuals and congregations.
 - 1) Walking Together is based on modest annual growth
 - 2) Mission Partners program was restructured such that gifts can now be restricted to the specified ministry. The forecast represents the decreasing gifts that donors have not yet restricted the use thereof.
 - 3) Other gifts are based on modest annual growth.
 - c. Unrestricted bequests: Represents estate gifts to the ministry and/or mission of WELS and is based on the lower end of actual gifts received during the prior five-year period as more donors are restricting gifts to a specific ministry.
 - d. Investment income: Represents earnings on operating funds and the continued depressed interest rates for short-term investments, money market funds, and depository accounts.
 - e. Other revenue: Represents income for services provided and assumes the amount will remain constant during the biennium.

Ministry Financial Plan Summary

SUMMARY	2011-12 Actual				2012-13 Plan				2013-14 Plan				2014-15 Plan			
	Synod Support	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	Synod Support	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE
	Home Missions	5,400,200	1,680,515	7,080,715	9.40	5,533,710	2,343,301	7,877,010	10.50	5,743,410	1,340,500	7,126,500	10.50	5,850,510	1,258,200	7,143,110
World Missions	5,146,400	3,367,321	8,513,721	50.65	5,248,110	4,175,059	9,415,819	51.65	5,377,710	3,030,000	8,407,710	51.60	5,731,310	3,032,000	8,763,310	50.60
Ministerial Education	8,380,854	24,292,456	32,673,350	305.40	8,178,610	24,479,744	32,658,344	304.50	8,336,510	28,375,500	36,712,000	314.13	8,474,310	27,697,600	36,171,910	313.13
Congregational & District Ministry	4,311,653	2,074,653	6,386,306	35.80	4,554,810	1,798,001	6,352,810	34.90	4,733,810	2,319,400	7,053,200	37.70	4,857,810	1,972,800	6,830,610	37.70
Ministry Support	2,857,420	1,693,687	4,551,107	28.30	3,362,810	1,416,201	4,761,810	30.45	3,770,510	1,671,200	4,741,700	29.80	3,413,510	1,457,600	4,871,110	29.80
Debt Retirement	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-	1,810,810	-	1,810,810	-	1,910,010	-	1,910,000	-	1,810,810	-	1,810,810	-
TOTAL	27,762,367	33,117,632	60,880,000	428.65	28,478,810	34,225,853	62,895,853	436.85	29,062,110	36,579,000	65,641,900	443.73	29,537,810	35,448,400	65,386,210	441.73

	2011-12	% of total
Synod Support	5,400,200	19.5%
Home Missions	5,146,400	18.5%
World Missions	8,380,854	30.1%
Ministerial Education	4,311,653	15.6%
Congregational & District Ministry	2,857,420	10.6%
Ministry Support	1,600,000	5.8%
Debt Retirement	27,762,367	

	2012-13	% of total	% change
Synod Support	5,533,710	19.4%	2.5%
Home Missions	5,248,110	18.4%	1.8%
World Missions	8,178,610	28.7%	-2.2%
Ministerial Education	4,554,810	16.0%	5.5%
Congregational & District Ministry	3,362,810	11.8%	14.5%
Ministry Support	1,810,810	5.6%	11.0%
Debt Retirement	28,478,810		2.5%

	2013-14	% of total	% change
Synod Support	5,743,410	19.8%	3.8%
Home Missions	5,377,710	18.5%	2.6%
World Missions	8,336,510	28.7%	1.6%
Ministerial Education	4,733,810	16.3%	3.6%
Congregational & District Ministry	3,770,510	11.3%	-2.7%
Ministry Support	1,910,010	5.5%	0.6%
Debt Retirement	29,062,110		2.1%

	2014-15	% of total	% change
Synod Support	5,850,510	19.8%	2.0%
Home Missions	5,731,310	19.1%	6.6%
World Missions	8,474,310	28.3%	1.7%
Ministerial Education	4,857,810	16.2%	2.6%
Congregational & District Ministry	3,413,510	11.4%	4.4%
Ministry Support	1,810,810	5.3%	0.0%
Debt Retirement	29,537,810		3.0%

	2011-12	% of total
Total Funding	7,080,715	11.6%
Home Missions	8,513,721	14.8%
World Missions	32,653,750	53.8%
Ministerial Education	6,386,306	10.5%
Congregational & District Ministry	4,551,107	7.8%
Ministry Support	1,600,000	2.8%
Debt Retirement	60,880,000	

	2012-13	% of total	% change
Total Funding	7,877,010	12.6%	12.0%
Home Missions	9,415,819	15.0%	10.3%
World Missions	32,658,344	52.1%	0.0%
Ministerial Education	6,352,810	10.1%	-1.1%
Congregational & District Ministry	4,761,810	7.6%	3.2%
Ministry Support	1,810,810	2.6%	0.0%
Debt Retirement	62,895,853		3.0%

	2013-14	% of total	% change
Total Funding	7,126,500	10.9%	-8.0%
Home Missions	8,407,710	12.6%	-8.0%
World Missions	36,712,000	55.9%	12.4%
Ministerial Education	7,053,200	10.7%	11.5%
Congregational & District Ministry	4,741,700	7.2%	-0.8%
Ministry Support	1,910,000	2.6%	0.0%
Debt Retirement	65,641,110		4.7%

	2014-15	% of total	% change
Total Funding	7,143,110	10.9%	0.3%
Home Missions	8,763,310	13.4%	4.2%
World Missions	36,171,910	55.3%	-1.5%
Ministerial Education	6,830,610	10.4%	-3.2%
Congregational & District Ministry	4,871,110	7.5%	2.7%
Ministry Support	1,810,810	2.6%	0.0%
Debt Retirement	65,386,210		-0.4%

Ministry Financial Plan Summary

	2011-12 Actual				2012-13 Plan				2013-14 Plan				2014-15 Plan			
	Special Support	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Fundings	FTE	Special Support	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Fundings	FTE	Special Support	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Fundings	FTE	Special Support	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Fundings	FTE
	Home Missions	297,883	794,591	1,092,474	4.40	598,769	22,000	620,769	3.59	817,119	474,300	1,291,419	5.81	624,819	495,700	1,120,519
Board and Administration	1,471,057	324,711	1,795,768	1.00	1,945,816	533,600	2,479,416	2.10	1,768,519	274,700	1,943,219	1.81	1,751,119	196,700	1,947,819	1.81
Multicultural Ministry	368,781	21,983	390,764	1.00	381,858	81,000	462,858	1.10	486,819	23,800	510,619	1.81	487,819	36,800	524,619	1.81
Campus Ministry	2,859,680	535,013	3,394,693	3.00	2,898,376	1,414,700	4,313,076	3.10	2,957,819	555,300	3,513,119	3.81	3,874,319	544,200	4,418,519	3.81
Outreach Ministry	2,888	46,787	49,675	0.00	5,039	332,000	337,039	1.10	3,319	304,800	308,119	0.51	3,319	104,800	108,119	0.51
Joint Mission Council Ministry	5,898,200	1,688,515	7,586,715	9.40	5,533,719	2,343,300	7,877,019	10.59	5,743,619	1,362,500	7,106,119	10.51	5,869,819	1,288,200	7,158,019	10.51
TOTAL																

World Missions																
Board and Administration	1,651,087	1,502,871	3,153,958	4.50	428,383	978,600	1,406,983	4.59	417,819	971,300	1,389,119	4.35	428,819	961,100	1,390,919	4.35
Africa	1,565,888	428,757	1,994,645	13.01	1,312,132	423,200	1,735,332	13.10	1,212,619	548,300	1,760,919	13.81	1,204,819	544,200	1,749,019	13.81
Europe	441,618	93,857	535,475	2.50	475,851	156,000	631,851	2.59	516,019	112,500	628,519	3.81	539,419	101,000	640,419	3.81
Latin America	763,635	250,960	1,014,595	7.25	565,306	170,200	735,506	7.25	487,219	182,700	669,919	6.75	465,419	184,200	649,619	6.75
Middle America	212,798	87,678	300,476	1.00	195,889	51,000	246,889	1.10	226,519	68,500	295,019	1.81	242,119	68,500	310,619	1.81
East Asia	1,053,572	368,620	1,422,192	9.00	717,231	587,252	1,304,483	9.10	838,919	364,300	1,203,219	9.51	838,919	464,300	1,303,219	9.51
South Asia	444,056	215,338	659,394	4.00	373,864	259,286	633,150	4.10	281,819	364,800	646,619	3.51	379,219	268,900	648,119	3.51
Asia-Pacific Rim	658,743	275,886	934,629	5.00	554,872	441,861	996,733	6.10	611,419	74,700	686,119	4.81	624,219	64,000	688,219	4.81
Joint Mission Council Ministry	-	-	-	0.00	-	-	-	0.00	-	65,000	65,000	0.51	-	65,000	65,000	0.51
Multilingual Publications	568,150	34,734	602,884	3.00	481,239	25,300	506,539	3.10	583,919	241,000	824,919	5.81	533,819	167,000	700,819	5.81
Other	107,038	130,618	237,656	1.00	128,852	1,486,000	1,614,852	1.10	138,119	96,800	234,919	1.81	134,219	96,800	231,019	1.81
TOTAL	5,146,400	3,387,321	8,533,721	58.65	5,248,119	4,175,809	9,423,928	51.65	5,377,719	3,030,000	8,407,719	51.81	5,731,319	3,032,000	8,763,319	51.81

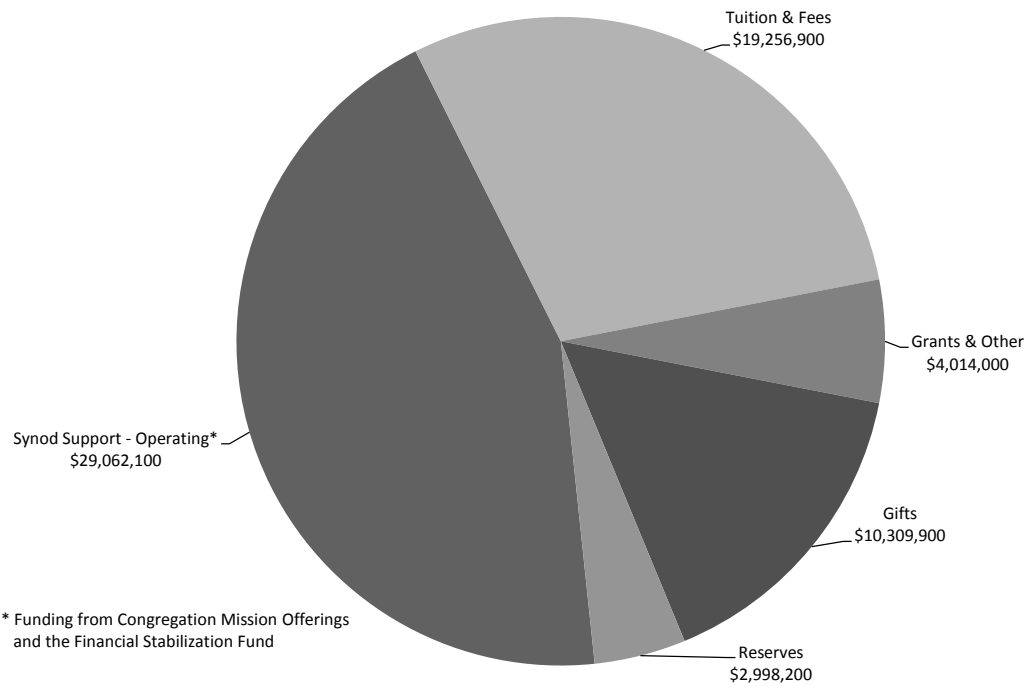
Ministerial Education																
Board and Administration	622,746	774,081	1,396,827	1.35	657,356	185,800	843,156	1.45	488,819	813,800	1,302,619	1.81	418,219	813,800	1,232,019	1.81
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary	1,178,218	4,087,087	5,265,305	38.51	1,288,724	4,047,610	5,336,334	38.76	1,185,919	4,698,600	5,884,519	38.46	1,158,819	4,768,700	5,927,519	38.46
Marion Luther College	3,188,133	12,927,438	16,115,571	164.01	3,008,653	13,346,537	16,355,190	163.22	3,193,819	15,772,800	18,966,619	167.11	3,274,319	16,841,000	19,115,319	168.11
Luther Preparatory School	2,009,248	4,341,623	6,350,871	68.25	2,487,812	4,218,562	6,706,374	58.25	2,348,819	4,533,300	6,882,119	64.25	2,365,819	4,682,200	7,048,019	64.25
Michigan Lutheran Seminary	1,362,548	2,162,827	3,525,375	41.31	1,148,865	2,743,235	3,892,100	42.31	1,208,519	2,557,200	3,765,719	43.31	1,219,419	2,581,900	3,801,319	43.31
TOTAL	8,368,894	24,292,456	32,661,354	315.41	8,178,819	24,479,744	32,658,344	314.95	8,186,519	28,375,500	36,562,019	314.11	8,474,319	27,687,600	36,161,919	313.11

Ministry Financial Plan Summary

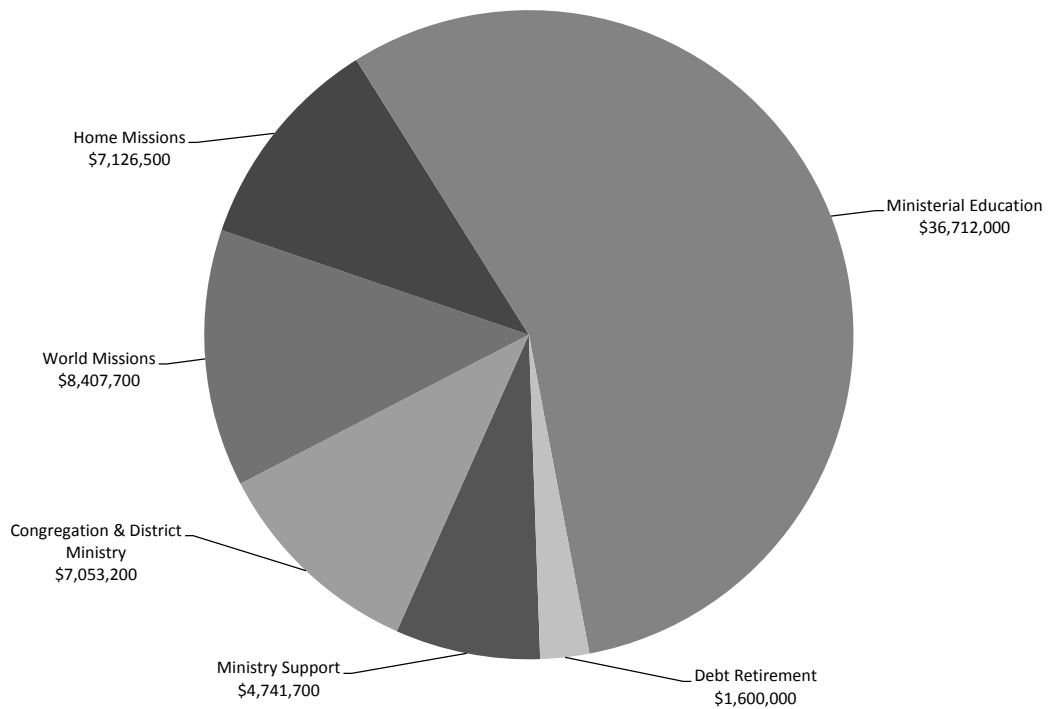
	2011-12 Actual				2012-13 Plan				2013-14 Plan				2014-15 Plan			
	Synod Support	Special gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Synod Support	Special gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Synod Support	Special gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Synod Support	Special gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE
Congregation & District Ministry	888,855	1,527,321	2,406,176	15.30	852,819	1,226,500	2,128,319	15.89	1,013,619	1,703,500	2,707,119	14.80	1,063,819	1,474,000	2,537,819	14.80
Congregation & Ministry Support Group	82,221	108,432	281,675		65,819	291,000	315,819		136,819	25,000	361,819		138,719	25,000	163,719	
Conference of Presidents	1,548,168	77,784	1,626,952	16.45	1,234,519	381,000	1,635,519	14.59	1,623,519	263,500	1,884,019	17.50	1,485,519	263,500	1,749,019	17.50
Christian Giving	606,866	78,055	684,921	4.15	488,319	341,500	824,819	4.69	486,019	222,700	708,719	5.80	548,519	185,500	734,019	5.80
Communication Services	501,967	-	501,967	0.00	531,819	-	531,819	0.00	977,019	-	977,019	0.00	1,003,219	-	1,003,219	0.00
District Ministries	84,843	75,943	160,786	0.00	-	-	-	0.00	95,819	80,000	175,819	0.00	-	-	-	0.00
Convention	48,941	115,922	164,863	0.00	50,819	50,000	100,819	0.00	48,819	17,000	65,819	0.00	58,119	17,000	75,119	0.00
Commission on Inter-Church Relations	103,446	256	103,702	0.00	148,819	-	148,819	0.00	111,019	10,000	121,019	0.00	116,819	10,000	126,819	0.00
Special Support	254,126	-	254,126	0.00	259,819	-	259,819	0.00	259,019	-	259,019	0.00	259,819	-	259,819	0.00
TOTAL	4,318,653	2,078,653	6,397,306	35.90	4,554,819	1,785,000	6,339,819	34.98	4,753,819	2,319,400	7,073,219	37.70	4,857,819	1,972,800	6,830,619	37.70

Ministry Support	131,200	434,220	565,420	0.50	152,819	481,000	644,819	0.59	171,119	489,500	660,619	0.50	177,219	482,000	659,219	0.50
Facilities	154,179	404,988	559,167	0.00	161,219	10,000	171,219	0.00	135,319	67,000	202,319	0.00	138,319	67,000	205,319	0.00
Synodal Council	312,012	16,748	328,760	2.00	297,819	18,000	315,819	2.00	301,419	50,000	351,419	2.80	307,519	50,000	357,519	2.80
Synodal Proceedings	-	-	-	0.00	-	-	-	0.00	27,919	-	27,919	0.00	55,819	-	55,819	0.00
Special Task Forces	1,197,195	144,515	1,341,710	10.90	1,294,319	388,600	1,682,919	11.59	1,356,819	73,200	1,430,019	12.25	1,424,519	55,200	1,479,719	12.25
Technology	981,124	557	981,681	11.90	1,233,819	-	1,233,819	13.45	1,044,219	-	1,044,219	11.55	1,071,319	-	1,071,319	11.55
Financial Services	165,780	1,257	167,037	2.00	223,819	-	223,819	2.00	259,819	-	259,819	2.80	257,819	-	257,819	2.80
Human Resources	-	721,431	721,431	1.00	-	781,000	781,000	1.00	-	871,500	871,500	1.00	-	872,700	872,700	1.00
Christian Aid and Relief	2,933,420	1,693,687	4,627,107	24.30	3,362,819	1,418,200	4,781,019	30.45	3,278,519	1,474,200	4,752,719	29.80	3,433,519	1,457,800	4,891,319	29.80
TOTAL	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	24.30	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	30.45	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	29.80	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	29.80
Debt Retirement	4,537,420	1,693,687	6,231,107	24.30	4,962,819	1,418,200	6,381,019	30.45	4,878,519	1,474,200	6,352,719	29.80	5,003,519	1,457,800	6,461,319	29.80
TOTAL	4,537,420	1,693,687	6,231,107	24.30	4,962,819	1,418,200	6,381,019	30.45	4,878,519	1,474,200	6,352,719	29.80	5,003,519	1,457,800	6,461,319	29.80

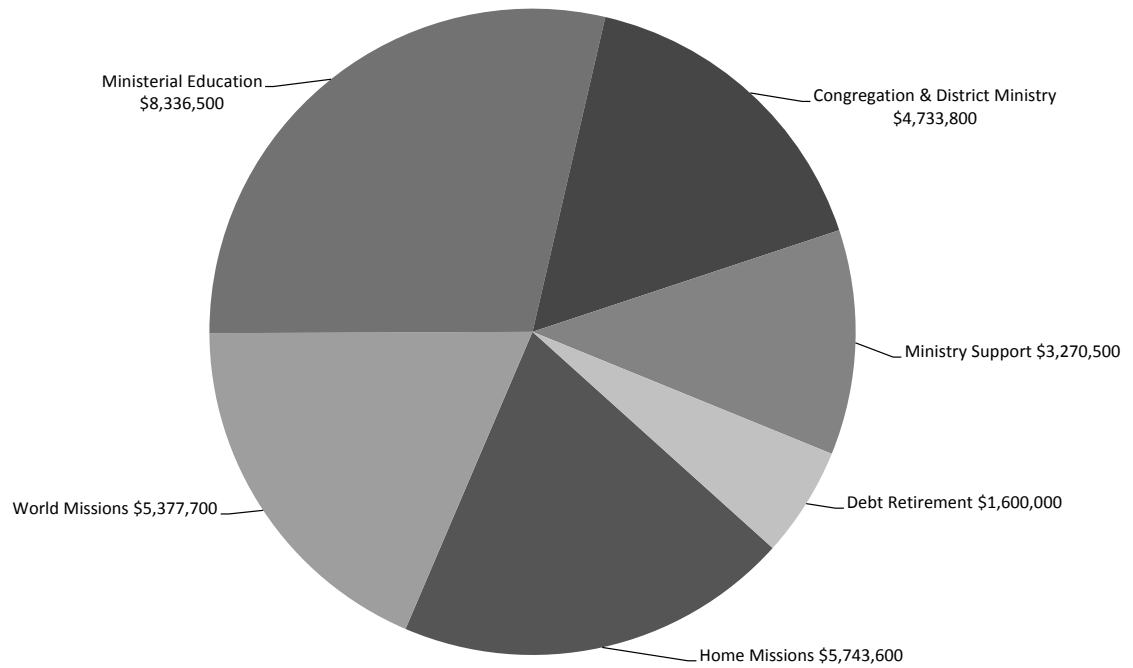
**FY 2013–14 Total Ministry Plan Support
\$65,641,100**



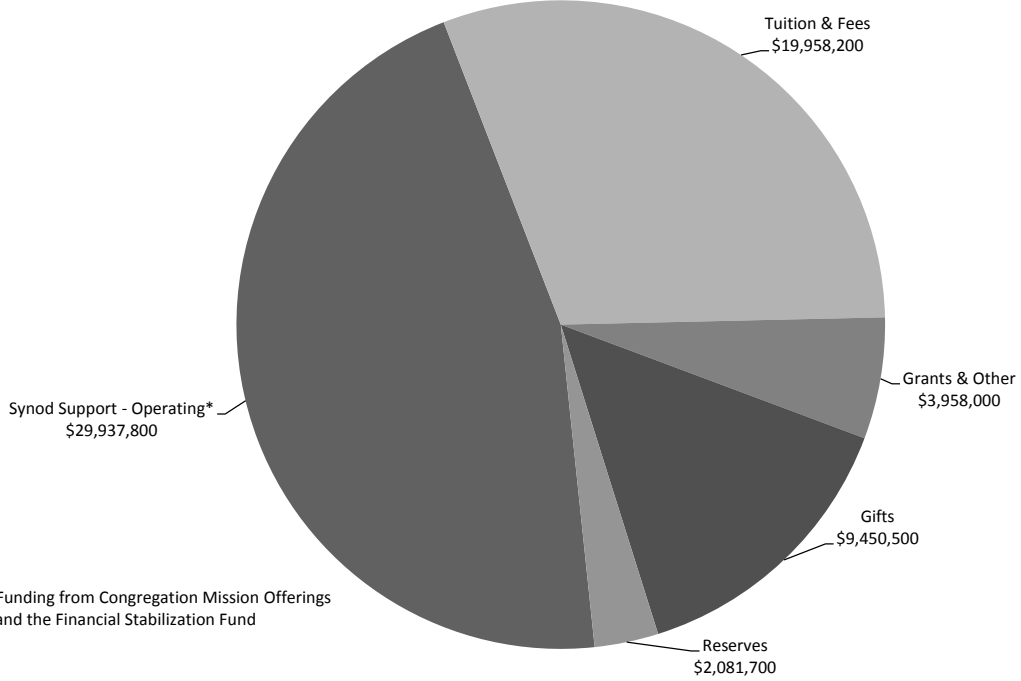
**FY 2013–14 Total Ministry Plan Expenses
\$65,641,100**



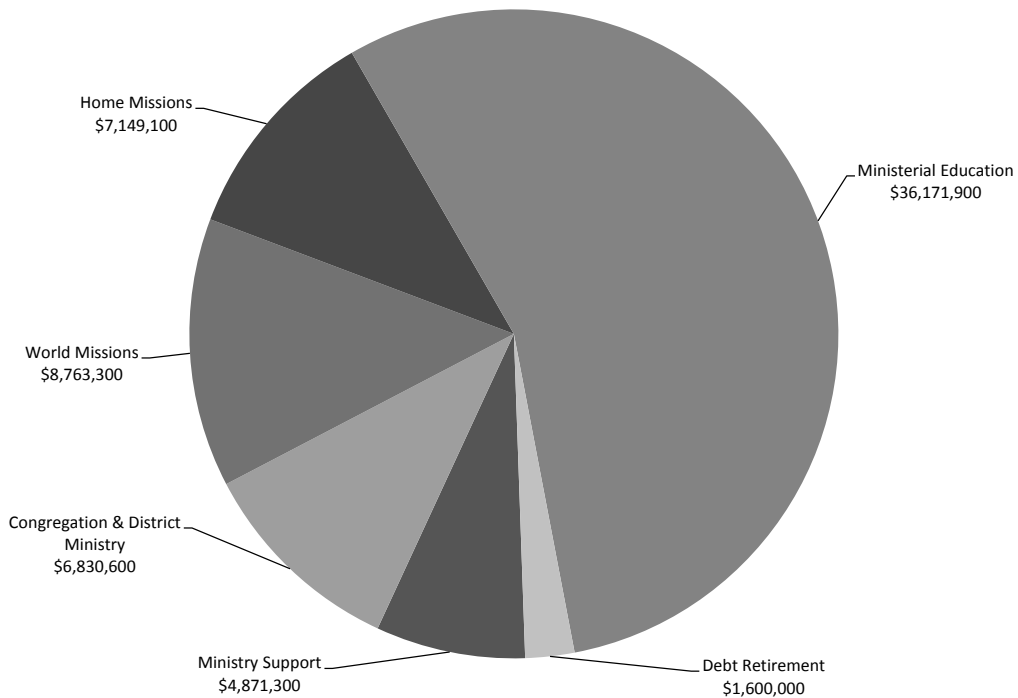
FY 2013–14 Synod Operating Support Allocation
\$29,062,100



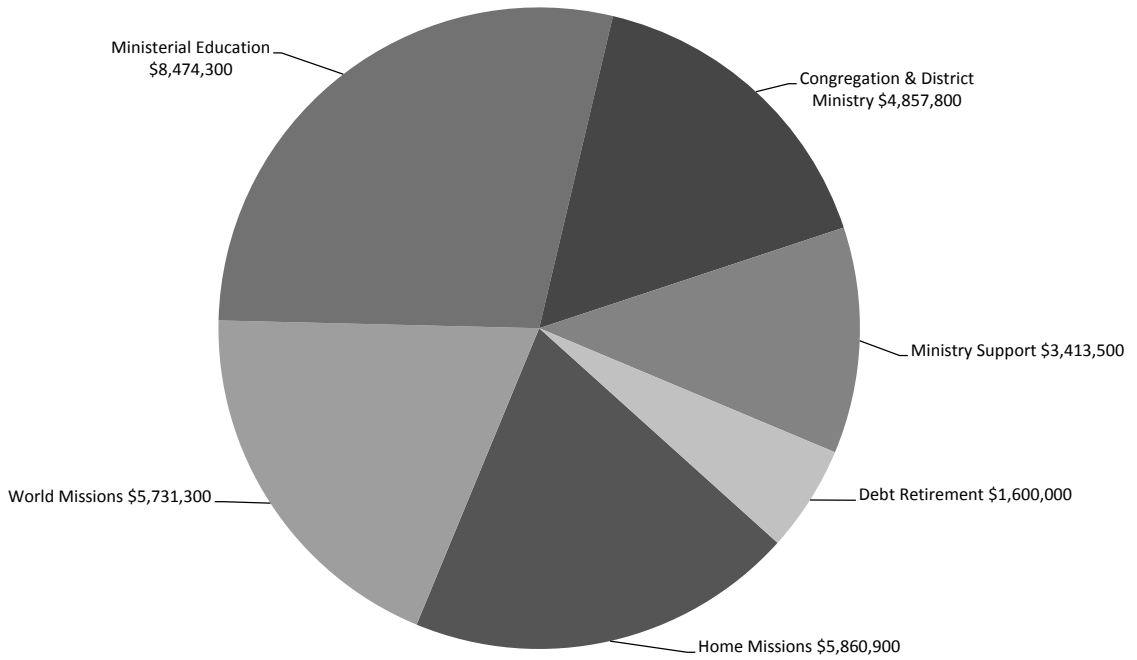
**FY 2014–15 Total Ministry Plan Support
\$65,386,200**



**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	15,635	16,346	17,056	17,767	18,478	19,189
Range Spread	14,214	14,924	15,635	16,346	17,056	17,767	18,478	19,189
Service Incr.	474	497	522	546	571	594	619	643
Ranges	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Experience								
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. 132 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	14,998	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
Service Incr.	476	500	525	549	573	597	622	646
Ranges	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Experience								
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. 132 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."

Board for World Missions

Floor Committee #9

Our calling

The motto that is currently used to define the synod's work is "Christ's Love, Our Calling." God's love in Christ is extended to the entire world as clearly indicated in John 3:16, which states, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son." In keeping with that love and the assignment given by the synod's constitution, the Board for World Missions has as its calling "... the responsibility of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ for the discipling of all people living outside the United States of America and Canada and those people who, because of cultural barriers, have not been made the responsibility of other agencies of WELS" (WELS Bylaws, Sec. 6.1). The Lord has promised blessing with the proclamation of his Word, and once again those blessings are evident.

Our current situation

World Missions is serving 80,176 baptized souls in the 23 fields where WELS is doing mission work. This is not including the approximate 36,000 who are being served in seed-sowing ministries in Asia and Africa, but who have not been fully organized into congregations or national churches. Worldwide the national churches field 149 pastors, 34 student pastors, 30 vicars, and 192 evangelists who serve the spiritual needs of 520 congregations and 194 preaching stations. The expatriate missionary force numbers 42 full-time missionaries and 8.5 teachers. Sixty-nine lay workers are also presently serving in various fields.

Statistics are reported online and have been divided into two categories: 1) church planting efforts that involve resident missionaries and 2) alternate strategies where outreach and ministry are done through assistance offered in areas of the world where WELS has no resident missionary. To access statistics, e-mail carolyn.feltner@wels.net. Information concerning independent sister churches who receive specialized help from WELS can be found in the report of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (p. 11).

The work of World Missions is overseen by seven reorganized administrative committees. They are the

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

The administrative committees consist of pastors, teachers, and laymen who volunteer to manage and facilitate the work of the world fields assigned to them. The 31 administrative committee members are appointed by the Board for World Missions and are accountable to the board for the activities in their respective fields. The reorganized five-man Board for World Missions was authorized by the 2007 synod convention. It consists of two pastors, one teacher, and two laymen who are elected by the synod in convention. The restructuring has been a blessing in enabling the board to do strategic planning and, when necessary, to make strategic decisions and move resources rapidly.

Expansion

Over the past two years exploratory visits were conducted in Bolivia and Haiti. The explorations were prompted by the interest of people desiring the gospel in these areas. Whatever new expansion the Board for World Missions authorizes can only be enabled at this time by the deployment of manpower and resources from existing areas and/or the use of alternate forms of mission outreach. Special Funds were used to ensure a four-year commitment to a sorely needed fourth professor at Asia Lutheran Seminary. That position has now been filled.

Initiatives for cross-cultural outreach have also been developed in collaboration with the Board for Home Missions and the Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI) at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. They include the formation of Cristo

Palabra de Vida (Christ Word of Life) for Hispanic/Latino outreach, the calling of two Asian Pastoral Studies Institute graduates to do mission development in Indochina, and a program to promote and facilitate outreach to Muslims in the United States and around the world. Further details on these latter developments can be found in the report of the Joint Mission Council (p. 147).

Noteworthy activities

Nepal and Pakistan

Since 2002 a total of 15 Bible-storying workshops have been conducted in Nepal with advanced students progressing to the Bible institute stage. Since many in Nepal are illiterate, the catechism is being taught through Bible stories. Trained nationals are now participating in the teaching, and congregations are being formed through the efforts of those who take the Word back to their respective places of residence. All told the number of people being reached in Nepal through WELS materials and those trained by WELS is now more than 20,000 in the Scripture learning program and reaches into 29 of the 75 districts of the country. World Missions is working closely with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's Pastoral Studies Institute to find ways to advance training of a select few to the Bible institute and seminary stages. After seven years, more than 400,000 pieces of literature have been distributed in Nepal. Through baptisms and ongoing training of leaders in Scripture, a confessional Lutheran church has been formed that numbers more than 4,000 souls.

In Pakistan more than 36,000 students have now been enrolled in the Bible Correspondence and Teaching School courses. Most of these numbers are children being trained in Christian schools of other denominations, although close to 3,000 of these courses are distributed to villages by workers via bicycles. This effort, begun in 2006, has now resulted in the distribution of 207,000 pieces of literature in this Muslim country. The requests for WELS materials have been huge since no other mission agency has provided materials for children that have the Urdu translation and graphic illustrations like those provided through WELS Multi-Language Publications. Through Bible workshops and Christian instruction via the Internet, our Pakistani contact, his immediate family, and a significant number of his staff have been confirmed as Lutherans. A small confessional Lutheran church in that country now numbers 40 communicants. This small church has been at the forefront of outreach through medical clinics and flood relief efforts at which Christian literature is distributed. World Missions is continually uplifted by this courageous witness of the Christian community in Pakistan in the face of heavy Muslim opposition.

Chinese outreach

Outreach to the Chinese people, the most populous ethnic grouping on earth, has received priority status in the World Missions program since 2003. Three major emphases in this work are:

1. Education—Since the 2009 synod in convention encouraged the study of Mandarin, a committee, consisting of representatives from all four ministerial education schools, has set forth a program enabling Mandarin language study for ministerial students and providing courses that offer more awareness of eastern culture and history. A Chinese culture and Mandarin course began at Martin Luther College in the 2012–13 academic year. It is taught by an instructor from China. Twenty-nine students in the pre-seminary program attended the first semester courses on eastern culture and history. Sixteen students are currently enrolled in the elementary Mandarin classes being offered in the second semester. Outreach is also being done through teaching English as a foreign language. There are currently around 55 teachers, many of them graduates of Martin Luther College, who are teaching English language courses and sharing the gospel with inquiring students on off hours in eastern Asia.
2. Literature—the production of appropriate religious materials in Chinese. A major effort to produce and publish Chinese Christian materials is currently taking place in Hong Kong. The material provided through the Translation Working Group provides Chinese materials for seminary and Bible institute training as well as outreach materials for congregations.
3. Theological training—of pastors and layworkers for outreach and ministry to the Chinese. Asia Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong trains workers for gospel outreach to Chinese-speaking peoples in the surrounding region.

Innovative theological education

If our Christian beliefs and Lutheran confessional message are to impact the world, it will be done in part by training as many national pastors, lay leaders, and theological professors as possible. In recent years creative approaches and new technological developments have greatly enhanced WELS' ability to train others. The Latin America Traveling Theological Educators (LATTE) program provides faculty mobility for teaching pastoral students in countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean. The Apache Christian Training School provides ministerial training for adults on both the San Carlos and White Mountain Reservations. It is currently offering about 60 Apaches the

opportunity of instruction for service in forms of ministry that might not otherwise be available to them. In Africa, the Greater Africa Theological Studies Institute has provided an avenue for gifted pastors to continue their education. Regional seminaries such as Asia Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong train workers for vast areas of the world. Extended learning courses can be delivered through technology to remote areas where WELS missionaries cannot go. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's Pastoral Studies Institute is working with World Missions to certify the training provided in other theological education programs and world seminaries as well as to train ethnic pastors in the United States for missionary work overseas. The addition of a World Missions seminary professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary who is financed by World Missions enables teaching visitations and curriculum development at national church seminaries around the world. This position will help to pioneer educational possibilities for distant locations.

Publications

An ongoing publishing push for Christian literature, evangelism tools, Bible study materials, and theological courses in a variety of languages is a major emphasis in World Missions. Most of this work is coordinated through the Board for World Missions' Multi-Language Publications (MLP) Committee. A full list of the publications can be found in the Multi-Language Publications Catalog or online at www.nph.net. The work of MLP is foundational for cost-effective evangelism and training in the many diverse and remote areas of the world and more so in light of missionary shortages. MLP materials also provide communication tools for cross-cultural work being done in established and mission congregations in the United States. During the biennium both an Asian publications and a digital publications coordinator position were added to the MLP program. The Asian publications coordinator, Pastor Brad Wordell, still serves as a half-time missionary to Japan, but the funding of his position was prioritized by the BWM because of the tremendous need for translated materials in the expanding Asian fields. The digital publications coordinator is part of the staff at the MLP office in El Paso, Texas, and was added to provide more materials in digital form and to enhance existing materials with graphics and audio media for the sake of the illiterate. In October 2012 an Asian Publications Conference was held in Hong Kong in which Lutheran translation teams representing 13 countries and 15 languages were given instruction in how to better facilitate the translation, editing, and distribution of Bible-related materials.

Sustained fellowship with independent churches

As increasing numbers of national churches approach independent, sister-church status, positioning for the future will require a plan for maintaining a healthy, ongoing fellowship and partnership with them. To that end the Board for World Missions and the Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) have developed guidelines by which the working relationship of emerging national churches can be transferred from World Missions to the Commission on Inter-Church Relations.

The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) was established to provide a forum in which sister church bodies and emerging national churches could gather around Scripture for mutual support, fellowship, and encouragement in reaching the lost. The conference celebrated its sixth triennial conference in New Ulm and Mankato, Minn., on June 4–6, 2011. There were delegates representing 24 churches, with guests attending from another 12 Lutheran church bodies. The next triennial gathering will take place in Lima, Peru, in 2014 .

Safety and security concerns

Several countries in which WELS has operated have been identified as very high risk for problems like kidnapping and possible accidental or intentional executions by criminals and extremists. Included among these are Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan. World Missions continues to work with insurers and professional security agents to constantly monitor circumstances in dangerous countries. The goal is to carry out the work and yet minimize as much as possible any significant dangers to WELS workers and national church leaders.

A look ahead

It appears World Missions will be able to enter the next biennium reasonably confident that its current program can be sustained. Making this possible, however, is the heavy commitment of its special funds, which, unless generously replenished, may ultimately result in further significant reduction of programs after the biennium is over. World Missions commits the future of the program to the Lord in prayer. With the world's population at 7 billion and a steady growth of around 80 million souls annually, Board for World Missions' members are convinced that there has never been a larger mission field or greater opportunity to spread the gospel than right now. When considering those who don't know Jesus, World Missions cannot help but come to the conclusion that by far the greatest number of them are in countries other than the United States. If WELS members are looking at the Lord's leading in events around us, we cannot overlook the fact that, in spite of discouraging developments in the church and world, the Lord has greatly blessed our church body's efforts to reach out to peoples of other nations and cultures. The 33,642 souls

in our world mission fellowship in 1990 have more than doubled to more than 80,000 today, and if we added the people who are currently willing to be under WELS' spiritual guidance there are more than 100,000 who need to be further nurtured, trained, and empowered to reach out to those around them. Some of World Missions' plans to accomplish as much as it can with limited resources include indigenization and alternate strategies.

Confessional Lutheran churches

The purpose of World Missions is to plant and establish confessional Lutheran churches. Therefore progress in World Missions can be seen in terms of opening new fields as well as in phasing missionaries out of existing fields after the foundation for a self-dependent church has been laid. Whenever a solid foundation is laid by teaching the whole counsel of God, it is vital to encourage the national church to become increasingly self-disciplining, self-administering, self-propagating, and self-supporting within the context of its own culture. Wherever there is national ownership of the gospel work, the work moves forward at a better pace and ultimately enables WELS manpower and resources to be redeployed elsewhere for the spread of the gospel.

Alternate strategies

The Board for World Missions and its administrative committees are committed to using cost-effective, alternate mission strategies to achieve objectives wherever feasible. These alternatives can either supplement or, in some instances, replace the more traditional, long-term, resident missionary-team approach used in the past. The following is only a sampling of some of these alternate, cost-effective strategies. Many are financed through special funds.

- Short-term visitation teams (for theological training, nurturing fellowship, limited projects/goals)
- English as a second language (ESL)/English as a foreign language (EFL) (as a supplement to outreach)
- Laity who travel, work, or manage overseas businesses for assistance in mission outreach
- Providing printed religious materials and Bible study courses
- Humanitarian aid (as a form of outreach to less accessible countries)
- Outreach to internationals on United States campuses
- Seed-sowing ministries (radio, TV, satellite, literature, Web sites)
- Regional seminaries and traveling theological education teams
- Sabbatical programs that include active and retired professors, pastors, and teachers
- Seminary exchange programs
- Extended education programs that use technology whenever feasible
- Providing Bible and Bible commentary translations

Christian Aid and Relief

The Board for World Missions is particularly enthused about the possibilities of working in partnership with WELS Christian Aid and Relief. This collaboration enables rapid response for disaster relief in areas where WELS has missionaries and national churches. The goodwill that such prompt help elicits is often enormous—and crucial in lands openly hostile to the gospel. Christian Aid and Relief will also provide opportunity for following up in some disaster areas with continued assistance and gospel proclamation, even after first responders have departed. World Missions is proceeding cautiously in countries like Haiti and Pakistan to use humanitarian assistance as a bridge for gospel witness. This approach has already been greatly blessed in countries like India, Indonesia, and Nepal.

Technology

The prospect of using technology to leverage WELS' theological education programs is also anticipated. Given the variety of countries in which WELS works, determining how to do extended education and/or distance learning in each remains a challenge. Most teaching missionaries have taken an Internet class provided by Martin Luther College that offers instruction on how to design and construct online courses. There have been meetings with instructional technologists from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Wisconsin Lutheran College to discuss technological teaching possibilities with BWM representatives. A list serve has been created for the exchange of ideas amongst missionaries and stateside educators. The rapid development of different forms of technology raises hopes but also requires much study before significant investment is made. A conference on Media in World Missions was held in October 2012 at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minn., and the forum identified both the opportunities for gospel proclamation provided by new technologies and new equipment and the significant issues involved with their use such as finances, supporting structure, networking, and legal and security issues.

Volunteerism

The use of both long-term (a year or more) and short-term (2 weeks to 3 months) volunteers in world mission fields

is a trend that is on the rise. Short-term volunteerism, enabled by self-funding efforts and on-field coordinators, is significantly increasing. People from congregations throughout the synod have been able to use their skills and talents in an on-field experience that opens their eyes to the great mission challenge our church faces. Facilitating the greater share of volunteer efforts is Kingdom Workers (KW), which recruits, trains, and places volunteers onto fields that have full-time KW coordinators who take the administrative and organizational duties off the shoulders of the missionaries. Kingdom Workers has also increased its professional staff of workers to recruit and orient volunteers and to serve missions with planning outreach programs that include English as a foreign language/English as a second language, building projects, vacation Bible schools, and humanitarian efforts for the poor and disabled.

The World Missions team continues to seek the prayers, interest, and support of all the members of WELS for the work of reaching the world's lost, which is at the very core of our synod's mission. May our Lord bless our calling in regard to worldwide gospel outreach so that as many souls as possible might know Christ's love.

Rev. Dan Koelpin, reporter

Rev. Larry M. Schlomer, chairman

Dr. Robert Anderson, secretary

Rev. Howard Mohlke

Mr. Mark Schulz

Mr. Danny Wehmeyer

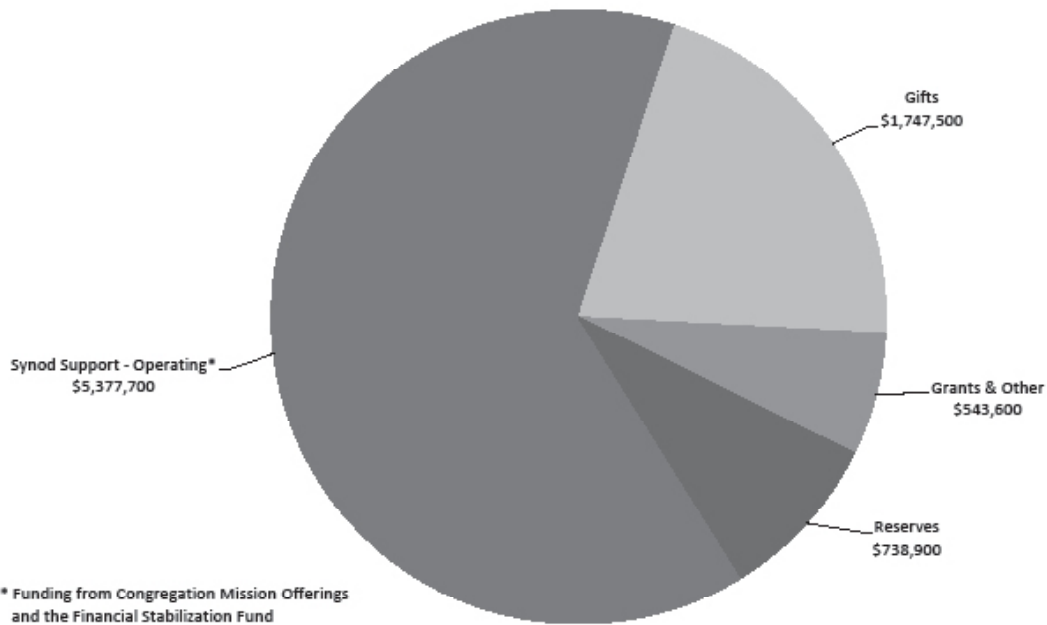
Advisory:

Rev. Dan Koelpin, administrator of WELS Board for World Missions

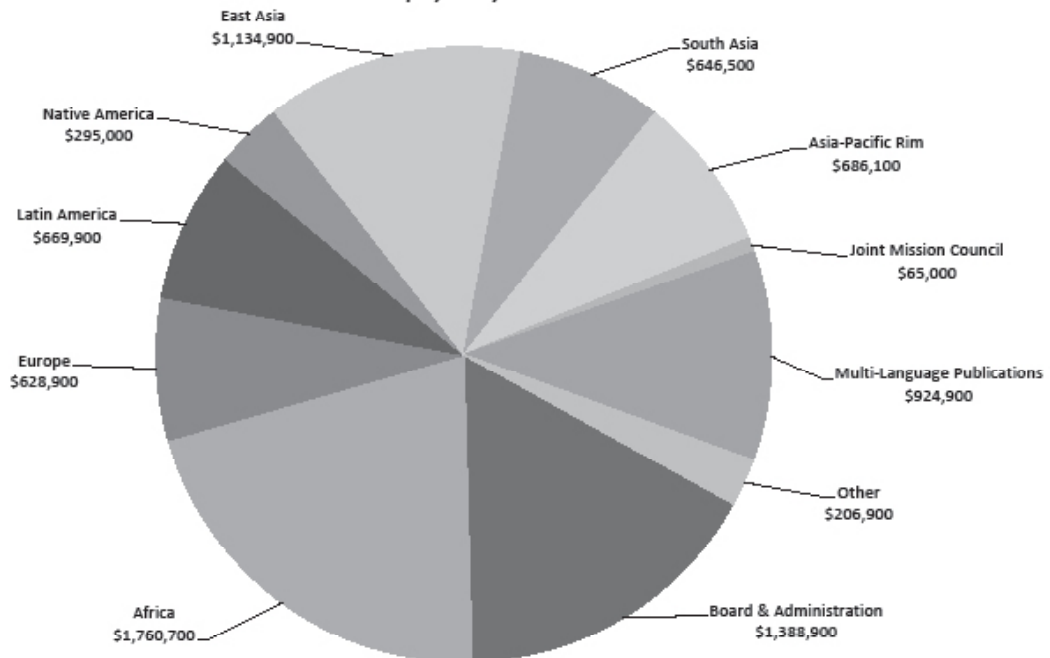
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Mr. Sean Young, director of WELS Missions Operations

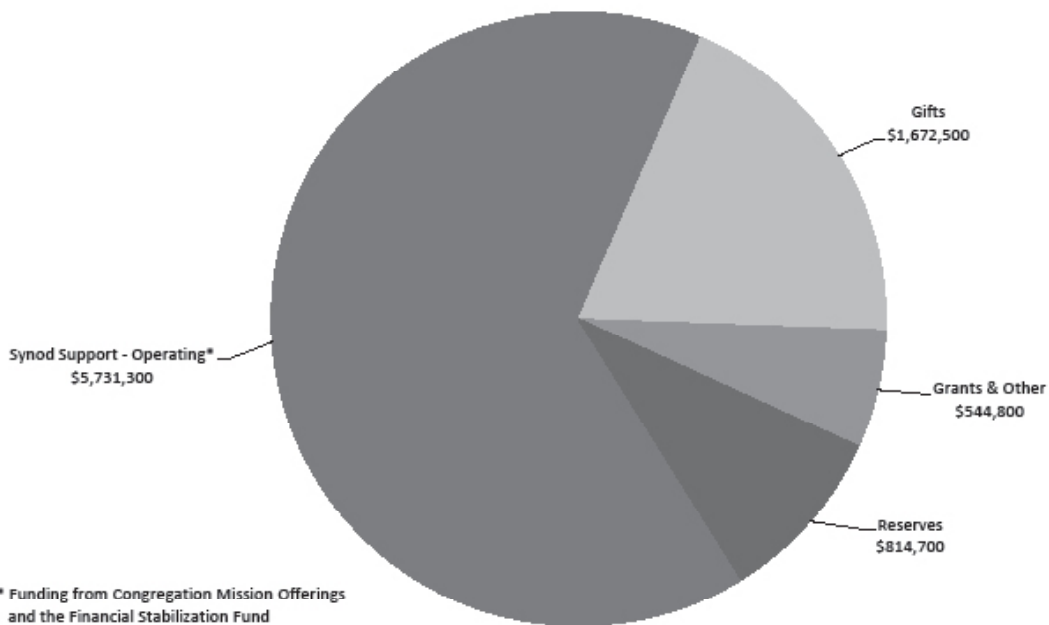
**FY 2013–14 Support
World Missions
\$8,407,700**



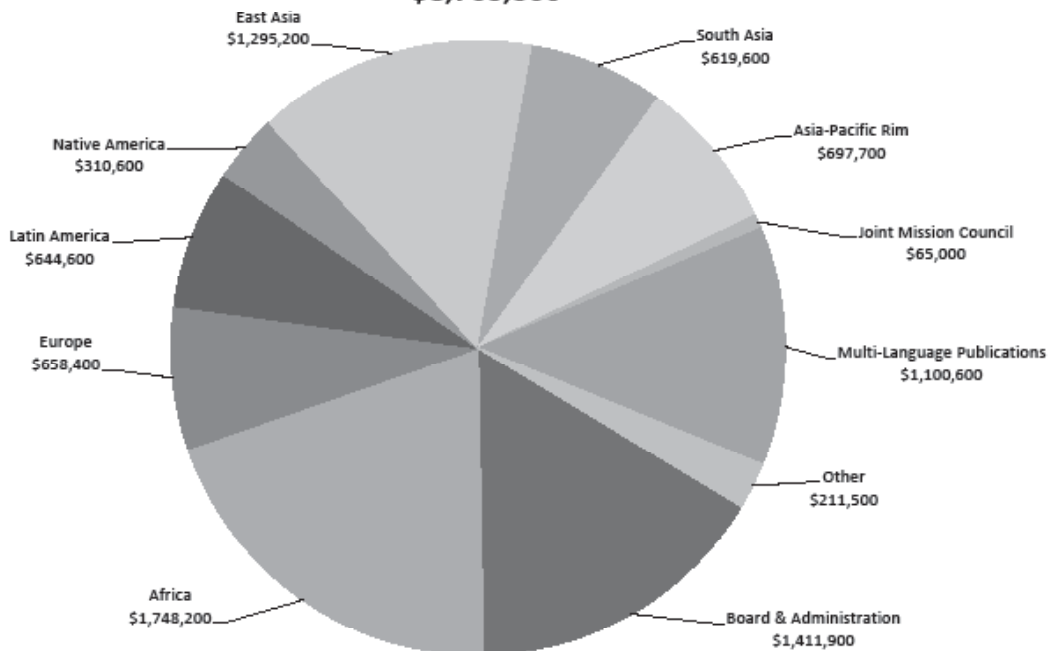
**FY 2013–14 Expenses
World Missions
\$8,407,700**



**FY 2014–15 Support
World Missions
\$8,763,300**



**FY 2014–15 Expenses
World Missions
\$8,763,300**



Board for Home Missions

Floor Committee #10

Our calling

Through the past 50 years the Board for Home Missions (BHM) has authorized 585 missions. Through the work of Home Missions, our church body has been blessed to see the gospel taken to souls who need to hear about Jesus Christ. By God's grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, we know we are his children. By his directive, we know we are to tell others the great things our God has done. We thank the Lord for allowing us to continue starting mission churches.

We work with various partners to accomplish our goal of starting mission churches. Through 13 district mission boards, Home Missions works with dedicated and faithful volunteers promoting the cause of missions. Through the partnerships with WELS Church Extension Fund, Kingdom Workers, Lutheran Women's Missionary Society, and Multi-Language Publications, Home Missions receives much appreciated support. Through the ministry of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and the Pastoral Studies Institute, men from various ethnic backgrounds are trained to serve in gospel ministry. Many of these men serve in Home Mission settings. It is a pleasure to serve with such gifted and dedicated partners, all working together to see that the gospel of Jesus Christ reaches many more souls.

Our current situation

The past two springs (2011 and 2012), we give thanks to the Lord of the Church that Home Missions was able to authorize a total of six new missions. In the spring of 2011 there were 18 requests for new starts/new ministry totaling close to \$1.2 million. The Board for Home Missions Executive Committee approved ministries totaling \$411,000. New missions were started in Morristown, Tenn.; Moncks Corner, S.C.; Leamington, Ontario, Canada; and Vail, Ariz. In the spring of 2012 there were 15 requests for new starts/new ministry totaling just more than \$800,000. The Board for Home Missions Executive Committee approved ministries totaling just more than \$400,000. New missions were started in Lafayette, Ind., and Laramie, Wyo.

In that same time, 13 ministries (Anglo, Hispanic, Hmong, Korean) received financial support from Home Missions (enhancement phase). This support enabled three congregations to have a full-time pastor in gospel ministry. This support assisted three congregations to pay the full salary of their pastor. Two churches were able to call a second pastor. For five ministries, the extra support allowed them to do more gospel outreach. Overall, this additional support was granted to assist these congregations in reaching more souls with the gospel of Christ Jesus.

Through the Home Missions budget and divisional funds, 68 ministries receive financial support. Another 108 congregations are classified as mission congregations due to their loans with WELS Church Extension Fund. Below is a breakdown of the missions receiving subsidy.

- 10 ministries in the establishment phase (exploratory)
- 24 ministries in the development phase (mission status)
- 10 ministries in the enhancement phase
- 24 cross-cultural ministries (either a language other than English makes up or is a part of their ministry or the ministry is a multi-cultural congregation)

Home Missions also supports campus ministries throughout the United States. In addition to serving our WELS college students, some of the campuses have active international ministries.

In our synod's cross-cultural work, outreach to Hmong and Hispanic are receiving the greatest level of financial support. Four Hmong ministries receive financial support. Overall nine Hmong pastors serve 700 souls in nine locations. Thirteen Hispanic ministries receive financial support. Overall twelve Anglo and one Hispanic pastor serve. In addition to district mission boards, the Hmong Asian Committee supports outreach to Hmong communities. This committee is comprised of two Hmong pastors and two Anglo pastors. Pastor Keith Free, administrator of WELS Home Missions, serves as chairman. The National Hispanic Consultant, Pastor Tim Flunker, works with the Cristo Palabra De Vida National Council in addition to his work with district mission boards.

To encourage and continue to educate the cross-cultural ministries, an annual Hmong/Anglo Pastor Conference takes place in the fall at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Every two years the Hispanic ministries gather.

At the September 2010 meeting the BHM voted to operate under a regional structure for two years. During this period of time, while each district mission board kept its form and function, district mission boards were grouped together in regions to help facilitate training, to encourage accountability, and to assist in mission efforts.

At the September 2012 BHM meeting, it was decided to return to the district structure. After serving in this format the majority felt it added a layer of structure. It also was seen as difficult for Home Missions to effectively do its work with just four regions. Some positive aspects of the regional structure will be retained. An annual training meeting will continue. We feel that the ongoing training of our district board personnel is critical to our work.

In Home Missions we are thankful for the talented, hard working Missions Operations staff. The staff keeps things running smoothly. Over the past 11 years Mr. Mel Schuler helped coordinate Missions Operations. At first he served in Home Missions. Starting in 2008 he also began to serve World Missions. Schuler retired at the end of June 2012. We thank him for his faithful service. Replacing Schuler is Mr. Sean Young. Young began his service in May 2012. He has been acclimating well in serving the multi-faceted needs of both World and Home Missions. The BHM chairman is Pastor Chuck Westra. In addition to serving as BHM chairman, Westra serves at Christ Our Savior, Columbia, Tenn. We are blessed to have his passion for gospel ministry. Home Missions also is blessed with three mission counselors: Pastors Mark Birkholz, Peter Kruschel, and Edward Schuppe. These men serve full time giving their sage advice to mission pastors and congregations. They also serve us in researching mission models and strategies to reach out with the gospel in an ever-changing world. Above all they help Home Missions keep its focus on reaching the lost.

While Home Missions appreciates every partner who helps support its work, it works most closely with the Church Extension Fund. Without its active support in providing loans and grants to mission congregations, it would be much more difficult for the majority of mission congregations to buy land and/or build their first worship facility. Through the mission heart of the Church Extension Fund staff and board of directors, Home Missions has seen blessing after blessing in Home Missions gospel ministry. Since 1993 when the grant program began, more than \$25 million in grants has been received by mission congregations. This astounding figure illustrates the value of our partnership.

In February 2011 the Church Extension Fund Board of Directors granted Home Missions a \$1 million grant to help mission congregations buy land or build a worship facility. Three of the missions have dedicated new worship facilities: Peace in Jesus, Boise, Idaho; Amazing Love, Frankfurt (had been New Lenox), Ill.; and Trinity, Woodbridge, Va. Beautiful Savior, Moncks Corner, S.C., has bought land and is beginning construction on a worship facility. Spirit of Life, Caledonia, Mich., is scheduled to start construction in March 2013. Christ, Denver, Colo., is using the grant to assist in covering remodeling costs of its worship facility/ministry center.

Mr. Ron Hillmann is the new Church Extension Fund president. He began serving in December 2012. He replaced Mr. Jim Buelow who retired Dec. 31, 2012. We thank Buelow for his 12-plus years of service. We pray the Lord bless Hillman as he serves in this new capacity.

A look ahead

In conjunction with the synod's 2017 long-range plan, the BHM authorized a Strategic Planning Task Force. At the fall 2012 BHM meeting, the task force shared a draft of its work. Since that meeting, the Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents have reviewed the document. Seven vision goals make up the heart of the document. The task force is looking at those vision goals to help direct Home Missions for the next five to seven years. At the spring BHM meeting, the task force will bring the document to the BHM for its approval. Just as important, though, the task force will offer directives as to how the document can be put into action by our district mission boards.

Thinking about one of the proposed vision goals of the strategic plan, Pastor Keith Free put together a short document for a fall 2012 mission conference in Wisconsin Dells relating to a "vision" for the upper Midwest districts. Working with WELS Evangelism Director Michael Hintz, encouragement was given to the district mission boards in Michigan, Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin, Southeastern Wisconsin, and Western Wisconsin and their respective evangelism commissions to work together in helping foster a mission mindset in their respective districts. Further planning has taken place since that proposal. While we recognize that the work of district mission boards and evangelism commissions are unique from one another, they are able to work together to encourage a mission mindset. Congregations interested in second site ministry or starting a mission can work with their district mission board. Congregations looking to enhance their evangelism ministry can work with their district's evangelism commission.

As district mission boards serve congregations that are looking to start a mission or a daughter congregation, there is a document that will help them through the process. Mission Counselor Peter Kruschel has put together a document titled "Who Will Go? We Will Go!" This document can assist congregations going through the process of looking to start a mission in an orderly and systematic way. For more information, visit <https://connect.wels.net/home-missions>.

WELS-Canada, a separately incorporated organization of WELS congregations, moved a step closer to becoming a mission district in summer 2012. The Dakota-Montana and North Atlantic Districts approved the Canadian mission congregations in their districts being under a WELS-Canada Mission Board pending approval at the 2013 synod convention (the mission congregations would still be under their respective districts for doctrine and practice). If approved, WELS-Canada would be WELS' fourteenth mission district. A lot of work has gone into taking this step. And while we certainly realize it is the Lord and not a structure or another mission board that brings souls into the kingdom of God, we pray that this will assist our brothers in Canada to reach more souls with Jesus' gospel.

Through the past years Home Missions faced some financially challenging times (as did all WELS divisions). The Home Missions portion of the synod budget dropped significantly. We had to cut subsidy from some existing missions. The number of new mission starts was limited as we used limited resources to support mission efforts already in place. As stated earlier in this report, we are thankful that we have been able to authorize six missions over the past two years. At this time, as Home Missions looks at the currently proposed synod allocation to Home Missions, we believe we may be able to authorize up to ten missions in the spring of 2013 and another six to ten in the spring of 2014. We are thankful for all these blessings. We are thankful for our many partners who work together with us in this gospel work. Above all we are thankful to our Lord for allowing us to work toward this end. Through all our endeavors, may the name of the Lord Jesus Christ be glorified.

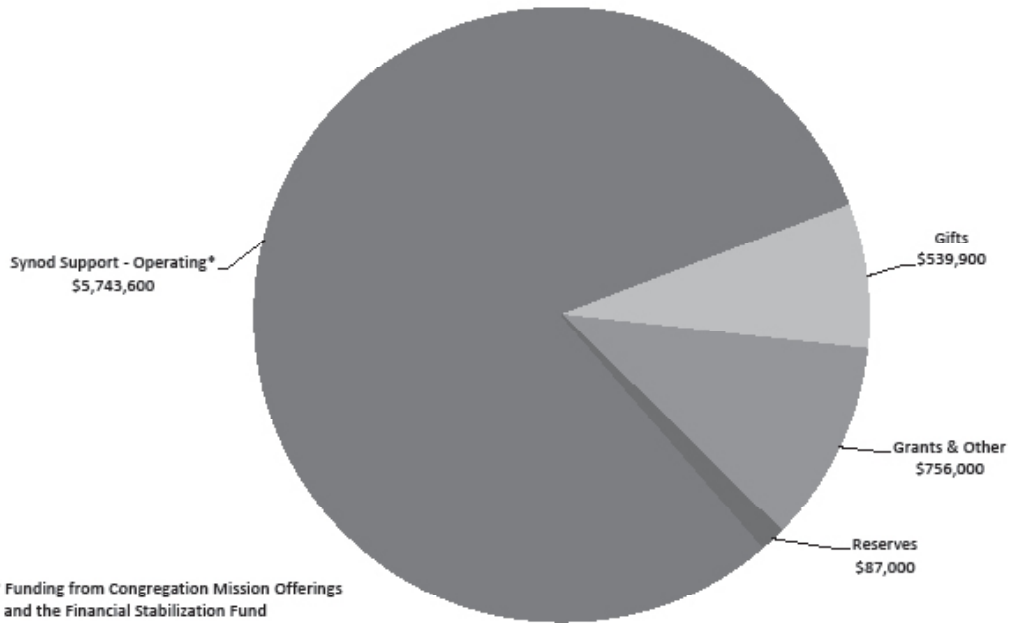
Rev. Keith Free, reporter

Rev. Charles Westra, chairman
Mr. John Beeskow, Michigan Mission District
Mr. Bruce Burger, Nebraska Mission District
Rev. John Dorn, Northern Wisconsin Mission District
Dr. Keith Eldred, Colorado Mission District
Rev. Jerome Enderle, North Atlantic Mission District
Dr. August Gabert, Pacific Northwest Mission District
Rev. Jeremy Glowicki, Minnesota Mission District
Mr. Thomas Hansen, Dakota-Montana Mission District
Rev. Jonathan Hein, South Atlantic Mission District
Rev. Stephen Helwig, Nebraska Mission District
Mr. Jesse Huggins, Arizona-California Mission District
Mr. John Isleb, Southeastern Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. Steven Kalscheuer, Western Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. Daniel Kemnitz, Northern Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Robert Krueger, Michigan Mission District
Mr. Paul Mattek, South Central Mission District
Mr. David Neumann, North Atlantic Mission District
Mr. David Sauer, Minnesota Mission District
Rev. Lloyd Schlomer, Dakota-Montana Mission District
Rev. Caleb Schoeneck, South Central Mission District
Mr. Donald Schuppe, South Atlantic Mission District
Rev. Douglas Semenske, Southeastern Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Nathan Strutz, Western Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Wayne Uhlhorn, Colorado Mission District
Rev. Matthew Vogt, Arizona-California Mission District
Rev. Craig Wasser, Pacific Northwest Mission District

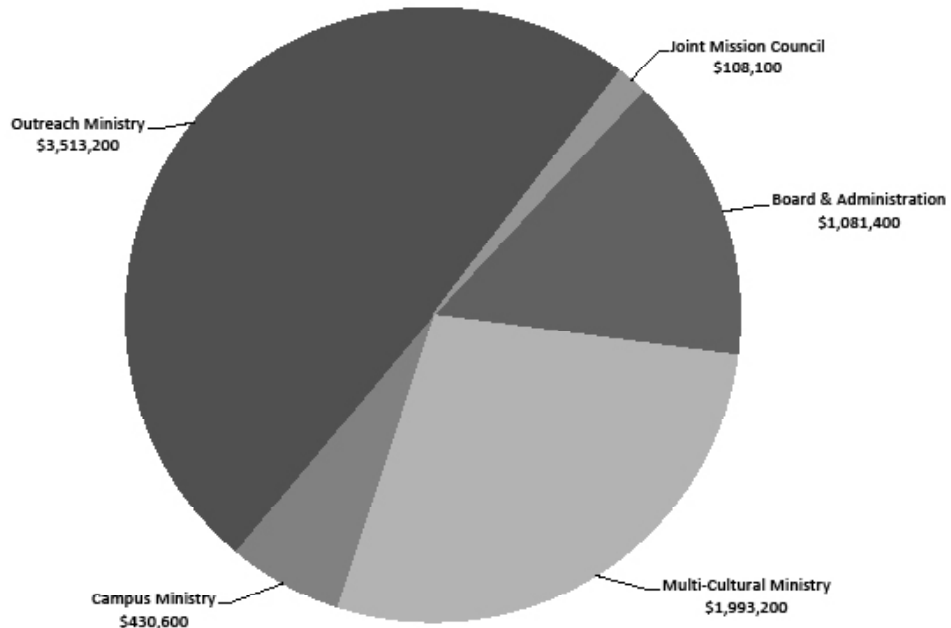
Advisory:

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

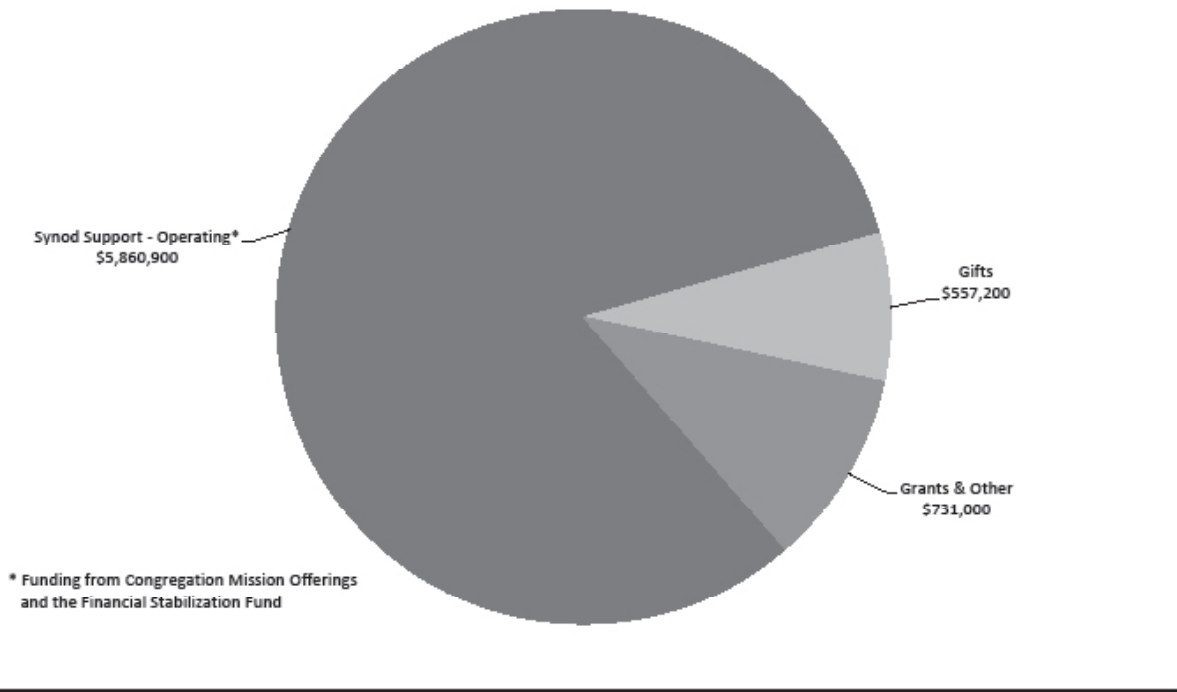
**FY 2013–14 Support
Home Missions
\$7,126,500**



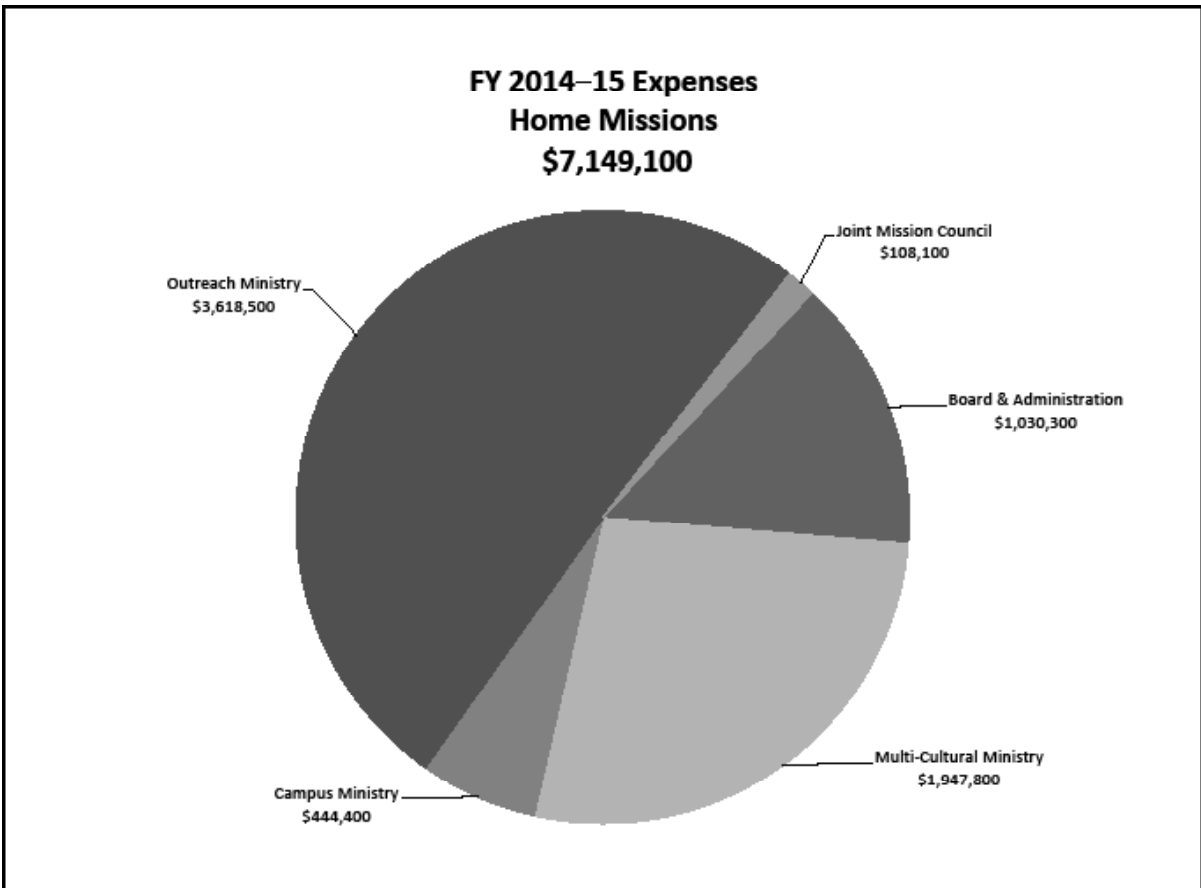
**FY 2013–14 Expenses
Home Missions
\$7,126,500**



**FY 2014–15 Support
Home Missions
\$7,149,100**



**FY 2014–15 Expenses
Home Missions
\$7,149,100**



Joint Mission Council

Floor Committees #9 and #10

Our calling

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

The present focus of the Joint Mission Council is to

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

Our current situation

The director of Missions Operations, Mr. Mel Schuler, retired at the end of June 2012. From mid-May until his retirement he worked closely with his replacement, Mr. Sean Young, to introduce him to the role of director of Missions Operations and how the Joint Mission Council functions as a council to both the Boards for World and Home Missions. We sincerely thank Schuler for his years of service, and with that transition occurring over the summer of 2012, the JMC did not meet.

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

Hmong ministries

The Thailand-Laos Oversight Committee that was formed in 2010 under the JMC became part of the Asia-Pacific Rim Administrative Committee of the Board for World Missions at the April 2012 JMC meeting because the operational conflicts that were occurring were resolved. The JMC continues to monitor the ministry alongside the Asia-Pacific Rim Administrative Committee.

Pastor Ken Pasch, the field coordinator in Thailand for World Missions, lives in Chiang Rai, Thailand, and takes a yearly trip back to the United States. He works closely with our Hmong brothers through the Hmong Asian Committee of the Board for Home Missions since there are strong connecting links between the two. Much of the mission work in the hill tribe villages was started by U.S. Hmong pastors back in 1993 and beyond (Pasch came on board in 2010).

That partnership—Thailand outreach and U.S. Hmong ministry—continued with a trip to visit Pasch in Thailand in February 2013 for Pastor Pheng Moua and his wife (Immanuel, Minneapolis, Minn.) and Pastor Bonkeo Lor and his wife (Grace, Kansas City, Mo.). The purpose of the visit was for encouragement and to review print and digital resources in order to create a uniform outreach communication tool for use both in Thailand and the United States.

Cristo Palabra de Vida

As the Cristo Palabra de Vida National Council continues to help congregations plan, develop, and implement outreach plans to reach the Hispanic population in their immediate vicinity, another facet of work among the Hispanic has been developed by the council. The council also works with the congregations already doing work among Hispanics, both those supported by Home Missions and those congregations not receiving any financial support, by providing leadership in two areas.

One of those areas is lay leadership training. Starting in 2013, the National Hispanic Council will coordinate regional leadership training workshops in four or five areas of the United States. The workshop provides a hands-on training session that will help the lay leaders of the Hispanic congregations improve their skills and abilities to help their pastor in doing ministry in their congregations. Right now the council is determining where and when the workshops

will take place. Costs for the conferences will be covered by the individual participants. The National Hispanic Council will attempt to place the workshops in areas where several congregations can drive to attend and set the agenda for the workshops.

The other area is to facilitate a biennial Hispanic pastors conference by searching for a location, securing a grant to help cover the costs, setting the agenda, securing the worship leaders, and directing the conference. The most recent conference was held at Christ the Lord, Houston, Texas, and was attended by 24 pastors, one deaconess, and one vicar.

The National Hispanic Council is looking to establish a pattern that in the odd years (2013, 2015, etc.) it will provide the workshops and potentially a summer quarter week at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. In the even years (2012, 2014, etc.), it will sponsor the pastors conference.

The National Hispanic Council continues to watch the two men in the Pastoral Studies Institute's Cristo Palabra de Vida who are working as vicars this year. Both men are set to graduate from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in May 2013 and will be presented to the Assignment Committee.

Muslim outreach

Pastor Pieter Reid accepted the call to be the Muslim outreach coordinator on April 11, 2012. His official transfer from the Indonesian field to his present call occurred on July 1, 2012. This position is being funded jointly by the Joint Mission Council and the Board for World Missions through fiscal year 2016–17. Reid has begun working to identify areas that have a Muslim ethnic base that can be developed into mission fields and is also working on developing outreach material that can be used by congregations in their effort to reach those souls that need to be saved.

Sudanese outreach

The Lord continues to bless the outreach opportunities in Des Moines, Iowa, to reach Sudanese refugees with the gospel. This work has spread to Omaha, Neb., through Good Shepherd, our WELS congregation there. Mr. Peter Bur, who is a Sudanese immigrant, came to America as a refugee because of a five-decade-old struggle for independence that has cost the lives of millions in the Sudan.

For more than 20 years Bur has been the spiritual leader of a group of Christian Sudanese immigrants who have managed to stay together through many moves. Bur and his fellow Sudanese began to grow concerned when they observed that the practice of the church to which they belonged did not agree with the teaching of the scriptures. That's when Bur's friend encouraged him to reach out to Good Shepherd. On July 31, 2012, 21 Sudanese were confirmed. Sept. 9, 2012, marked the one-year anniversary of their first Sudanese worship service, conducted solely in their native Nuer language. Today a group numbering 40 souls is under the spiritual care of Good Shepherd.

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

Asia Publications Conference

In an effort to continue effectively producing doctrinally sound resources for outreach and training purposes in world mission fields, the JMC assisted in the underwriting of the Asia Publications Conference in Kowloon, Hong Kong, Oct. 29–Nov. 2, 2012. The conference was attended by WELS missionaries, translators, and national pastors from WELS churches and those in our fellowship.

The weeklong conference focused on elements of the translation process. Presenters included Dr. Ernst R. Wendland and Dr. Daud Soesilo on the theory of translation and Mr. Martin Spriggs, WELS chief technology officer, on the use of technology in the production and distribution of translated material.

This was the second major conference of its kind presented by WELS Multi-Language Publications, a part of WELS World Missions that assists in the production of Christian literature in more than 40 languages.

The benefit of having the JMC underwrite such a conference is that these sorts of gatherings help in the creation of outreach and training materials not to be used just overseas but also here in the United States for our cross-cultural ministry work.

A look ahead

The Joint Mission Council is currently working with these various committees and groups to enhance their respective ministries. The following are these ministries' plans for the near future.

Hmong ministries

A priority for the Hmong ministries in the future will be the development of the leadership in their home congregations.

Coordination and collaboration between the Hmong Asian Committee in the United States and the Asia-Pacific Rim Administrative Committee will be essential to maximize the unique partnership for involvement, support, and prayers emerging from our U.S. Hmong congregations.

Cristo Palabra de Vida

The Lord has helped us to see many new opportunities. The national council continues to actively encourage more congregations to see these opportunities in their neighborhoods and open their church doors to these people. There are more than 350 congregations who have Hispanics living in a close proximity to their worship facility. The Home Missions' Hispanic consultant will be assisting the national council to help these congregations reach the lost who speak Spanish or are culturally connected to the Spanish language.

Muslim outreach

Pastor Pieter Reid will continue to grow in his role of a "mission counselor" for congregations wishing to do outreach to Muslims. Reid will focus on helping to train and mentor other Muslim background believers to serve in our WELS outreach to Muslim mission fields.

Sudanese outreach

Because of the security issues in Sudan, we have not been able to establish a firm outreach in the country. Outreach efforts continue in Des Moines, Iowa, and Omaha, Neb., with a watchful eye for the day that we might extend our efforts to southern Sudan.

In conclusion

The Lord has provided many opportunities for the Joint Mission Council and our mission boards to share the gospel message. Pray that the Lord of the harvest will provide us with the resources to meet these opportunities.

Mr. Sean Young, reporter

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

Board for Ministerial Education

Floor Committee #11

Our calling

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

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

Our current situation

The BME distributes subsidy to the ministerial education schools from a block grant supplied by the Synodical Council. The current funding model seems to be working for Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS), which has seen stable reserves for the past two biennia; and for Martin Luther College (MLC), which conservatively projects stable reserves by 2015. It is unclear whether the current funding model will work in the long term for the preparatory schools. As we move toward the support goals of WELS’ long-range plan, all four schools should be adequately supported by the synod that they serve.

The BME has a working group on financial assistance with the goal that no student is denied the ability to train for the ministry of the gospel for financial reasons. The ministerial education schools are developing their partnership with the Ministry of Christian Giving to be sure that their financial assistance programs are adequately supported. The largest project continues to be reducing the educational debt of MLC graduates.

The BME has a working group on programmed maintenance to keep up with capital needs on our campuses. During the last biennium, MLC successfully piloted a partnership with the Ministry of Christian Giving to support the building of the new Early Childhood Learning Center in New Ulm, Minn. We would like any capital campaigns at the schools to be conducted in coordination with the Ministry of Christian Giving and to be reviewed and adopted as a regular part of the synod budget process. We would also like the long-range capital plans of the ministerial education schools to be part of the next synodical long-range plan, scheduled to be adopted in 2017.

With the blessing and encouragement of Home and World Missions administrations, the ministerial education schools are establishing increasingly close partnerships with the world mission fields in our fellowship in order to help in the development of their individual ministerial education programs. We are hoping that the partnerships will serve as models for the area Lutheran high schools and Lutheran elementary schools in our fellowship that are enrolling international students.

Over the last biennium, the ministerial education schools have put considerable effort into partnerships with the Conference of Presidents and the Congregation and Ministry Support Group, especially the Commission on Lutheran Schools, to expand current efforts in the continuing education of called workers. See the separate report of the Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee (p. 82).

Significant progress has been made in the last biennium to address governance issues that arose since the incorporation of the ministerial education schools. We have clarified the roles and relationships of staff in

the business and fiscal offices, information technology, human resources, facilities management, and mission advancement and are developing new working protocols.

A look ahead

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

Rev. Paul Prange, reporter

Rev. Philip Hirsch, chairman

Rev. Kenneth Brokmeier

Rev. George Ferch

Rev. Douglas L. Free

Teacher Richard Gibson

Mr. Hoge Holtz

Mr. Kyle Koltz

Teacher Kurt Rosenbaum

Mr. Dean Waldschmidt

Rev. Thomas Westra

Teacher Jon Woldt

Rev. Michael Woldt

Advisory:

Pres. Matthew Crass, Luther Preparatory School

Pres. Daniel Johnson, Wisconsin Lutheran College

Pres. Joel Petermann, Michigan Lutheran Seminary

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

Teacher Greg Schmill, director of WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Pres. Paul O. Wendland, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Pres. Mark Zarling, Martin Luther College

Addendum: Proposed bylaw changes

After a review of the WELS Bylaws, section 6.32 “Board for Ministerial Education,” the BME recommends the following changes:

(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.”~~

The BME recommends changing the wording to: “fulfill the mission given to them by the synod.”

Rationale: The synod is moving from a mission-objective-vision form of planning to a long-range plan while the schools still have mission statements that have been approved 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 the calls;

4. coordinate all the curricula of the schools primarily for the thorough and effective (*The BME recommends adding here: “lifelong”*) education of future pastors and teachers (*The BME recommends adding here “and staff ministers”*) and pastors and teachers (*The BME recommends adding here “and staff ministers”*) now in service;

Rationale: The two changes reflect the addition of staff ministry courses at MLC and the significant expansion at both WLS and MLC of the respective continuing education programs.

5. (*The BME recommends adding here: “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;

Rationale: The change reflects the current partnerships and governance arrangement of cooperation with synod entities to accomplish this task.

6. cooperate with the governing boards (*The BME recommends adding here: “, the Synodical Council, and the Conference of Presidents”*) in providing competent, non-called auxiliary staffs for the efficient operation of the schools;

Rationale: The change reflects the current partnerships and governance arrangement of cooperation with synod entities to accomplish this task. We do not usually use the word “auxiliary” any more for our hired staff members at 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.

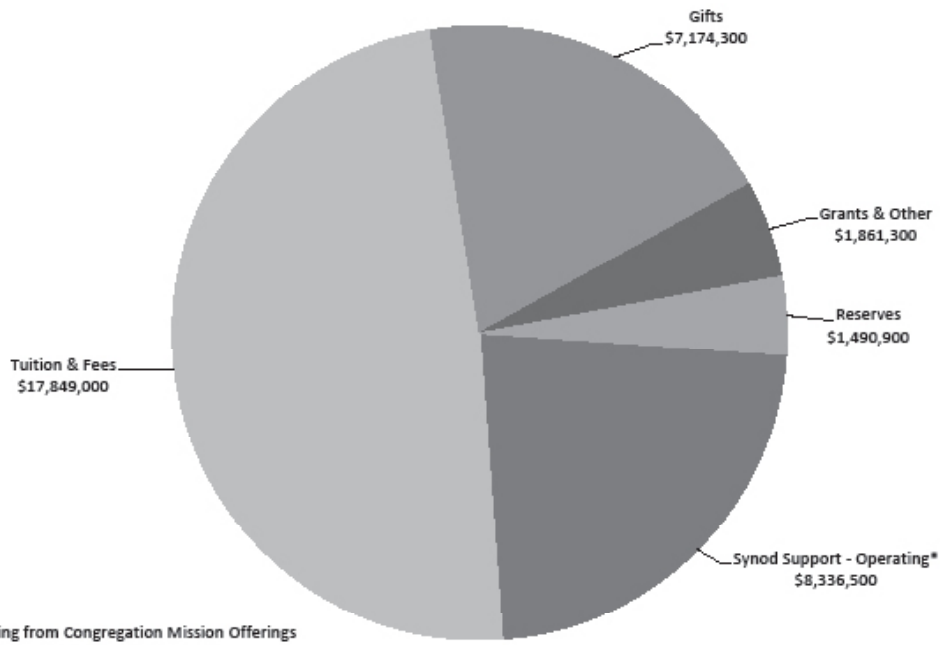
(The BME recommends adding here: “10. assist in and help coordinate the area Lutheran high schools’ ministerial education programs.”)

Rationale: This effort deserves its own point and is not directly related to the rest of #9.

(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~~ (*The BME recommends adding here: “, and the synod’s Chief Financial Officer”*).

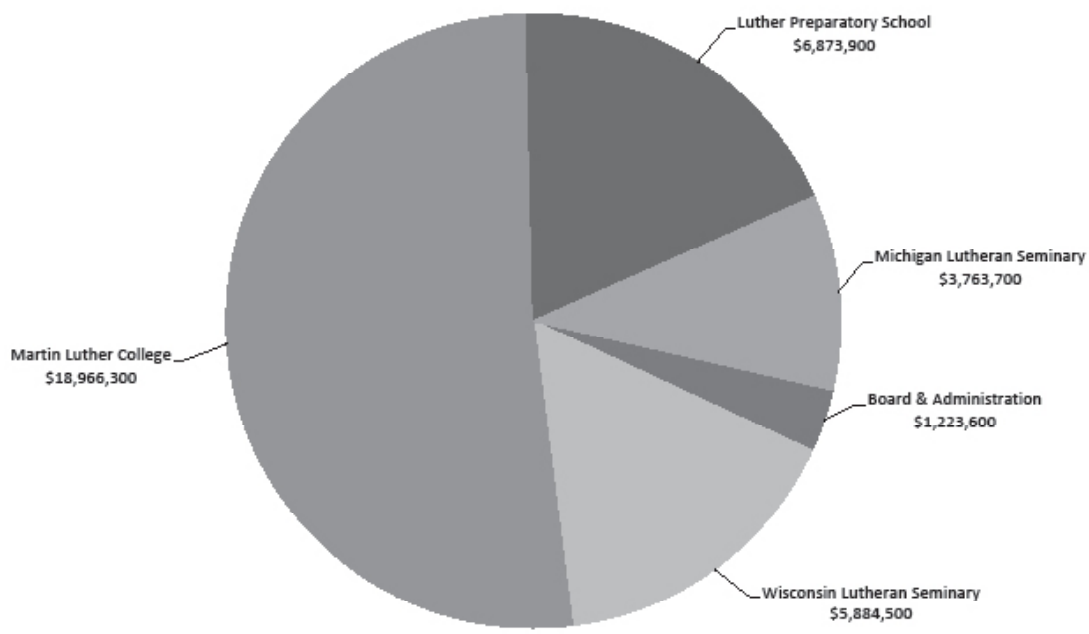
Rationale: These changes reflect current practice. Because of good working and reporting relationships at the BME level, the CPS (now CLS) administrator(s) do not feel the need to attend BME meetings. Because of good working relationships with MLC, the WLC president does not feel the need to attend BME meetings. The Synodical Council has asked that the synod’s Chief Financial Officer be an advisory member of the BME.

**FY 2013–14 Support
Ministerial Education
\$36,712,000**

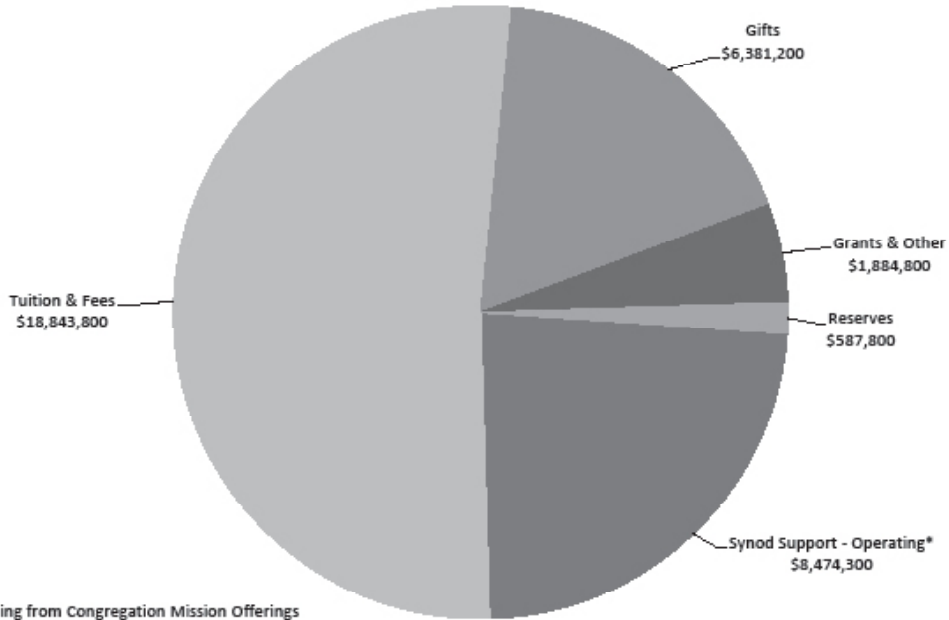


* Funding from Congregation Mission Offerings and the Financial Stabilization Fund

**FY 2013–14 Expenses
Ministerial Education
\$36,712,000**

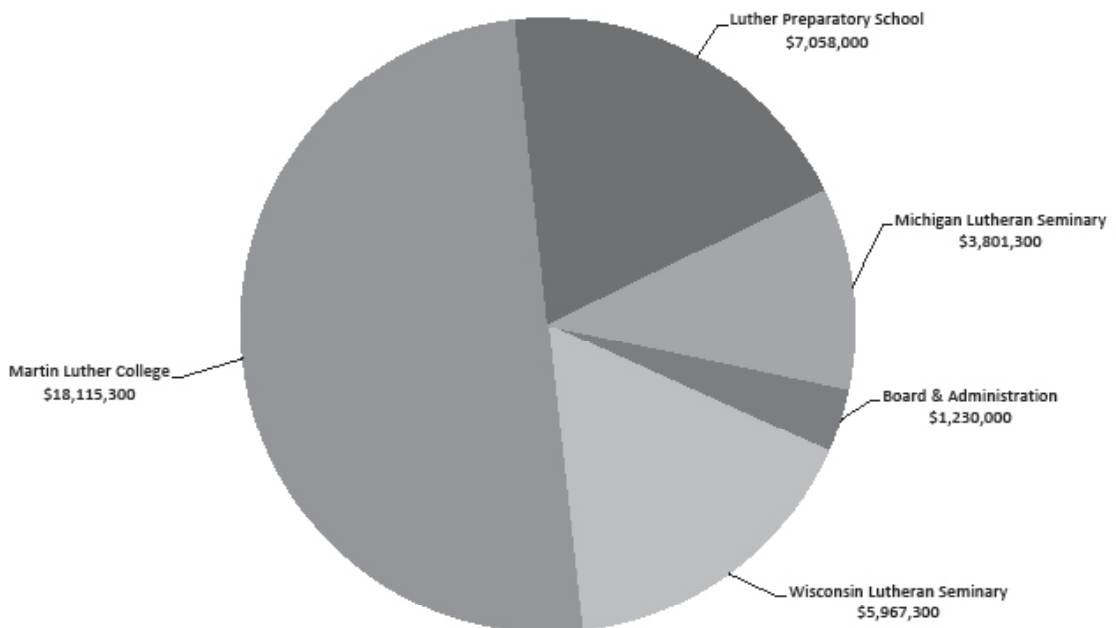


**FY 2014–15 Support
Ministerial Education
\$36,171,900**



* Funding from Congregation Mission Offerings and the Financial Stabilization Fund

**FY 2014–15 Expenses
Ministerial Education
\$36,171,900**



Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Floor Committee #11

Our calling

God has given us a new birth into a living hope by the resurrection of our Lord from the dead. Around us, people still struggle with regret, confusion, and anxiety. They attach their hopes to dead and dying things, to the unstable fancies and the passing values of this world. It is our calling to prepare men to serve as pastors, men who will—as full-time ministers of the gospel—“declare the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9). We equip them to serve this dying world with the living and enduring Word of our God (1 Peter 1:25), to call others out of darkness, and to serve those who were once not a people (1 Peter 2:10). Recognizing that the devil still prowls around seeking to devour the church’s pastors and teachers, we also have the privilege—increasingly in recent years—of offering opportunities for theological and professional growth to called workers. In a hostile world we want them to stand firm in the true grace of God (1 Peter 5:12).

The following report will summarize how we have carried out our calling in the past two years as well as express the major focus of our hopes for the next two.

Our current situation

Students

Enrollment—Traditional

In May the seminary hopes to present 42 candidates for assignment to the public ministry of the church. That number includes 37 traditional students, three men from the Asian ministerial training program, and two from Cristo Palabra de Vida. We also hope to present 35 men for assignment to a year of vicarship. Looking at the trends, after seeing one of our lowest enrollments in decades in the coming school year, we anticipate our enrollment will rise in the years following.

	<i>Current year</i>	<i>2013–14</i>	<i>2014–15</i>	<i>2015–16</i>	<i>2016–17</i>
Seniors	37	23	34	34	29
Middlers	35	35	29	29	41
Juniors	37	30	30	43	42
Special	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total on-campus	109	89	93	116	112
Vicars	23	35	34	29	28
Emergency/Temp Leave	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total off-campus	<u>23</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>28</u>
TOTAL STUDENT BODY	132	124	127	145	140

Enrollment—Pastoral Studies Institute

The full enrollment picture for the seminary must include the work the Pastoral Studies Institute is doing with second-career men preparing themselves to come to Mequon, Wis.; with the Asian ministerial training program; and with Cristo Palabra de Vida (the Spanish ministerial training program):

<i>Pastoral Studies Institute students</i>	<i>2012–13</i>
Cristo Palabra De Vida	3
Asian ministerial training	10
PSI second-career and special students	<u>6</u>
Total students	19

Financial aid

Our financial aid goals are threefold:

1. We seek to provide counseling for students in careful money management. We do this by providing mandatory financial seminars for each year of a student's on-campus enrollment. Individual counseling is also provided by our financial aid officer, Prof. Forrest Bivens.
2. We aim, through all financial aid sources, to offset the costs of seminary tuition. The table below provides a historical record of how financial aid has risen to offset tuition costs. Note that the table only shows the amount WLS distributes every year. The seminary's portion represents only about half of the total amount our students receive in assistance. Many of them also receive generous grants from the Seibert Foundation, the Salem Foundation, the Kropp Scholarship Fund, the Brooks Foundation, and from many individuals and congregations. Average total assistance from all sources came to \$8,016 per student during the last school year and \$8,232 for the first six months of this school year.

<i>School year</i>	<i>WLS total financial aid</i>	<i>Average aid per student</i>	<i>WLS tuition</i>
2008-09	\$339,090.00	\$2,898.21	\$6,910.00
2009-10	\$356,150.00	\$3,124.12	\$7,280.00
2010-11	\$405,000.00	\$3,648.64	\$7,570.00
2011-12	\$392,127.00	\$4,405.92	\$7,885.00
2012-13	\$483,820.00	\$4,438.71*	\$8,245.00

*as of January 2013

3. We seek to address the issue of student debt in two ways. First, we do our best to ensure that students do not increase their indebtedness while attending the seminary. We rather hope to help them reduce it through careful money management. Second, through special grants we seek to help students pay down "toxic" (i.e. credit card) debt.

Those students who carry debt report owing \$18,477 on average. Most of it was acquired in the form of student loans taken out while they were undergraduates.

None of this financial assistance would be possible apart from our Savior's grace and the living hope he has given to his people. Our risen Lord has stirred the hearts of many to give generously to the seminary's Scholarship Fund. This past fiscal year we received \$537,424 in gifts and \$219,185 in temporarily restricted bequests. This is in addition to \$474,869 in permanently endowed gifts and bequests received last year. For the first six months of fiscal year 2012-13, God's people have contributed \$371,647 to the Scholarship Fund.

Winterim

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

- 25 students went to Florida, Arizona, and California to receive hands-on experience in outreach or to increase their practical leadership skills by addressing real-life congregational issues.
- 8 went on study tour to Mexico to improve their knowledge of Spanish.
- In partnership with Wisconsin Lutheran College and Asia Lutheran Seminary, WLS offered a 13-day study tour to Israel. The tour presented a thorough and aggressive survey of the land where the 12 tribes settled and where Christ walked. A total of 22 individuals participated, including five WLS students. The three collaborating institutions plan to offer similar trips in the future, both to Israel as well as to areas visited by the Apostle Paul.
- 13 did independent research, both on campus and off. Four students went to St. John's, Antigua, while two went to Blantyre, Malawi (through funding provided in part by Kingdom Workers).

With the current emphasis on practical training and learning by doing, it is gratifying to see the success of Winterim in bringing this kind of accent to our curriculum.

Winterim has also become a standard feature of our continuing education program, as pastors sign up for the various courses offered on campus. This past year 10 pastors were in attendance.

The vicar program

In May 2012, 23 vicars received one-year assignments to various congregations across North America. In 2012, many

congregations who had wanted a vicar did not receive one because of the small class size. That will change as we look forward to placing larger classes, beginning already with this year. In May 2013, we expect to assign 35 vicars in all.

The vicar program has progressed from emergency service to churches and schools by student volunteers to required training for all men who have completed the second year of training at WLS. The importance of the vicar year can hardly be overestimated. It allows the student a year in which he can put what he has learned in the classroom into practice in a real-life ministry setting. It is the envy of many other seminaries whose programs of practical training are only part time. As we look to the future, however, we need to remain diligent in ensuring that we can continue to provide funding for this vital year of seminary training. The increasing costs of supporting a man and his family for one year in the field (currently around \$37,000) make this an issue of very real concern.

We are, therefore, grateful for synodical and congregational commitment to and funding for the vicar program. In this connection special mention should be made of the Board for Home Missions (BHM), which annually supports about ten “vicars in missions.” The seminary has been nearly matching BHM funds as we partner with them in support of the vicars in missions program. Also deserving of special mention is the encouragement and support of the Conference of Presidents (COP) under the leadership of President Mark Schroeder. The seminary’s Student Field Services Committee works with both the BHM and the COP in identifying and recruiting those pastors and congregations who possess the necessary qualifications for this important work.

Seminary Chorus

The choir presents an annual Christmas concert, performed twice on the second Sunday in December. A graduation concert is held the evening before the seminary’s graduation service in May. The choir also tours. This year, after presenting a number of concerts in Wisconsin, the choir traveled to six congregations in Illinois, Kentucky, Georgia, and Alabama. The chorus has appeared in 40 of the United States as well as in Canada during its long history. The big event of the year was held on May 5 when the Seminary Chorus was joined by the Martin Luther College Choir and the Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee to present a festival concert that inaugurated the seminary’s 150th anniversary.

Pastoral Studies Institute

This program was added to the seminary’s responsibilities in 2003, with a director devoting three-quarters of his time to administering the program and one-quarter of his time teaching traditional students on campus. The BHM and others had noticed that pastoral training programs for non-English speakers were multiplying in the United States. There was a concern about maintaining appropriate standards and oversight. The seminary was therefore asked to provide leadership, accountability, validation, and support for all pre-pastoral and pastoral training offered to non-English-speaking immigrant groups in the United States. Notable among these programs are two satellite seminary training operations in North America: Cristo Palabra de Vida and the Asian ministerial training program.

Another aspect of the PSI’s service has been to provide training for second-career men whose background and commitments made it nearly impossible for them to attend Martin Luther College. Finally, the PSI is active in providing off-campus, experiential training for our traditional students in home mission, urban, and cross-cultural settings.

In order to ensure that the PSI was meeting the expectations of our synod, the PSI director initiated a strategic assessment of the PSI. Questionnaires were sent to 150 pastors and synodical leaders, of which nearly half were returned. On the basis of the responses, the PSI’s Mission/Vision/Core Values document was revised and endorsed by the PSI executive committee, the seminary faculty, the seminary board, and synod administrators. Statements from the document follow:

- The PSI’s key feature is flexibility. This flexibility allows our seminary to take advantage of opportunities without sacrificing our heritage of providing God’s church with faithful pastors who will boldly proclaim God’s Word.
- The mission of the Pastoral Studies Institute of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is to guide the training of non-traditional students from different cultures or different careers for service as pastors in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and to provide opportunity for mutual encouragement with seminary programs in our fellowship around the world.
- The PSI will continue to guide and encourage second-career students as they prepare for their studies at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and, ultimately, for service as pastors in WELS.
- The PSI will seize opportunities God presents to guide and encourage men from a broad cultural spectrum so they can use their gifts to serve in their communities for the front line work of reaching souls for Christ’s kingdom.

- The PSI will provide thorough training programs that ultimately lead to pastoral training but do not assume that all participants in these programs will proceed through the entire system to the pastoral training. Major steps and interim forms may include elder, evangelist, congregational assistant, pastoral assistant, or others as needed and negotiated by participating congregations. In some cases, certificates will be granted. In fewer situations, degrees will be awarded.
- The PSI will work in partnership with the student's pastor, district mission board, and district president to discover appropriate ministry opportunities for the student after his graduation.
- The PSI will provide after assignment a program of support, continuing education, and mission counseling for all PSI graduates.
- The PSI will provide appropriate and ongoing assurances to our church body that the program is working closely with our congregations and mission fields to provide faithful, well trained, and properly supported men to participate in the worldwide gospel outreach of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Caribbean Pastoral Training Plan

An example of the PSI's flexibility is the Caribbean Pastoral Training Plan. After extensive consultations with the field, the PSI executive committee, the seminary faculty, the governing board, and the Conference of Presidents have all approved a plan for training men from our congregations in the Eastern Caribbean for service as pastors within that context. Four of them are entering Martin Luther College this fall. The plan envisions time spent both at our college of ministry and on this campus, with components of the training being offered "onsite" in the Caribbean. WLS will confer a master of divinity on all who successfully complete the program.

World Mission Seminary Professor

Although administratively the World Mission Seminary Professor program is a part of the PSI, it deserves mention in its own right. This program was added in 2006 with its own director. With the drawdown of missionaries from many maturing fields, ongoing support for world seminaries was seen as vital for maintaining ties of mutual love and for receiving mutual encouragement. The Board for World Missions (BWM) asked WLS to provide guidance, visitation, and teaching assistance. The BWM also provides funding for this position, but the workload impact is felt by all faculty members as each year we seek to free up men who can visit and teach at various seminaries around the globe.

In the 2011–12 year, manpower represented by the World Mission Seminary Professor position facilitated overseas teaching or consulting by eight different members of the WLS faculty on eight different world mission fields. Seventeen different courses (only six of which were broadly similar to courses taught on this campus) were administered to 270 students. Additionally, consulting on matters of curriculum and pedagogy was provided to ten different fields.

At this writing it appears that 2012–13, God willing, will see overseas service by at least four professors on six different fields who will offer at least eight different courses. Consulting has been provided already to five different fields, and this is likely to increase.

The World Mission Seminary Professor program demonstrates our synod's commitment to preserving confessional Lutheran teaching around the world by fostering a network of world seminaries. A key thrust is to provide continuing education for called workers of national churches.

Governing board

Changes

Dr. Arthur Eggert of the Western Wisconsin District was re-elected for another six-year term. New to the board in 2012 was Pastor Jonathan Balge of Milwaukee, elected to his first term in office by the Southeastern Wisconsin District. Leaving our board is Pastor Peter Unnasch, who was appointed to serve the rest of Pastor Michael Woldt's unexpired term after he had left to serve on Martin Luther College's board. Unnasch has been a true friend of the seminary, and we will miss his gentle spirit and sage counsel.

Revised mission/vision statement

A strategic planning committee—composed of members of the faculty, the board, and the student body—revised the seminary's mission/vision statement. The statement, available at www.tinyurl.com/WLS-Mission, was approved by the governing board.

Assessing faculty workload

With additional responsibilities in continuing education and in carrying out the PSI program, faculty workload remains a concern despite somewhat lower enrollments of late. It continues to grow, driven up by many factors.

The magnitude of the workload is easily recognized from the long list of extra duties many of the faculty members perform and from the reduced amount of scholarly work for which most faculty members have time. The governing board wishes to get a handle on the various tasks seminary professors are asked to carry out as part of their calling, including (besides those mentioned above) serving on synodical committees, the impact of Winterim travel, writing books and articles, personal study, and study in degree programs. Dr. Arthur Eggert has been working on developing a template of assessment that categorizes all aspects of a professor's workload. Once an adequate instrument has been developed, the board intends to work with the faculty in assessing and prioritizing various tasks, as well as in coming up with a system for peer to peer accountability.

Tuition model for WLS

A special faculty/board/student committee recommended against adopting a high tuition/high aid model for this campus, based upon concerns over the sustainability of such a model as enrollment levels increase. The governing board adopted the recommendation.

Faculty and curriculum

Milestones and highlights

- Prof. John Brug and Prof. Forrest Bivens celebrated 40 years of service in the public ministry by a special service in the chapel on April 22, 2012.
- Prof. John Brenner was awarded his PhD in history on April 9, 2013, from Marquette University. His doctoral thesis is entitled "The Election Controversy Among Lutherans in the 20th Century: An Examination of the Underlying Problems."
- Prof. Stephen Geiger has successfully completed two of the six "prelims" needed to pass in his PhD program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He was tested in the areas of ancient history and Latin literature.
- Prof. Ken Cherney is working on his PhD thesis from the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa.
- Professors Michael Quandt, John Schuetze, and Bill Tackmier are also continuing work towards degrees at the master's level or higher.

Mandarin scholarships

The seminary offers scholarships to middlers and seniors to enable them to audit Mandarin language courses at Wisconsin Lutheran College. Many come with knowledge of Mandarin already, and the purpose of the effort is to ensure that their skills do not lie fallow. The money is to offset lost wages (allowing students not to get a part-time job so that they can audit classes without affecting their seminary studies).

Senior thesis

Members of the class of 2012 were the first to successfully navigate the requirements of the senior thesis. Although there were a few hiccups along the way, feedback from the students on the value of the project was overwhelmingly positive. All the seniors have the opportunity to present their work to the campus family in April. The faculty has had a chance to evaluate the feedback we received from seniors on how we might be able to improve the experience for succeeding classes and will implement many of their suggestions.

Grow in Grace, the Institute for Continuing Education at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

With the establishment of Grow in Grace, the seminary has demonstrated its desire to give the mission of continuing education new prominence and urgency. Continuing education director, Prof. Richard Gurgel, has been working hard to put continuing education—in all its various forms—on the agenda of every congregation and pastor. Generous grants from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and from the Zietlow and Antioch Foundations have provided the necessary funding to this point. Grow in Grace has adopted the following mission/vision statements:

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

The seminary's continuing education program has four key thrusts. They are listed below along with some key accomplishments:

1. To develop and deliver curricular resources. This includes constructing a repeating core curriculum in which many elements can be delivered online or offsite. From 2010 to 2012, 36 pastor institutes were held with more than 1,549 attendees and 13 satellite summer quarters with 236 in attendance. In the "regular" summer quarter of 2012,

92 called workers took courses, with 28 participating online. We were also able to offer Hebrew Review and Hebrew Institute courses on the Mequon campus for the first time and hope to develop equivalent courses in Greek. In the spring of 2013, online course enrollment had to be discontinued because the course was full.

Martin Luther College has begun plans to take over the Master of Arts in Religion (MAR). Although WLS will continue to offer its faculty to serve in teaching these courses, Martin Luther College seems a better fit so that teachers may receive credit for the courses towards licensure. Thus the focus of Grow in Grace shifts almost entirely to pastors.

2. To develop our Pastor Partner initiative. This includes offering support to pastors at all stages of ministry, providing mentors to new pastors, and offering coaching for more experienced pastors who desire it. Currently there are 44 young pastors being mentored by 24 mentors. Eighty percent of our 2012 graduates requested a mentor. Also, the first celebration of ministry retreat—entitled “Renewed in Grace”—took place in April 2012 with 57 pastors and spouses attending. Reactions were extremely positive to the first retreat, prompting the holding of a second retreat held in April 2013.
3. To develop tools to help pastors evaluate their ministry. A resource packet entitled “Ordained for a Life of Growth” was developed in 2011 for use in every circuit. Currently 80 circuits are using the resource packet and another 40 are planning to use it soon for a total of 120 circuits or 82 percent. In 2012 an essay entitled “Reclaiming our Christ-centered Lutheran Devotional Heritage” was developed, along with accompanying resources. Each of the two essays has been turned into workshops that can be scheduled by circuits, conferences, or districts.
4. To encourage informal learning. We are developing our continuing education Web site to offer resources to encourage and celebrate informal learning opportunities in our midst by providing blogs, book reviews, and a space where good continuing education ideas can be shared circuit to circuit.

Of concern is the fact that our major grant funding for this continuing education effort will end with this fiscal year (2012–13). At this time it is uncertain where funding for continuing education will come from. Though our goal remains sustaining this effort through tuition and fees, it is not realistic to expect that we will achieve this by the time our grant funding has ended. Areas of Grow in Grace that may require financial support for the future include: a) providing matching grants and travel scholarships to make courses more affordable for pastors and congregations as well as to encourage congregations to support the continuing education of their pastor; b) mentoring, coaching, and celebrations of ministry need the support of matching grants and travel scholarships to encourage broad participation.

Fiscal and property

Synod subsidy and mission advancement

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary depends on three sources of funding to carry out its calling. The first is the regular support we receive from the synodical budget in the form of subsidy and other support. The second is the money we receive from charging students tuition and room and board. Special gifts are essential for us to sustain our calling now. We praise the generosity of our Savior God who has moved the hearts of his people with his amazing grace!

	<i>Fiscal year</i>	<i>YTD</i>
	<i>2011–12</i>	<i>12/31/2012</i>
Unrestricted	\$ 317,880	\$ 189,713
Temporarily restricted	537,424	371,647
Permanently restricted	<u>91,544</u>	<u>156,653</u>
Total	\$946,848	\$718,013

In addition, many of God’s saints—now gone to glory—have remembered the seminary in their wills, leaving behind a living legacy and testimony to their faith. This past year we received an unusually high number of bequests, totaling \$949,261 in all. This compares with \$96,565 for the first six months of FY 2013.

We also thank God for continuing to bless the efforts of our faithful mission advancement personnel—Mr. Kevin Keller, Mrs. Lori Guse, and Pastor David Dolan along with the work of the entire team at the Ministry of Christian Giving.

Gifts in addition to synod subsidy allow us to

- offer generous financial aid to our students,
- support the vicar in missions program,
- subsidize off-campus experiences for students,
- support professors’ continuing education,
- develop continuing education courses, and
- respond to emergencies without adding extra burdens to the synod’s budget.

Budget planning and performance

WLS has been making every effort to trim costs and to hold down expenditures. In our budget, we do not plan any permanent staffing changes except for a modest increase in student help hours. We intend to subsidize the operating fund by spending down our unrestricted net assets. Our best estimate now is that we will be able to sustain ourselves through this source of support for the next biennium. As for expenditures, we ended FY 2012 with a balanced budget. For the first six months of FY 2013, our expenses are tracking at .4 percent over budget. By the end of the fiscal year, however, we anticipate coming in on budget.

Use of WLS unrestricted funds

As of Dec. 31, 2012, WLS holds \$5,810,789 in unrestricted net assets. WLS administration plans to use these funds in the following ways:

<i>Name of Fund</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Reason for Plan/Designation</i>
Contingency Fund	\$500,000	Board-designated: to be spent only at board approval. This fund enables the board to respond to emergencies or deal with a sudden dip in expected revenue without immediately slashing programs
Seminary Fund	\$826,226	Board-designated: this fund enables administration to subsidize the operating fund and to pay for special projects.
Scholarship Fund	\$3,335,030	From gifts donors intended to be used for scholarships. Much of this represents earnings or market gain on the original donor gifts. The board therefore designated them to be treated as a scholarship endowment.
Bookstore, Library, PSI, Continuing Education	\$534,267	Student-generated funds from bookstore sales; gifts/grants from donors for the library or for the PSI
Print shop, residence fund, student furniture replacement	\$328,057	Funds established from fees designated for specific purposes
Fixed assets	\$287,209	Investment in certain types of fixed assets WLS owns (excepting buildings and land).

Beyond subsidy, as we have already mentioned, the seminary depends on special gifts to support continuing education, student financial aid, the vicar program, programmed maintenance, and our regular operating budget. As of this writing, a plan for addressing all these ongoing needs is still under development. Our board-designated unrestricted assets have bought us time to adjust to the new funding realities.

Staffing changes

Our communications coordinator, Ms. Sarah Malchow, accepted a new position at Wisconsin Lutheran College. Mr. Barry Washburn, our technology director, went on full disability due to illness. Ms. Mary Rausch has retired from her years of faithful work in food service. We are pleased to welcome Mr. Jeff Mitchell as technology services coordinator.

Campus projects completed

A great deal of work was completed in the area of technology. The campus infrastructure has been improved, including rewiring the dormitory, updating switches and access points, adding a new 20 mg fiber pipe, installing a new main server and domain controller, and upgrading our phone system. The exterior doors were also replaced, and the new ones were fitted with a security access control system (on budget at a cost of \$200,000—half of it funded from unrestricted seminary funds and half from synodical programmed maintenance money). An upgrade for our Grow in Grace Web site has been completed, and our main Web site is scheduled to have its upgrade completed by the summer of 2013. The auditorium/gymnasium was also the focus of a number of programmed maintenance projects completed this past biennium. The lighting was replaced with more energy-efficient LED fixtures. The carpet was replaced on the stage and stair risers. Finally, since the auditorium organ was on its last legs (or perhaps better: its last wheeze), it was replaced at a cost of \$112,000. More programmed maintenance work is yet to be done, however. For a number of years the seminary has been postponing some big ticket projects.

Library and technology

The library staff has completed an inventory of our entire collection. Many missing items were found. Student staff is also working on converting electronic files into formats that are user friendly for continuing education. To contain rising costs, the library has migrated from its previous catalog database to a new system.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary alumni

Nearly 60 men gathered for the sixth annual Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary alumni meeting on Sept. 17, 2012, in the seminary chapel. The alumni awarded two student scholarships of \$1,000 each. Earlier this year, the alumni had made a \$500 contribution to Grow in Grace.

A look ahead

Under God's grace, in the next two years we plan to celebrate our 150th anniversary. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary was founded in 1863 because our fathers in faith understood that thorough theological training was vital if the pastors of the 13-year-old synod were going to remain loyal to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. Our fathers also saw the vast numbers of people who were harassed and helpless, as sheep without a shepherd. Our fathers' priorities remain ours 150 years later. May Jesus, the Lord of the Church, lead us to both remember and recommit ourselves to our heritage and also to rejoice in the hope we have in the Savior's abundant promises: "May the LORD our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us" (1 Kings 8:57).

Under the theme "Heritage and Hope: Remembering . . . Rejoicing," the seminary is planning a series of events and activities for 2013–14. Besides hosting a number of celebratory events on campus (chorale gatherings, a special symposium, and more), the seminary is planning special publications to commemorate this milestone. The seminary also intends to ask and encourage the members of our synod to participate in a 150th anniversary thank offering with generous gifts to support the seminary's ministry. With God's blessing, the thank offering will

- enhance the seminary's commitment to provide excellent opportunities for practical field training. Generous offerings will provide a solid basis from which the seminary can continue to assign vicars to outstanding pastoral supervisors who serve in mission-minded congregations. These offerings also will encourage the seminary to support additional student outreach experiences in Asian, Hispanic, and African American ministries.
- expand the seminary's ability to support and encourage students (and graduate students) through financial aid and scholarships. Generous offerings will enable the seminary to provide greater assistance for students via scholarships and financial aid. In this way both single and married seminarians will face fewer financial challenges and find more time to study and learn what is necessary for serving as a pastor.
- enable the seminary to develop and maintain the campus that it may serve a wider variety of WELS activities. Generous offerings will enable the seminary to keep up the campus buildings and grounds with the beauty many have come to love and enjoy. As synodical support stretches itself to embrace multiple opportunities, it is vital that private gifts to the seminary enable our school not only to maintain the campus as we know it but also to expand its use for summertime retreats and events for all WELS members.

To carry out this thank offering, the seminary is working closely with the Ministry of Christian Giving.

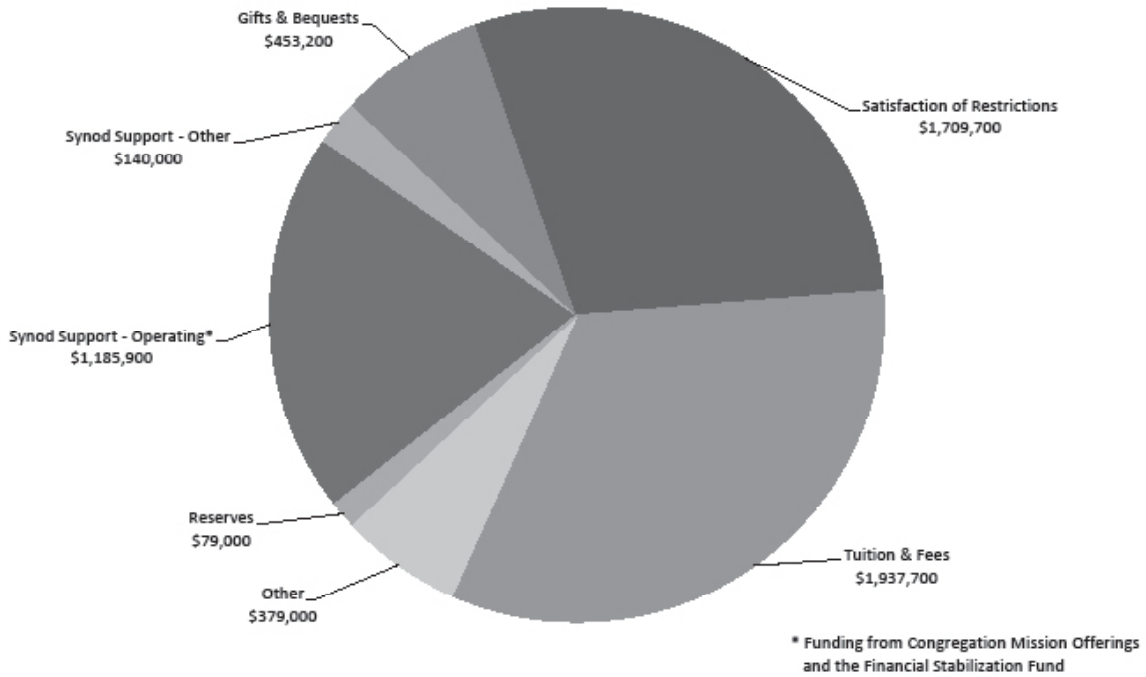
Pres. Paul O. Wendland, reporter

Rev. Thomas Westra, chairman
Rev. Jonathan Balge, vice chairman
Mr. Philip Becker, secretary
Rev. John Dolan
Dr. Arthur Eggert
Rev. Eric Hartzell
Teacher Michael Hein
Mr. Gerald Zimpelmann

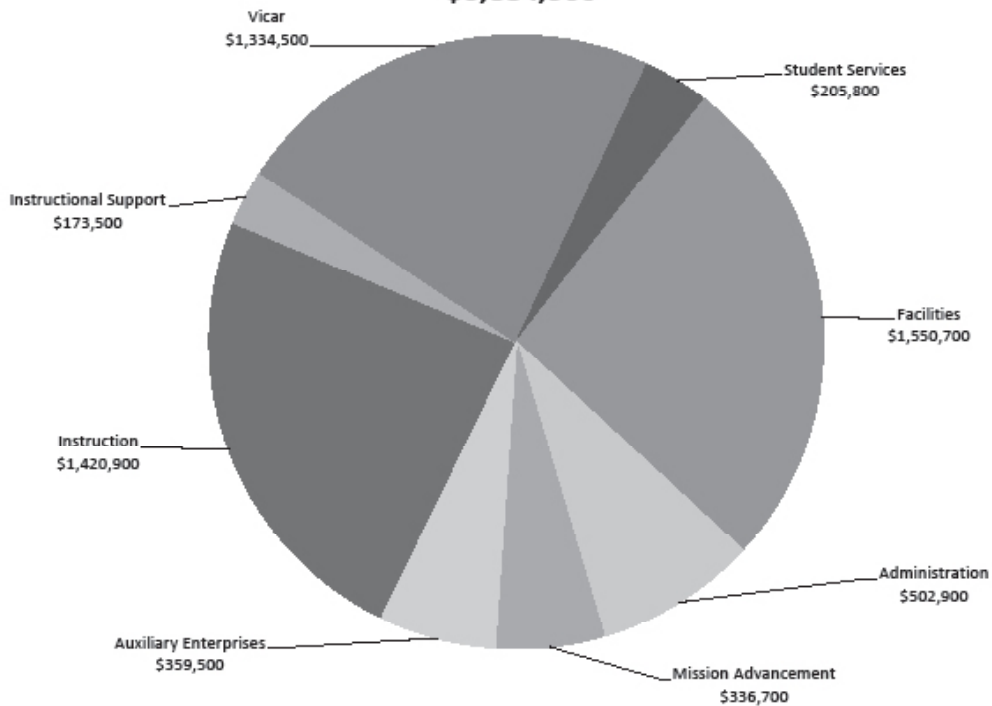
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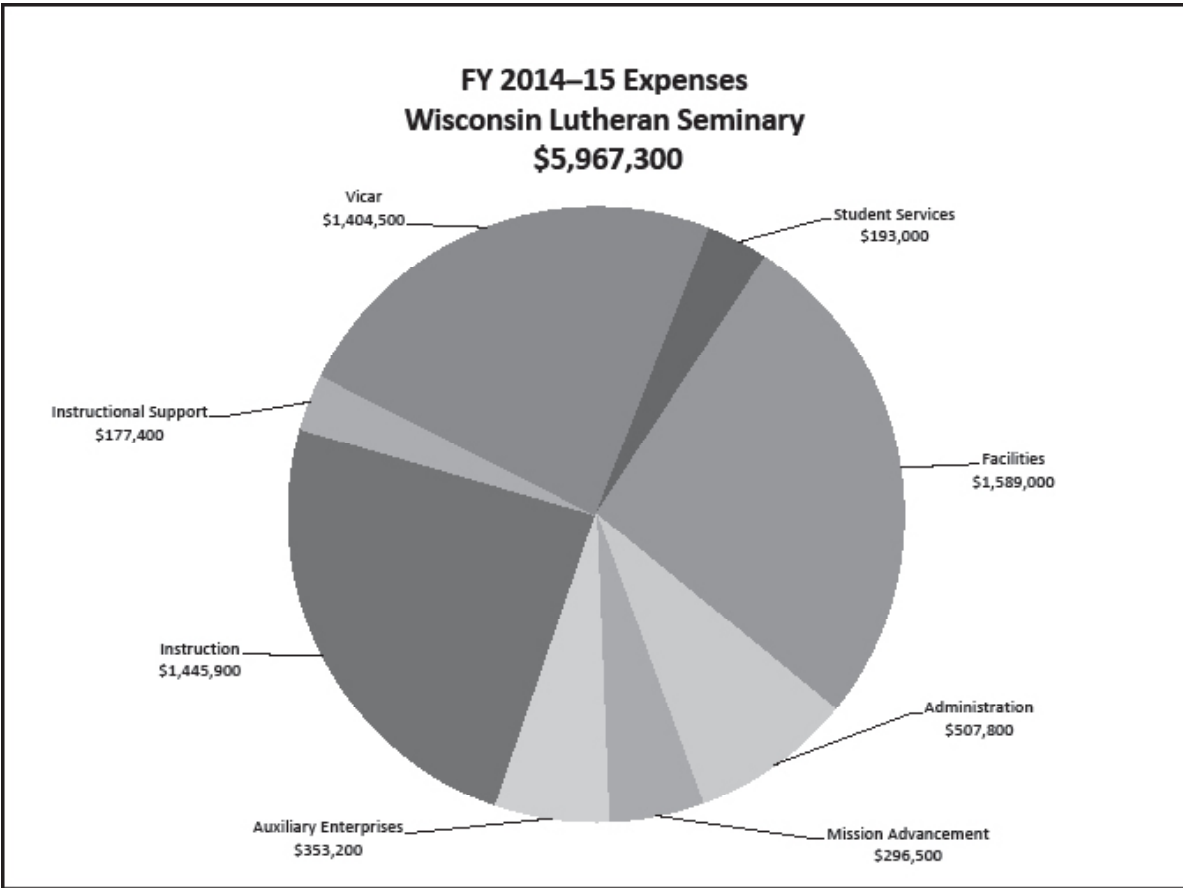
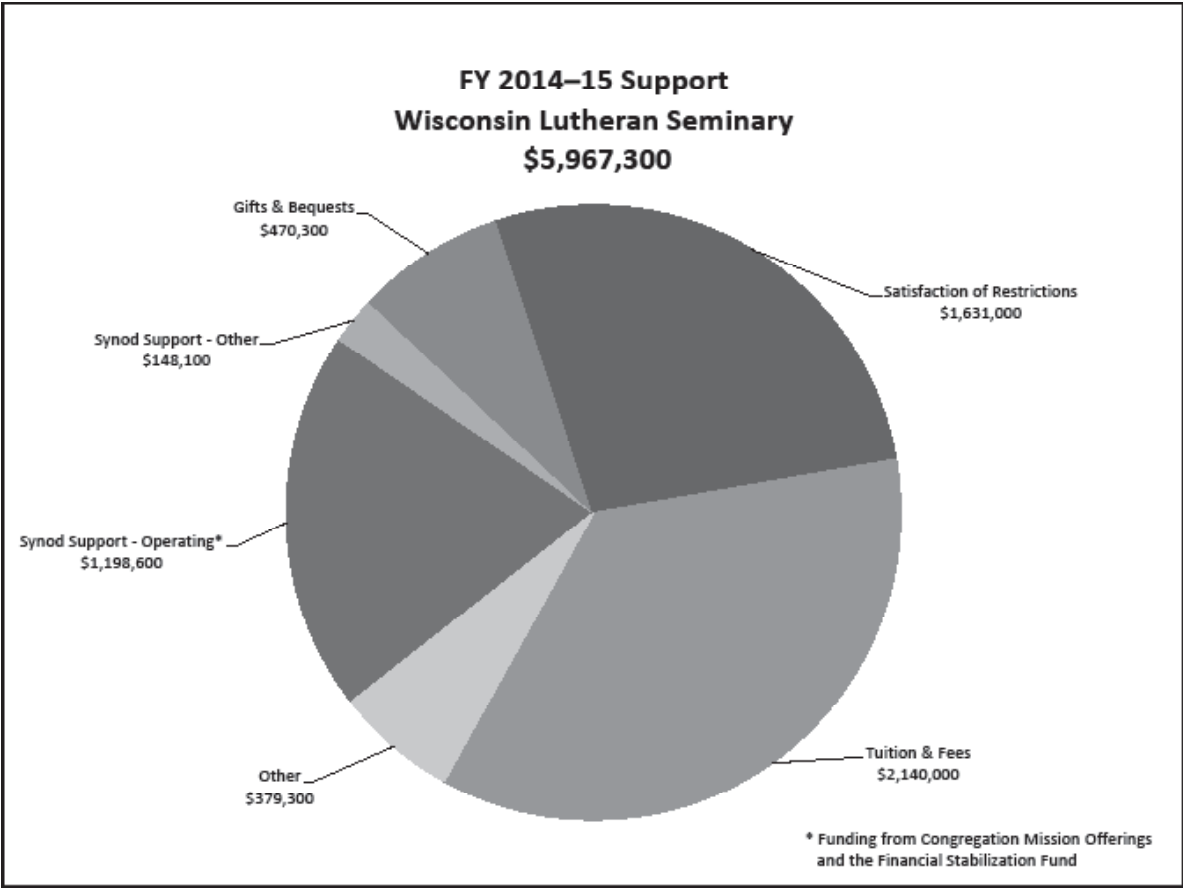
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. David Rutschow, president of the Southeastern Wisconsin District
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Pres. Paul O. Wendland, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

**FY 2013–14 Support
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
\$5,884,500**



**FY 2013–14 Expenses
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
\$5,884,500**





Martin Luther College

Floor Committee #11

To submit a report to WELS' *Book of Reports and Memorials* is a powerful reminder from a gracious God. Few church bodies within the visible Christian church continue to own and operate a dedicated ministerial education system. Yet such a report written for a synod convention reminds this writer that accountability to WELS is an opportunity for thankful praise. The Lord of the Church has graciously allowed the unconditional gospel—as revealed in his inspired and inerrant word—to remain in our midst. The Spirit of Jesus has moved the hearts of Christians within WELS to take ownership in the vital task of training future gospel servants. On behalf of the faculty, staff, and students of Martin Luther College (MLC), your WELS college of ministry, a sincere thank you for your prayers, offerings, and involvement.

Our calling

The words of MLC's updated mission statement, adopted in September 2011, clearly communicate our calling.

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

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

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

Please join the governing board and campus family of MLC in praying that Jesus bless our labors and keep us clearly focused on our purpose to train gospel servants for the Lord's Great Commission.

Our current situation

God's gifts to MLC: Students—undergraduate

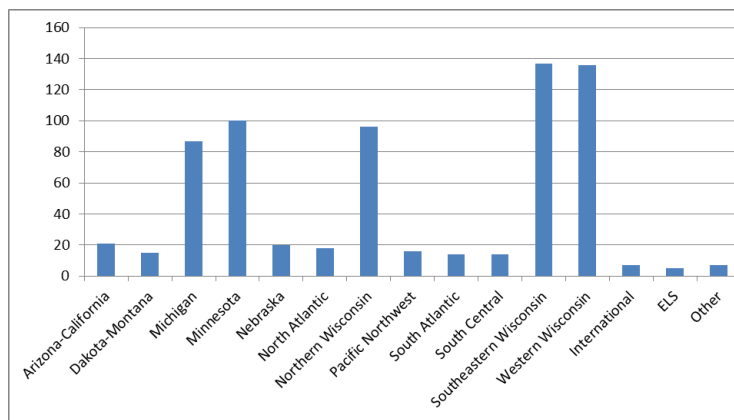
The fall semester began with on-campus undergraduate enrollment of 708, an increase of 11 from fall 2011. Undergraduate enrollment on campus for the second semester is 693, a significant increase of 28 from the previous year. Several factors contributed to this higher enrollment: excellent retention rate during the first semester, lower number of mid-year graduates, and higher than usual number of transfers into MLC at the start of the second semester. We are grateful to the ascended Lord Jesus for continuing to provide such gifts of workers to his church. We ask God's people to remember that Jesus also urges his people to continually pray: Ask the Lord to send workers into his harvest field.

The following charts reflect the enrollment as of Jan. 31, 2013.

Program of study

Pre-seminary studies	151
Early childhood education	70
Elementary education	203
Secondary education	48
Staff ministry	8
Double major—Early childhood education and elementary	38
Double major—Elementary and secondary	154
Double major—Staff ministry and education	7
Double major—Early childhood education and parish music	1
Educational studies	5
<u>Unclassified</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	693

Origin of students



High school origin

High school type	Number of students
Area Lutheran high school	381
Homeschool	5
Other	9
Preparatory school	198
Public	100
TOTAL	693

God's gifts to MLC: Students—graduate and continuing education

The MLC office of graduate studies and continuing education assists WELS in reaching its long-range plans and strategies (2011 *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 59-63) for lifelong professional development of its called teachers and staff ministers. Under God, this office at MLC specifically addresses the following synod goals as stated in the 2011 BORAM:

- in collaboration with the COP and Congregation Ministry Support Group (CMSG), have in place for all ministerial education schools self-supporting continuing education courses in a wide variety of formats for called workers, with a strong component of equipping the saints for the strengthening of congregations (p. 60)
- MLC expands its efforts in the training of principals, early childhood directors, and early childhood workers (p. 62)
- The ministerial education schools expand their efforts in continuing education of called workers, education of international students for service in their ethnic groups of origin, and education of those who want to serve part time or as volunteers in the congregation (p. 62)
- Work with WLS, MLC, and the CMSG to foster spiritual, personal, and professional growth for all called workers through flexible programs of continuing education and mentoring, to enable the called workers better to equip, empower, and encourage lay members in their vocations and in volunteer service for their congregations (p. 63)

Graduate studies

In the area of graduate studies, MLC offers a Master of Science in Education degree that is uniquely designed to meet the needs of WELS teachers at all levels. As of the writing of this report, 34 teachers have completed their master's degree and 110 graduate students are enrolled. Our graduate students focus their studies in the following emphases:

- Instruction (40 students)
- Leadership (39 students)
- Special Education (20 students)
- Educational Technology (10 students)

Continuing education

During the 2012-13 academic year, MLC's continuing education served 749 participants through more than 80 offerings. Continuing education includes all academic services provided outside of MLC's regular undergraduate program (graduate studies, online courses, Webinars, and on-campus or satellite summer courses).

God's gifts to MLC: Personnel

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

- Mark Paustian—25 years
- Joyce Diels—40 years
- Earl Heidtke—40 years

At the conclusion of the 2012–13 academic year, the following have announced their intention to retire.

- John Gronholz, professor
- Susan Haar, professor
- Mark Lenz, professor
- Carla Melendy, professor
- Jon Scharlemann, vice president of mission advancement

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

- Gregory Diersen—professor of science
- Jason Enderle—tutor
- Michael Koepke—admissions counselor
- Tingting Zhang—instructor of Mandarin and Chinese culture

As of Feb. 8, the following people have accepted calls to serve on the MLC faculty beginning July 2013.

- Daniel Gawrisch—physical education professor
- Jennifer Mehlberg—early childhood professor, director of Early Childhood Learning Center
- Jonathan Schaefer—continuing education/new teacher induction

The MLC Governing Board continues the calling process in order to fill several additional positions.

- Professor of theology and history
- Professor of education—student teaching supervisor (male)
- Professor of education—student teaching supervisor (female)
- Professor of special education
- Professor of music
- Vice president for mission advancement

Two assignments are anticipated in May from the Assignment Committee.

- Admission counselor from the MLC graduating class
- Tutor from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's graduating class

Please continue to pray that Jesus grant strength and wisdom and joy to our faculty and staff. Our professors certainly prioritize their time for their classroom duties. Yet many other duties are placed before them. Our professors serve as advisors to students and provide evangelical encouragement and guidance, not only in academic matters, but also relating to spiritual issues, vocational questions, and life concerns. Our full-time professors serve on various campus committees. In addition, some coach sports and others advise extracurricular events. Increased continuing education offerings mean more professors teaching online courses or courses at satellite locations. And the majority of our professors are also called upon by the synod to serve in various other capacities. For example, two-thirds of our professors serve the synod at large by holding membership or appointment on various committees and boards.

God's gifts to MLC: Facilities and finances

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

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013*
Opening enrollment	712	724	697	708
Tuition, board, and room	\$14,800	\$15,250	\$15,710	\$16,340
Synod subsidy	\$3,651,030	\$3,681,530	\$3,188,133	\$3,016,053
Gifts and bequests	\$2,493,426	\$1,517,039	\$1,521,291	\$1,387,537*
Unrestricted net assets end of fiscal year	\$3,973,559	\$5,967,185	\$5,892,226	* BGRAM prepared in January 2013

Financial aid—student cost and indebtedness

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

	<i>% MLC graduates with debt</i>	<i>Average amount of debt</i>	<i>National debt average</i>
2008-09	77%	\$18,415	\$24,000
2009-10	63%	\$21,799	\$25,250
2010-11	78%	\$22,176	\$26,600
2011-12	80%	\$21,671	unavailable

In reaction to this trend, MLC has made every effort to limit the increase to tuition, room, and board costs. In recent years, MLC has made substantial increases in its commitment to student assistance and intends that each tuition increase be accompanied by a corresponding percentage increase to student assistance. However, the increases MLC has made to its tuition assistance have not been able to keep pace with the reduction in WELS subsidy.

	<i>MLC tuition assistance</i>	<i>Average per student receiving aid</i>	<i>WELS subsidy per student</i>
2008-09*	\$2,063,794	\$3,339	\$6,203
2009-10*	\$1,934,896	\$3,257	\$5,128
2010-11*	\$1,914,100	\$3,112	\$5,085
2011-12*	\$2,036,105	\$3,434	\$4,574
2012-13 **	\$2,104,350	\$3,340	\$4,260
2013-14 **	\$2,210,000	\$3,508	\$4,562
2014-15 **	\$2,321,000	\$3,684	\$4,678

*Actual

**Budgeted (estimated enrollments used for budget years)

Use of MLC unrestricted funds

As of June 30, 2012, the unrestricted fund balance at MLC totaled \$5,892,226. The MLC Governing Board has designated a large portion of these toward specific needs at MLC as follows:

Fund	Amount	Description
Economic Sustainability Fund (ESF)	\$2,076,712	Board designated funds to be spent at approval of the MLC Governing Board. To address the Higher Learning Commission directives, the goal of this fund is to reach 25 percent of the MLC operating budget or approximately \$4.1 million. The Governing Board has authorized up to \$1.4 million of this fund to facilitate the building of the early childhood learning center, as a bridge between construction costs and donations.
Scholarship Fund	\$2,391,248	Amounts designated for scholarships are the equivalent of two years of MLC's internal funding for student scholarships. Should there be an economic downturn, these funds will provide MLC time to react without necessarily reducing student assistance.
Program maintenance	\$500,000	The MLC campus has great need for many facility improvements, many of which come at a cost that cannot be absorbed through normal budgetary allotments. This funding is intended to be used for urgent facility projects that would otherwise be eliminated due to budgetary constraints.
Operating and other	\$924,266	This funding represents net assets that have been designated for other operating functions such as the library, financing costs, etc.

Accreditation reports completed

In 2009 our accreditation agency, the Higher Learning Commission, visited campus to review all aspects of the college. While the visit resulted in ten years of continued accreditation, we were asked to submit two follow-up reports in 2012. One report focused on assessment, specifically on “the allocation of a full-time position for assessment and institutional research, and on a revised assessment plan for undergraduate general education and for the graduate programs, and specific examples of the use of assessment data for strategic planning as well as curricular change.” The accreditation agency’s response to this report: “Martin Luther College is commended for an excellent progress report that responded directly to the team’s concerns and for the progress the college has made in its assessment program.”

The second report needed to address

- a. Progress on allocation of financial resources to reduce the annual teaching load of faculty, particularly for those who are engaged in teaching in the graduate program.
- b. Progress on the predictability of support from the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, to reduce or eliminate the wide fluctuation in subsidy experienced in recent years.
- c. Progress on reestablishing the reserve fund as part of the college’s annual budget

The accreditation agency accepted our report with this comment: “Martin Luther College is commended for the genuine progress it has managed in reduction of the graduate faculty load, the initiation of the teaching assistant program, the stabilization of the WELS contribution projected over the next years, the restoration of the operating reserve fund, and the increase in the college’s unrestricted net assets. Continuation of this kind of progress will position the college well for its comprehensive visit in 2018–19.”

Update on Mandarin instruction pilot project

Teaching Mandarin was a topic of discussion at the 2009 synod convention. The convention resolved “that the BME, working with World Missions, identify ways to offer Mandarin training through our Ministerial Schools to gifted

students in our worker training program.” The Board for Ministerial Education (BME) appointed a study committee and adopted the committee’s recommendations, which encouraged MLC “to offer an introductory Mandarin class for credit.” The MLC Governing Board then requested a feasibility study for the inclusion of Mandarin in the MLC curriculum. To teach Mandarin at MLC, a grant from the Antioch II Foundation was sought and received enabling MLC to begin teaching Chinese in the fall of 2012. Working with our missionaries, we invited Ms. Tingting Zhang from Hangzhou, China, to teach Mandarin. Zhang holds a B.A. in Chinese Language Literature Education and a Master’s Degree in Comparative Literature and World Literature. She is a sister in our fellowship who taught Chinese to international students at the International College of Zhejiang University of Technology. During the first semester of academic year 2012–13, Zhang taught Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture to 29 students and Elementary Chinese I to 16 students.

Daylight USA

The Lord has opened doors for MLC students to serve in our WELS home mission fields. We call this Daylight USA, a program through which MLC students do short-term service and ministry projects—both to serve the church and enhance their ministry preparation.

What does Daylight USA look like?

- Last year (2012) 120 students served 38 congregations in 25 states and 3 provinces of Canada.
- This spring (2013) 70 students will help 17 congregations share the gospel during MLC’s spring and Easter breaks.

What do MLC students and congregations say about these experiences?

- “I really learned to share my faith in a way that is not argumentative.”—MLC student
- “The kids and parents came from different walks of life, and they were excited to be at the camp and to hear God’s Word. I loved being able to talk to them. Some of them had never heard of Jesus before.”—MLC student
- “They responded with enthusiasm, hard work, joy, and a servant’s heart. God has certainly blessed them with many gifts for ministry. I know that our mission district was served well.”—WELS pastor from Colorado

Daylight International

The Lord has also provided opportunities for our students, faculty, and graduates to serve in international settings. Here are some interesting statistics:

- 2007—14 students to Asia, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Malawi, and Japan
- 2008—10 students to Asia and Dominican Republic
- 2009—9 students to Asia and Dominican Republic
- 2010—23 students to Asia, Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Colombia
- 2011—21 students to Asia, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Antigua, and Indonesia
- 2012—20 students to Asia, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Antigua, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Mexico and Peru

The above numbers represent graduates going into those countries for a year or more. Past short-term service opportunities of two weeks to two months duration have included experiences in Asia (students and faculty), Africa, Ukraine, and Peru.

A look ahead

Exciting growth in WELS early childhood ministries

The number of early childhood ministries in WELS has grown rapidly in the last several years. There are now 403 such ministries throughout our church body. Already four years ago, the Conference of Presidents directed MLC to graduate more early childhood teachers and directors. A gracious Good Shepherd has richly blessed our recruitment efforts and curricular changes so that now we have 112 students pursuing early childhood majors on campus.

To adequately prepare these teachers, a larger and more structurally efficient building is needed. Plans to build a new early childhood learning center are proceeding with asbestos removal in the current building slated for the beginning of February, demolition of the current building in late February and March, and the start of construction when the spring weather permits. Completion of the new facility is scheduled for Sept. 1, 2013. The guaranteed maximum price for the construction is \$3,385,000. As of this writing, God’s people have reflected the Father’s generosity in their gifts to this project. After just one year of a silent capital campaign, about \$700,000 remains to be gathered. We praise our Savior for such fruit of faith in the hearts of his people. (See the following chart for the increased number of donors. MLC sincerely thanks the Lord for such wonderful partnerships in gospel endeavors.) The difference between

construction costs and gifts received will temporarily be covered with reserve funds. The campaign will continue through June 30, 2013, so that these reserve funds are restored. No debt will be incurred in this construction project. Delegates will have opportunity to see the construction progress while at convention.

<i>Fiscal year</i>	<i>Number of donors</i>
July thru Dec. 2010	882
July thru Dec. 2011	991
July thru Dec. 2012	1388

Special education major to be offered

MLC's strategic plan, *Compelled to Speak*, included the development of an undergraduate special education major. The governing board in its February 2013 meeting adopted the recommendation to move forward with a special education major and authorized the calling of a special education professor to begin immediately. Some additional background will be helpful for the delegates.

A committee of the MLC education division considered surveying WELS principals and teachers to determine whether there was a need for some teachers to have special education training. The committee became aware of a doctoral study that surveyed WELS principals on this topic.

In the study principal responses were grouped according to district. According to this study, the average percentage of students who are "diagnosed with special needs and requiring accommodations/modifications" who attend our Lutheran schools is 12.55 percent. Another question asked the number of teachers with degree/certification in special education. Principals from one district reported three (3), from another district reported two (2), from two other districts reported one (1), and from the remaining districts reported zero (0).

The study's author, an MLC graduate, concluded the following:

1. The [special education] students are already in the Lutheran elementary schools [12.55 percent average].
2. The study revealed that the number of available resources and teaching staff with a degree or certification in special education is not sufficient for the successful implementation of special education at WELS Lutheran elementary schools.

There is definite interest in a special education major. The Admissions Office does not record specific program inquiries from prospective students. After reviewing their notes, however, the admissions counselors reported that over the past six months, 36 potential students expressed specific interest in special education training. In addition, exit interviews conducted with students who discontinued their studies at MLC reveal that a significant number of students leave because of their interest and desire to pursue training in special education.

The education division then explored possible implementation of a special education major. Special education has several areas of possible study including learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, and autism spectrum disorder. The committee feels that specialized training in learning disabilities would be the most helpful to our WELS schools. A goal for a special education program is to provide specialized training to some graduates who can serve as the special education resource person for a school. The ideal situation might be to have one regular teacher on a faculty with this specialized training.

Since we already have some courses in our curriculum, a student majoring in special education learning disabilities would be required to take seven additional courses. While special education could be a single major, students would be strongly encouraged to double major in elementary education and special education. For example, this would enable a graduate who is assigned to teach third and fourth grade to also serve as the school's special education resource person. Students could complete the double major in five years without needing to add courses in summer.

Summary: There are students with diagnosed special needs attending our WELS schools while the number of teachers with training in special education is small. It would benefit each of our schools to have at least one regular teacher who has special education training to work with special needs students and to serve as a resource to other faculty members and to parents. A special education major is possible within the credit structure and program plans for a student to complete a double major in five years and a single major in four years.

Graduate studies

The graduate program at MLC is expanding to meet the needs of WELS called teachers. The master's degree/post-

baccalaureate licensure option allows (D)MLC graduates before 2001 to earn their master's degree and state teaching license in the same program. Plans are underway to provide specific training for the WELS principalship through a Master of Science in Educational Administration program in 2014, and to add an option for a special education license in learning disabilities by expanding the current special education emphasis.

Continuing education

To fulfill the synod's directives, MLC continues to offer a greater variety of formats and programs, including the following new options:

- **New Teacher Induction:** MLC is working cooperatively with the Commission on Lutheran Schools to fulfill the 2011 synod resolution to provide mentoring to all beginning WELS teachers (Floor Committee #20, Resolution #1). A full-time continuing education professor has been called to help coordinate this program synodwide. We are happy to report that Teacher Jonathan Schaefer of Milwaukee, Wis., has accepted this call.
- **Issues in Lutheran Education:** This free blog began on Oct. 31, 2012, and supplies stimulating information and discussion on a variety of topics important to WELS schools and educators. Blogs are posted twice each month. Subscribers are informed when new articles are posted: <http://blogs.mlc-wels.edu/wels-educator/>.
- **Webinars:** Offered periodically as an affordable way for educators to learn about current educational topics.
- **Satellite courses:** MLC is increasing its ability to provide face-to-face instruction in off-campus locations. A streamlined hosting process enables more locations to serve as hubs. This summer, eight high schools are serving as hubs—Kettle Moraine, Michigan, West, Nebraska, California, Huron Valley, Shoreland, Manitowoc, and Michigan Lutheran Seminary.
- **Teaching that Works:** This is a series of online, one-credit courses designed to provide WELS teachers with affordable, convenient, practical, job-embedded, and collaborative ways to apply effective teaching practices. The first was offered in January 2013 with more to follow.
- **Professional development series:** WELS principals use MLC-provided online resources to provide ready-made development throughout the year in one-hour, easy-to-access lessons. In 2011–12, five schools utilized the title *Conflicting Worldviews: The Lutheran Teacher's Struggle for Children's Souls*.
- **Certificates:** In addition to the educational technology certificate, a new Teaching Online Certificate program is available to help teachers meet state guidelines to teach online.

Urban ministry

The Conference of Presidents has asked MLC to provide more teaching candidates for urban schools. The college is working with the Center for Urban Teaching in Milwaukee to address this need. Coursework, summer teaching experiences, and a year of residency in an urban school are several components being considered to expand and enhance training for urban ministry.

Increased recruitment efforts

New efforts in our admissions department have focused on increasing contact with homeschooled and public school students. Previous to 2012, pastors, teachers, and staff ministers would send only the names of students they deemed "prospects for ministry" to MLC for input into our database. Starting in 2012, MLC has requested the names of every high-school-aged student in our synod from each church. This allows us to obtain homeschool, public school, and WELS secondary students' information. These names have been input into our database and they have tremendously increased our number of contacts in our database. Efforts to reach those new students in our database with communication from MLC about the possibility of full-time ministry continue to grow.

Increased opportunities for Daylight

A new effort is underway to place a team of six graduates in Tomsk, Russia. We pray that God would bless these efforts. At present we anticipate that 25 students will opt for long-term service experiences in the current year and that Daylight International will help to sponsor short-term opportunities in Peru and China as well.

Daylight programming is funded through the budget and is overseen by the student/faculty service and cross-cultural learning committee. It should also be noted that the annual budget has not been able to fully fund the useful and beneficial service learning promoted by this committee. For many years the Daylight program has relied upon grant monies received through the Thrivent Churchwide Block Grant program, Antioch II Foundation grant distributions, and financial partnership with Kingdom Workers.

In conclusion

Martin Luther College invites the members of WELS to come and visit their college of ministry any time. Your

brothers and sisters will be thrilled to show you around so you can get a glimpse of one aspect of the worldwide work we strive to do together. Most important, MLC humbly asks God's people to pray for our ministry together. It is the Lord's work, using the Lord's inspired Word. May he bless our endeavors—to the glory of his name and for the good of his Church.

Pres. Mark Zarling, reporter

Rev. Michael Woldt, chairman

Rev. Jonathan Kolander, vice chairman

Teacher Steven Rosenbaum, secretary

Teacher Keith Bowe

Teacher Jonathan Hahm

Mr. Dale Krause

Mr. Steven Loehr

Rev. Michael Otterstatter

Mr. Timothy Petermann

Mr. Barry Price

Rev. Duane Rodewald

Mr. William Steinbrenner Jr.

Rev. Jeffrey Wegner

Advisory:

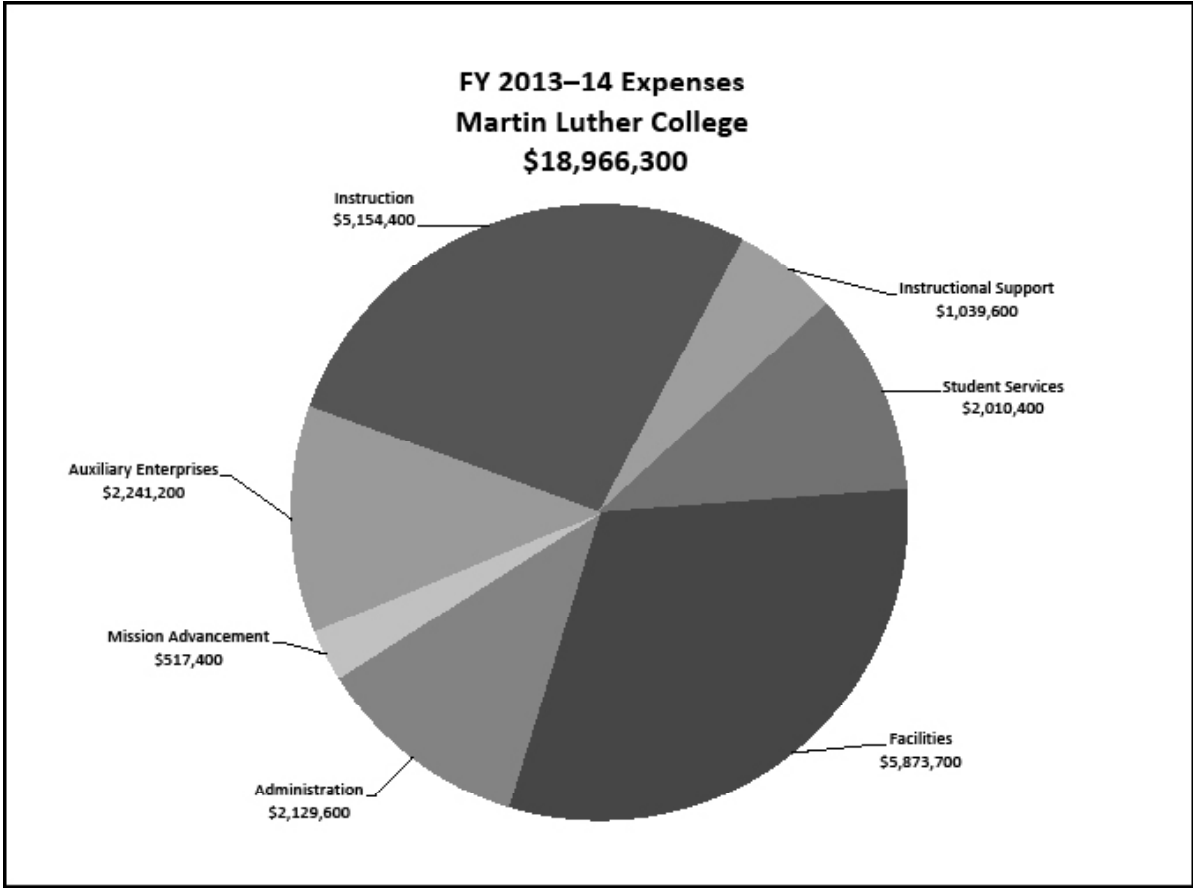
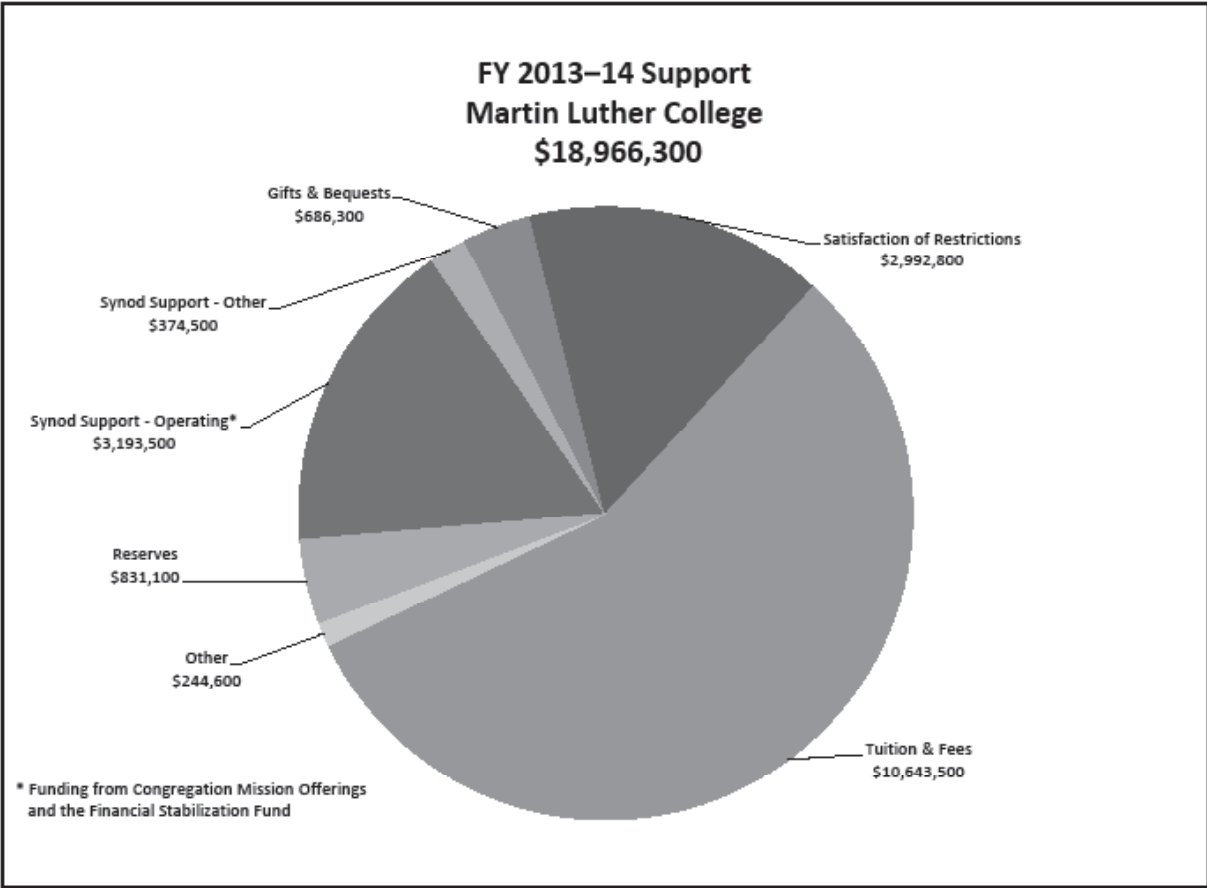
Rev. Charles Degner, president of the Minnesota District

Mr. Randy Matter, board appointed advisory member

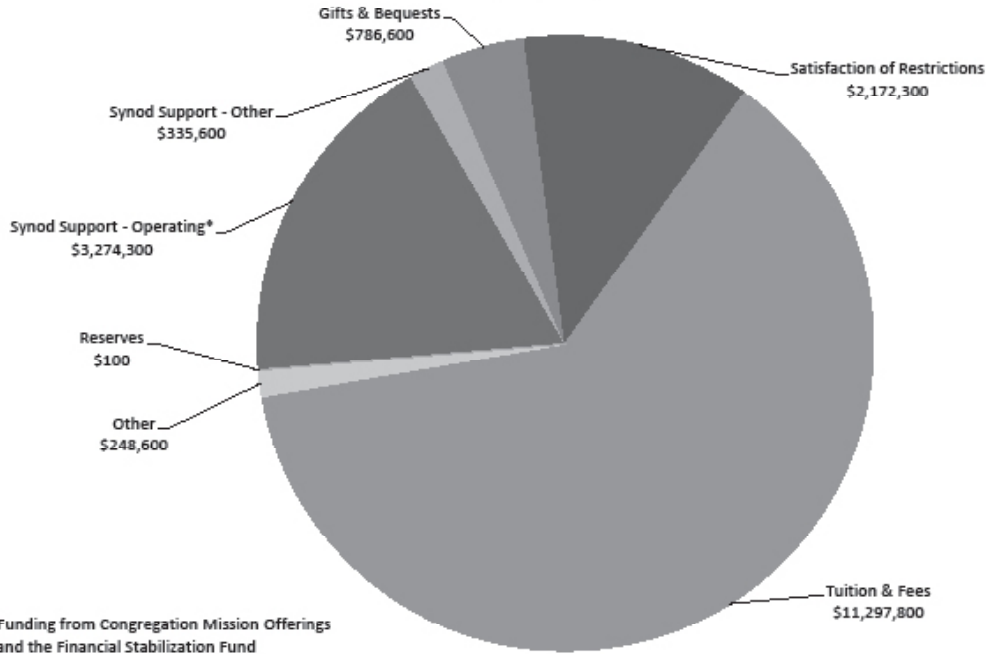
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

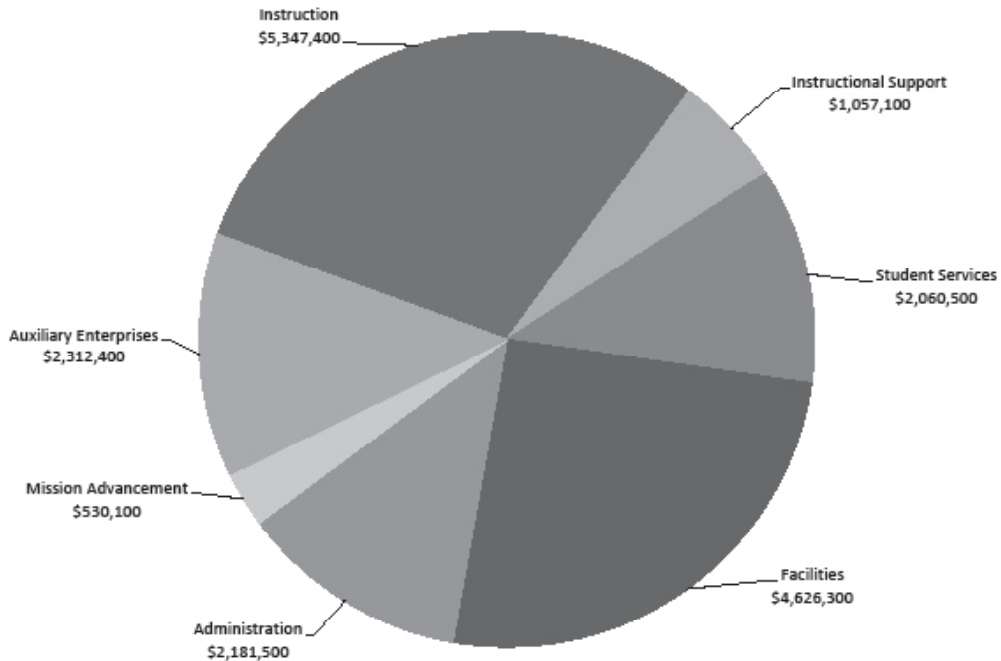
Pres. Mark Zarling, Martin Luther College



**FY 2014–15 Support
Martin Luther College
\$18,115,300**



**FY 2014–15 Expenses
Martin Luther College
\$18,115,300**



Luther Preparatory School

Floor Committee #11

Our calling

Luther Preparatory School (LPS), Watertown, Wis., has a single mission: To encourage and prepare high school students for a lifetime of service in the public ministry of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. That mission is central to everything we do—in the classroom, in co-curricular activities, in our worship services, and in the personal guidance given to every student.

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

Since its beginning in 1995, 55 percent of all Luther Prep graduates have enrolled at Martin Luther College. This gives evidence to Luther Prep fulfilling its purpose. Last year's graduating class saw almost two-thirds enroll at MLC, with more than 20 boys entering the pastor track.

Over the past four years LPS graduates have comprised more than 20 percent of the MLC student body and 35 percent of MLC's pastor track students. Over that same period, LPS graduates have comprised more than 40 percent of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) student body. These figures display God's generosity in blessing LPS's mission. Our synod benefits from its support of LPS and ministerial education.

Our current situation

Enrollment

LPS opened school year 2012–13 with an enrollment of 431. This marked the fourth year in a row that enrollment increased after eight years of declining enrollment. Our students come from 28 states, 7 foreign countries, 167 congregations, and all 12 WELS districts. More than two-thirds of our students come from lay families. With the number of applications being similar to the previous two years, it appears as though LPS will be in position for its fifth consecutive year of increased enrollment this fall.

Recruitment to LPS, with an eye on future full-time gospel ministry, remains a top priority. We always invite and welcome all WELS upper-grade students to visit our campus, "shadow" a Prep student, and spend a night in one of the dormitories to get a feel for Prep life. We host annual recruitment events such as basketball tournaments, Phoenix for a Day, the fall play, children's theater, and the musical, as well as summer music and athletic camps. Each year these events bring more than 3,000 WELS grade school students from across the country to our campus.

Preparing for the mission

The Word is central in all we do. Chapel is the heartbeat of our campus life as worship services are held twice daily. All classes are taught from a scriptural perspective, and students are encouraged in their personal devotional lives. The Holy Spirit working through the means of grace continues to encourage and prepare our young people for lives of gospel ministry and service.

The LPS curriculum is designed to prepare students to meet or exceed the requirements of MLC. LPS recognizes the need and desire for future musicians in our Lutheran congregations and classrooms. More than 95 percent of our students take piano lessons. The LPS organ program produces the most organ students for MLC. Many students are involved in the Jazz Band and string, brass, and wind ensembles. All students take at least one year of Latin and three consecutive years of a foreign language in order to thoroughly prepare them for future language studies, especially those in the biblical languages.

In 2009 LPS received accreditation from both WELSSA (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation) and NCA (an accreditation division of AdvancEd). LPS continues to meet the standards set forth and will go through the accreditation process again next year with NCA (AdvancEd).

Because we are a mission-driven school for gospel proclamation, LPS offers age-appropriate ministry experiences to its students. All of our seniors take part in our Taste of Ministry program, in which prospective pastor students spend

two days with an area WELS pastor, and our prospective teacher students spend two days in a classroom with an area elementary school teacher. Project Timothy is a program designed to provide mission, ministry, and cross-cultural experiences to LPS students. Approximately 50 students will assist with outreach and education programs of mission congregations in the Caribbean, California, Virginia, Georgia, Texas, South Carolina, and perhaps Mexico. Also, senior boys are given the opportunity to prepare and speak an evening devotion to the student body.

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

A look ahead

Luther Prep has plans in place to increase its recruitment efforts in the coming biennium. We currently visit more than 100 schools each year. We hope to significantly increase that number to 200 each year. We also plan to further enhance our technology so that even more Web-based resources can be used in the classrooms.

Luther Prep needs to receive approximately \$400,000 annually in direct gifts from WELS members in order to maintain our current ministry programs for our students. We are thankful to all the generous people who have supported LPS with these direct gifts, allowing us to approach that number these last two years. We will continue to pray for and rely on such gifts from God's people.

The synod's Watertown, Wis., campus is well-maintained. This past biennium it became necessary to replace our boiler system, which had served the campus for 62 years. The \$350,000 cost depleted the majority of Luther Prep's undesignated, spendable reserves. The proposed budget indicates that almost all remaining financial reserves will be depleted in 2015.

The LPS Governing Board recognizes the important gospel work done in all areas of ministry throughout our synod and the financial constraints that often go along with that work. After seeing a 20 percent decrease in synod subsidy (\$3.1 million to \$2.5 million) in 2009–10, synod subsidy to LPS has decreased even further as costs continue to moderately rise. LPS has carefully and modestly increased tuition each of the past five years. History has proven that when tuition is significantly raised, enrollment plummets. We remain concerned about using one-time monies from the sale of assets to fund ongoing ministry. It is imperative that LPS continues to offer financial aid to many families. It is also wise for LPS to continue to maintain the synod's campus. Please join us in approaching God's throne of grace in asking for his mercy and grace on every aspect of our synod's work.

In 2015 we will be celebrating 150 years of ministerial education taking place on your Watertown campus. Thousands and thousands of pastors and teachers—many who have joined the saints triumphant—received their solid foundation for public ministry on this campus. Thousands of faithful laymen and women also received a solid foundation for different vocations. Under the gracious and guiding hand of the Lord, LPS looks to remain faithful to the task the people of WELS have given to their school. The gospel and Christ's high calling lead us to recognize the privilege of preparing the next generation for gospel proclamation.

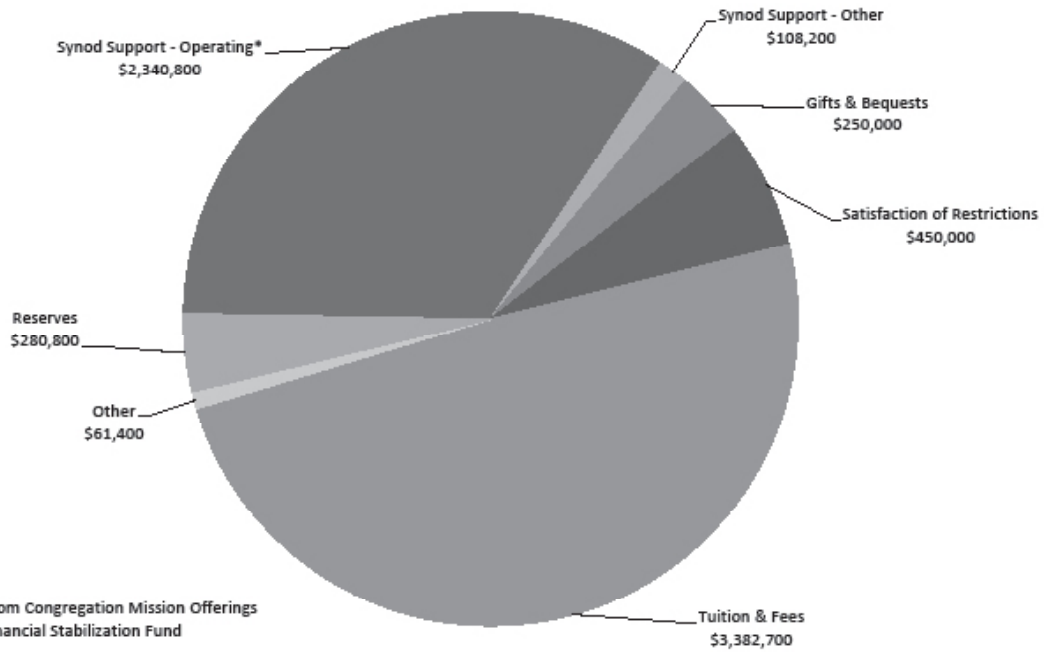
Pres. Matthew Crass, reporter

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

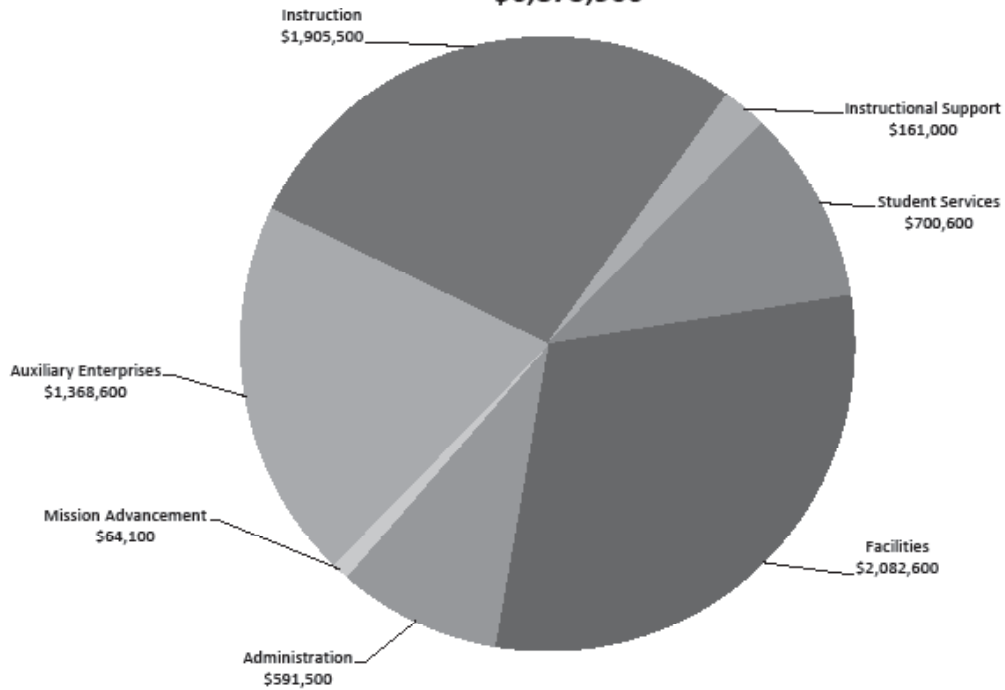
Advisory:

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

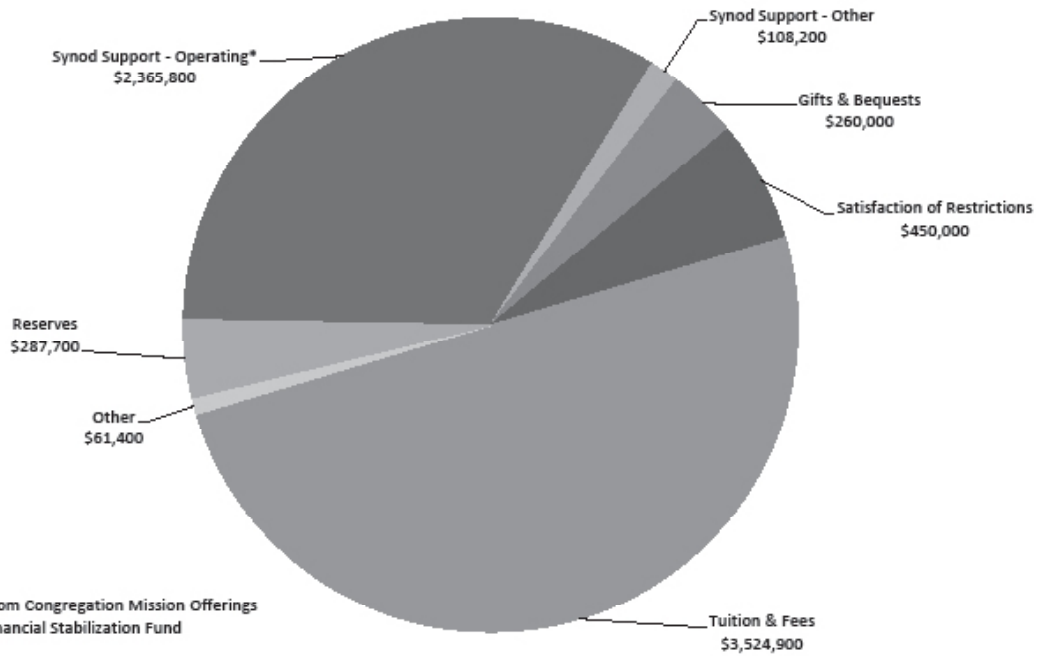
**FY 2013–14 Support
Luther Preparatory School
\$6,873,900**



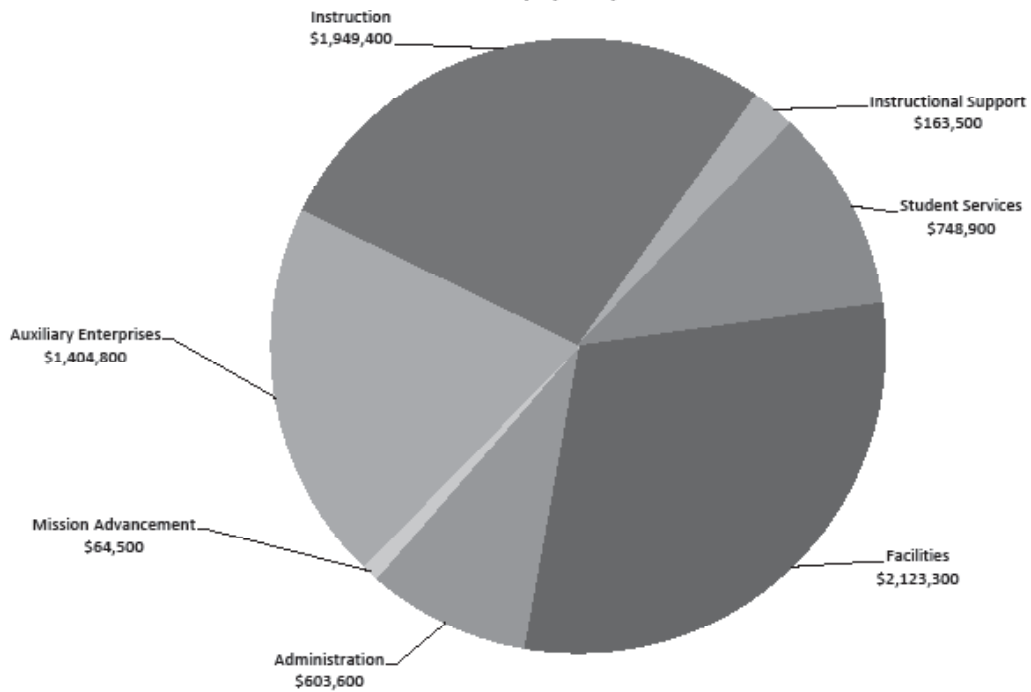
**FY 2013–14 Expenses
Luther Preparatory School
\$6,873,900**



**FY 2014–15 Support
Luther Preparatory School
\$7,058,000**



**FY 2014–15 Expenses
Luther Preparatory School
\$7,058,000**



Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Floor Committee #11

Our calling

Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS), Saginaw, Mich., is an integral component of the WELS ministerial education system, training future ministers of the gospel at the high school level and encouraging them to continue their preparation upon graduation at Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn.

The MLS Governing Board recently added to the school's mission statement: "To carry out its mission, the school trains international students for service either in the U.S. or in their native lands."

God's blessing on that mission is seen in the fact that 56 percent of the graduating class of 2012 went on to attend MLC and roughly 50 percent of our students have continued their training for the public ministry at MLC over the last 4 years. We also have 16 international students currently enrolled.

Our current situation

Enrollment

MLS began the 2012–13 school year with an enrollment of 237. This was the third straight year of increased enrollment beginning with the 2010–11 school year. This constitutes an enrollment increase of 56 students since a low of 181 in 2009–10. At the time of this writing MLS has received 54 applications for the 2013–14 school year. Based on past experience this would forecast a class of between 55 and 65. With our current smaller senior class (44) graduating in May, God-willing we will see another increase in overall enrollment for the 2013–14 school year. Current enrollment is 236.

<i>Grade level</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>
9	23	30	53
10	40	35	75
11	35	29	64
12	<u>25</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>44</u>
TOTAL	123	113	236

Dorm students: 150 (64%)

Commuting students: 86 (36%)

International students: 16

Districts represented: 9 of 12

States represented: 13

From Michigan: 194 (82%)

Faculty: 26

Staff: 26

In keeping with its mission, MLS currently only enrolls international students who belong to groups that are in some way affiliated with WELS World Missions. The goal is to assist these church bodies in raising up well-trained lay members and pastors or teachers who may someday be leaders and teachers in their home countries. At present, students from South Korea, Germany, Mexico, and Canada grace our campus. Students from WELS' sister church body in Germany, the ELFK, attend MLS for their junior year of high school and then return to Germany to complete secular high school and university training before enrolling at their seminary. They report to MLS that they value highly their year in the United States, especially for the training in English, Latin, religion, and church history. The MLS Governing Board has encouraged our international recruiter, Prof. Norval Kock, to continue to actively seek out students in many foreign countries who meet our criteria for WELS affiliation and who would benefit from our program.

Preparing for our mission

Encouragement and preparation for the public ministry occurs on campus, in local congregations, and through field experiences.

All of our students learn God's Great Exchange and how to share their faith with others. All of our students take piano lessons and some go on to organ playing, which is a recognized need in our synod. Seniors are visited regularly by the recruiters from Martin Luther College. Juniors enjoy a special banquet called "Junior Night" at which representatives of both Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary talk to them about the next levels of training for public ministry and what to expect. Sophomores go on "college tour" for a week to see the other three ministerial education schools of our synod. Freshmen attend Ministry Day at which local pastors and teachers share their stories, joys, and challenges of the ministry to get the students thinking about whether they too might serve Jesus in this special way. The entire student body participates in an annual Mission Seminar that highlights some area of our synod's gospel outreach at home and abroad.

Taste of Ministry is an opportunity for our girls and boys to spend time with an experienced teacher or pastor in the area. Getting into the classroom or seeing what goes on in a pastor's life beyond the pulpit often has a profound effect on our students' ministry decisions.

Project Titus is the name given to MLS's program of early field experience that takes place during the summer months. Each year students have the opportunity to sign up for one or more experiences. This might include canvassing or helping with a vacation Bible school, soccer Bible camp, or a summer school program at one of our Lutheran elementary schools. In the recent past students have participated in Project Titus trips to North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Nevada, and Wisconsin. In addition there were foreign trips to South Korea, Colombia, China, and Germany. These trips provide not only ministry experiences but also a sensitivity and understanding of other cultures.

All of these enable MLS students to make informed, mature, and Spirit-led decisions about full-time service in the public ministry.

Faculty and staff

President Joel Petermann began his full-time duties on our campus in the latter part of June 2012. With his arrival, Dr. William Zeiger has stepped down from acting president and is now back to teaching and being registrar. We thank him for his nearly two years of service as acting president. Prof. Norval Kock has assumed the position of vice president. Teacher Melissa LaBair, an MLC graduate, has now accepted the call as Dean of Girls after filling that position this last year on an interim basis.

MLS bade farewell to long-time maintenance staff member John Beyersdorf who retired in October 2012 after 41 years of service. We thank him for his faithful service.

Facilities

The facilities of MLS are generally in good repair with no major projects currently in progress. The refurbishing of the dormitories with new furniture (to replace 30-year-old furnishings), new paint, and new heating equipment is being planned. The cost of this project, which could be close to \$500,000, is being funded mostly through the efforts of the MLS Foundation.

Finances

MLS's finances have been a challenge in the last biennium. Reduced synod subsidy and declining enrollment both contributed to the strain. The resources the Lord provided were carefully used to keep our budget balanced.

Special thanks

Special thanks to God for the faithful service of Pastor George Ferch as the chairman of the MLS Governing Board. Ferch's eligibility to serve on the board will end at this summer's convention, and a new chairman will be elected.

Pastor James Naumann also recently left the board due to term limitations. We thank the Lord for his faithful service and welcome his replacement, Mr. Mark Eubank. In addition we give thanks to the Lord for the faithful service of Pastor Benjamin Tomczak. He accepted a call and was no longer able to serve on the governing board. We welcome his replacement, Pastor Marc VonDeylen.

A look ahead

MLS is very optimistic about the future. We know that the LORD has blessed us for 102 years of operation as a prep school of WELS and are confident he will continue to do so. The last years of increased enrollments also bode well for our future. Under God's blessing we pray that we can continue to send more than 50 percent of those students each year on to MLC and the other half to congregations as faithful lay workers in Christ's kingdom. To him be the glory!

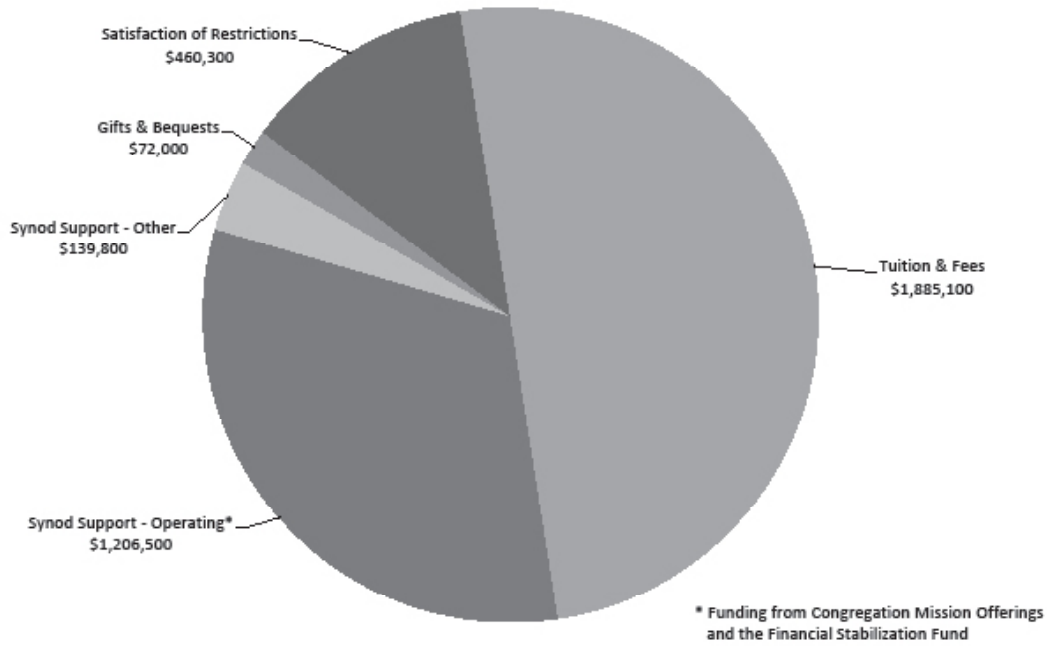
Pres. Joel V. Petermann, reporter

Rev. George Ferch, chairman, Southeastern Wisconsin District
Teacher Steven Carlovsky, secretary, Southeastern Wisconsin District
Prof. David Bauer, Minnesota District
Mr. Mark Eubank, Michigan District
Mr. Loren Mathison, Western Wisconsin District
Mr. Peter Naumann, Pacific Northwest District
Rev. Philip Paustian, Northern Wisconsin District
Rev. Marc VonDeylen, South Central District

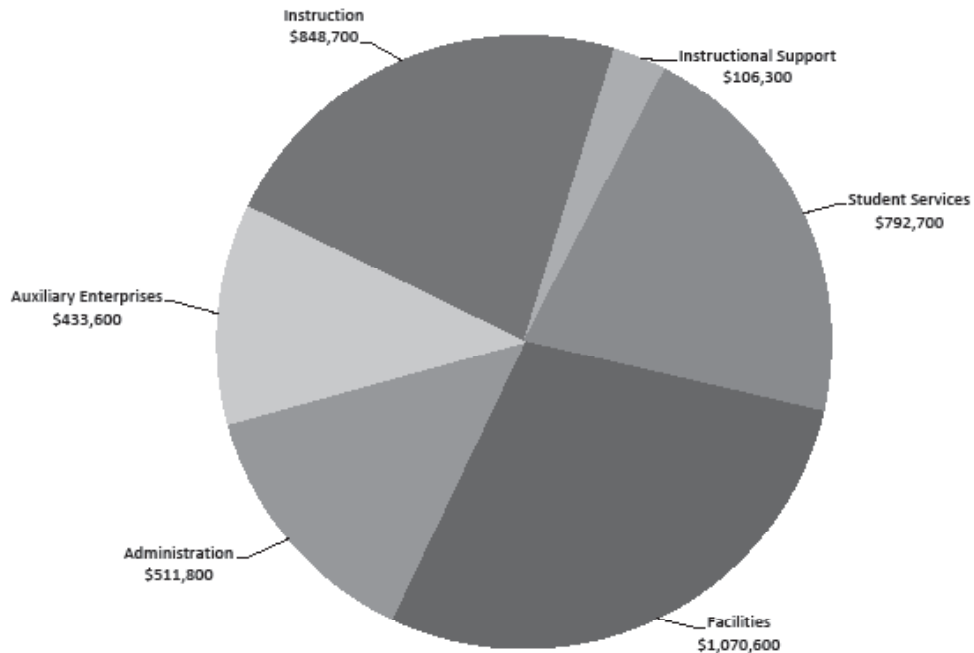
Advisory:

Pres. Joel V. Petermann, Michigan Lutheran Seminary
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president
Rev. John Seifert, president of the Michigan District

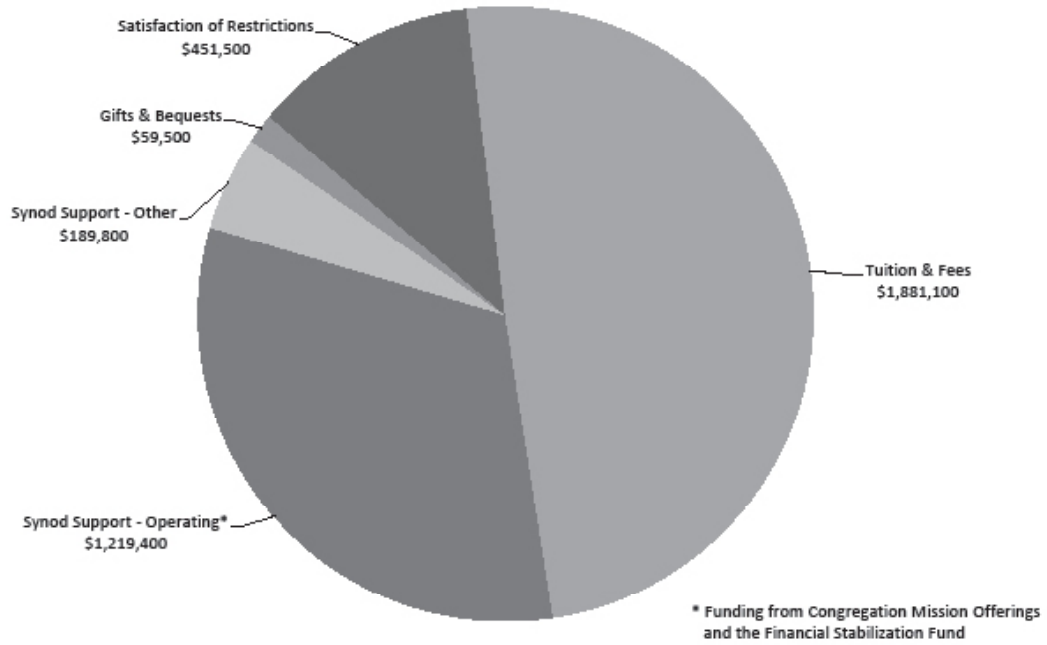
**FY 2013–14 Support
Michigan Lutheran Seminary
\$3,763,700**



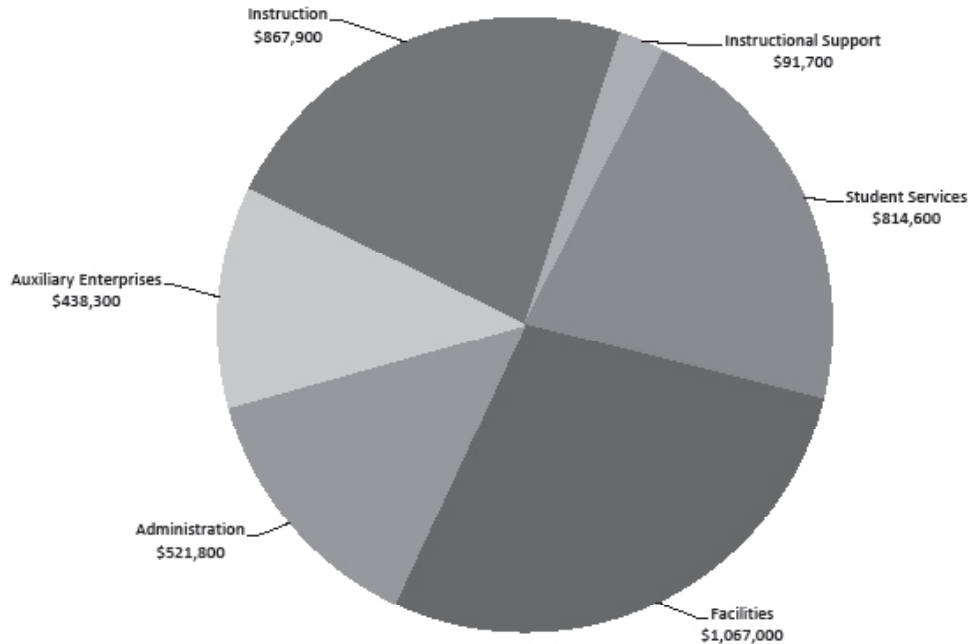
**FY 2013–14 Expenses
Michigan Lutheran Seminary
\$3,763,700**



**FY 2014–15 Support
Michigan Lutheran Seminary
\$3,801,300**



**FY 2014–15 Expenses
Michigan Lutheran Seminary
\$3,801,300**



Subsidiaries

A number of subsidiary groups serve the synod. These entities do not receive support from the synod's operating budget. Each of these is governed by a board that is accountable to the synod via the Synodical Council.

Northwestern Publishing House Floor Committee #15

Our calling

The constitution of WELS indicates, "The object and purpose of the synod shall be to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church." Then it lists a number of activities we do together as a synod, including "printing, publishing, purchasing, selling, and disseminating literature that maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice" and "furnishing appropriate literature for parish schools, Sunday schools, missions, institutions, and churches." For more than 120 years Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) has prepared materials that are consistent with Lutheran doctrine and practice.

NPH does not receive funds from WELS' budget. It funds the publication of Lutheran material through the sale of those materials to individuals, congregations, and schools. The bylaws of the constitution indicate that the proceeds NPH receives should be used to develop and publish new materials. NPH's calling is to continue to proclaim God's love in Christ through the careful use of the resources God grants. WELS' long-range plan assumes the function of NPH.

Our current situation

Since its last report, NPH continued to produce materials it considered important to WELS congregations. Some of these include Christmas and Lenten kits, vacation Bible school courses, Bible study materials, bulletin covers, *Meditations*, the *Christ-Light*® curriculum, worship resources, and books on selected issues. In addition, NPH has assisted other boards and commissions of the synod to prepare and distribute material to our congregations.

In the discussion of which Bible translation to choose for publications, NPH appreciates the sensitivity expressed concerning the financial impact this decision will have on NPH. However, the publishing house does not wish the decision to be based on what NPH may need. More important, NPH believes that the decision on which translation WELS should use in its publications—and therefore which translation NPH will use as it prepares the materials WELS congregations and schools will use—should be motivated by the study of the translations and what will best serve God's people and give glory to Christ. For now, using NIV84 for much of NPH's published materials can continue under "fair use" provisions of the copyright law.

NPH released a Sunday school version of the *Christ-Light* curriculum in 2013 and will release a version for Lutheran elementary schools in 2014. The release of the curriculum was delayed so that the curriculum could be adapted to make it compatible with whatever translation a congregation might choose for training the next generation. This approach has not weakened the curriculum's educational goals, but it has allowed teachers to assign memory work from the translation chosen by the congregation. Visit www.nph.net/CL2 for samples and additional information.

The future seems to direct NPH to explore the use of electronic distribution. The publishing house has been moving in that direction for some time already. Bible studies have long contained electronic resources, mostly leaders' guides. In addition, NPH is offering many Bible studies as downloadable versions on our Web site. Children's music is now almost entirely downloadable. An electronic version of *Christian Worship* is now available, and some new approaches will be included in the update of *HymnSoft*.

The growth of e-readers has suggested that NPH provide books in that format. The publishing house currently has the volumes of the People's Bible available for Kindle and Nook readers. NPH has about 75 books available for those e-readers. Sales are encouraging, but the need for print versions remains a reality.

A look ahead

As we look ahead, we note with thanks and praise God for the blessings he has provided. The future is not for us to know. Nevertheless, we look ahead with a desire to be good stewards of the resources God has graciously given, a positive—even hopeful—attitude, and a willingness to work while we have the opportunity.

Ongoing projects include resources for Christmas and Lent, *Parents Crosslink*, *Meditations*, and *Forward in Christ*. NPH is also working on new devotional books, materials available for download and use on congregational Web sites, more professional books for pastors, and a continuation of the "A Lutheran Looks At" series and the "Bible Discovery" series.

Forward in Christ will complete one hundred years as the synod's official magazine. The first issue was printed on Jan. 7, 1914. We are grateful for the Lord's blessing on the efforts of all who have been associated with the magazine over the past century. We look forward to marking the event.

Four years from now, we will celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. NPH is continuing its efforts to observe this important event with resources for districts, congregations, schools, and individuals.

NPH is funding the hymnal project director and beginning the long journey to the release of a new hymnal scheduled for 2024. Pastor Michael Schultz accepted the call to serve as the director and will have office space at NPH.

Two surveys have also pointed NPH ahead. The results of both surveys are posted on the NPH Web site for anyone wishing to review them. The first was a survey of our elementary schools and their use of electronic media for classroom teaching. NPH has shared the survey with WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools and WELS' chief technology officer. That survey has already started a discussion on how NPH can provide electronic resources for teachers of religious curriculum. The discussion of that survey will help guide NPH as we look beyond the release of the new *Christ-Light* material.

The second survey sought the input of WELS pastors on catechism materials. NPH shared the recommendations created in response to the survey with the Conference of Presidents in January of this year. The survey resulted in a yearlong discussion with the Education Committee of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary faculty and sought some information in planning for the future.

We believe that this survey has given us a start toward the development of new resources for catechism instruction in WELS congregations. It is clear to us that one book will not do all that the pastors have in mind. On the basis of the survey and our subsequent discussions, the new materials ought to pursue the development of the following:

- The Catechism and "Exposition"
 1. The simple enchiridion by itself, perhaps a keepsake edition.
 2. A new "Exposition of the Catechism" to revise the Kuske version. The Gausewitz "Explanation" was published in 1956 and Kuske's "Exposition" in 1982 with revisions in 1989 and 1998. This new revision will use the familiar Q&A format. It may be briefer, with fewer printed-out Bible passages, and a smaller format.
- Curricular materials
 1. Classroom workbook(s).
 2. A Bible history component of some kind.
 3. Teacher resources including quizzes; worksheets; Bible history teaching pictures; schedules for two, three, and four years of instruction; pictures that can be imported to SMART Boards and/or PowerPoint.
- Auxiliary materials
 1. A devotional resource that is geared to future use by the confirmand and could be used by families whose children are in confirmation instruction classes.
 2. Additional materials that will help families review the catechism and encourage them to help their children through their instruction classes.
- An online resource for students to explore Scripture and the catechism.

In order to make this happen, NPH will need to add a project director and retain the "Catechism Study Group" (Professors Quandt, Geiger, and Otto from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary with Pastors Ray Schumacher and John Braun from NPH) as a task force to serve as a resource for discussion, direction, and coordination.

As we move forward, we should anticipate field testing of the material to make sure it is helpful in the real world of catechism instruction.

We pause to give thanks for the service of Mr. Jerry Loeffel, who retired as president of NPH in December. We are grateful for his service and pray the Lord will continue to bless him. Currently Mr. Todd Rebillot is serving as interim president as the board seeks a replacement.

Rev. John Braun, reporter

Prof. John Hartwig, chairman

Rev. Joel Schroeder, vice chairman

Mr. William Strutz, secretary

Mr. Edward Wolf, treasurer

Mr. Matthew Plocher

Mr. David Neujahr

Mr. Christopher Snyder

Rev. Luke Werre

Prof. Keith Wessel

Advisory:

Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer

WELS Historical Institute Floor Committee #16

Our calling

Our calling as WELS Historical Institute is to “preserve and present the story of God’s grace to the WELS.” Our calling brings to mind the stone monument God directed Joshua to build when the nation of Israel had crossed the dry riverbed after God had cut off the flow of the Jordan River. Forever after when children asked, “What do these stones mean?” they would hear the account of this special manifestation of God’s grace.

Our current situation

The members of WELS Historical Institute work to provide a lasting witness of how God has worked among us with his blessing as we have proclaimed the message of his grace in Christ. To that end, our work over the last year focused on several projects, including:

- Membership publication of two issues of *Historical Institute Journal* each year (30-40 pages each). Each journal contains articles that focus on leaders, institutions, or events used by God to shape the course of Lutheranism and the history and work of WELS.
- Publication of two issues of a newsletter for members each year. Each issue offers information about the work of WELS Historical Institute.
- Presentation of a “Great Events From The Past” series each fall at the Landmark Church Museum in Milwaukee. Past events focused on the history of mission fields in Malawi, East Asia, and Apacheland as well as presentations on leaders of our past such as Pastor Friedrich Wyneken, Pastor Johannes Bading, and Pastor John W.O. Brenner. Presentations are available at www.welshistory.org.
- Continued restoration of the Landmark Church Museum back to its original 1863 condition.
- Establishment of a local support organization called Friends of the Landmark Church.
- Further development of the “Little School in the Woods” program and curriculum to give students a taste of an 1880s classroom experience.
- Launching a redesigned Web site at www.welshistory.org.

A look ahead

On Aug. 10, 2013, WELS Historical Institute will dedicate a Wisconsin State Historical Marker recognizing the beginnings of the Wisconsin Synod. This dedication will take place in conjunction with the celebration of the sesquicentennial of the Salem Landmark Museum in Milwaukee. Additional goals over the next biennium include completion of the “Little School in the Woods” program, increased membership, and expansion of events and activities that highlight our history as a church body.

This important work is done entirely by volunteers who wish to help “preserve and present the story of God’s grace to WELS.” WELS Historical Institute is not included in the synod’s budget. You have the opportunity to join us and help with event planning, writing, research, restoration, and gathering of gifts or donations. Consider becoming a member of WELS Historical Institute. History is interesting, but a shared history centered on Christ’s love is our calling and our treasure for eternity.

Prof. Robert Bock, reporter

Prof. Robert Bock, president

Mr. Daniel Nommensen, vice president

Mr. Duane Kuehl, treasurer

Ms. Naomi Plocher, secretary

Mr. Ken Artlip

Prof. John Brenner

Rev. David Dolan

Prof. James Korthals

Rev. Joel Leyrer

Mr. Steven Miller

Dr. Aaron Palmer

Dr. Joel Pless

Ms. Charlotte Sampe

Rev. Raymond Schumacher

WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. Floor Committee #17

Our calling

WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. (CEF), is a self-supporting, not-for-profit corporation, and subsidiary of WELS. Its primary purpose is to provide financing for mission congregation projects under the direction of the Board for Home Missions. WELS CEF provides loans and grants to qualified mission and mission-minded self-supporting congregations so that they can acquire parsonages, land, and ministry facilities to serve as tools for gospel outreach.

Our current situation

The funding to carry out our mission comes primarily from investments and gifts. Individual members, congregations, and affiliates of WELS may invest in CEF certificates. More than 4,100 investors have entrusted WELS CEF with \$90.2 million as of January 2013—a new record high for CEF member investments. These member investments provide funds for the Loan Program. Gifts and bequests made directly to WELS CEF are earmarked for the Grant Program.

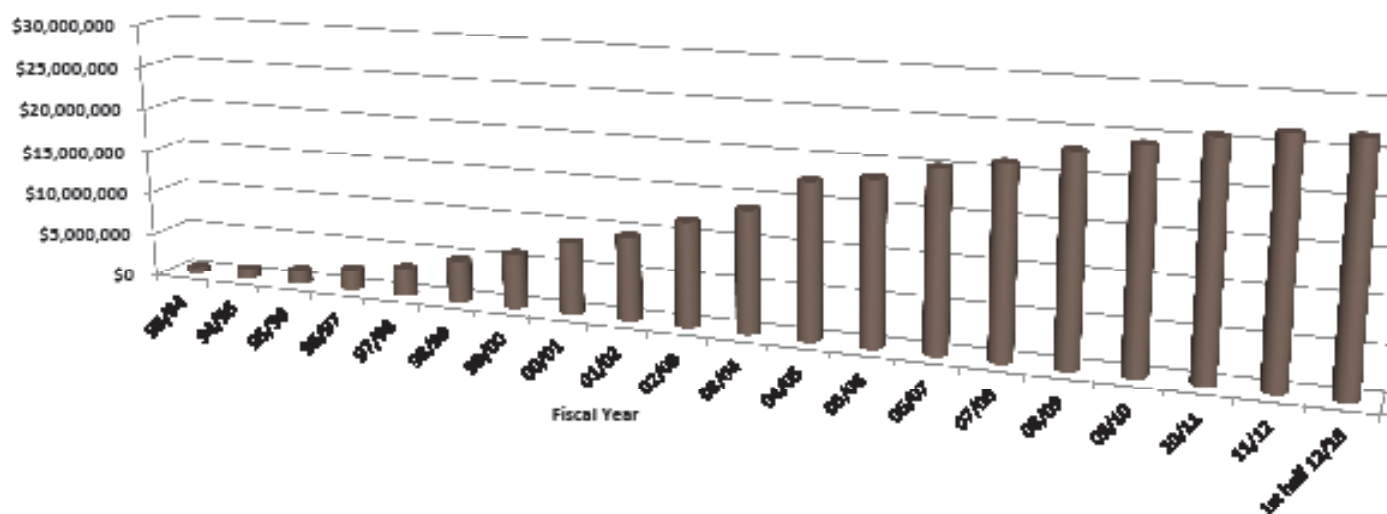
Loan Program

WELS CEF’s loan portfolio remains strong at more than \$120.7 million consisting of loans to 211 individual WELS congregations. Total new loan commitments have averaged around \$9 million the past three years; however, recent competitive commercial loan options have led to significant loan payoffs for some of our more mature loans. Currently 15 congregations have either an approved or active construction loan with the CEF. In September 2012, the CEF’s base loan rate was lowered to 3.75 percent for eligible mission congregations looking to obtain initial land and facilities.

Grant Program

WELS CEF provides matching grants to eligible mission congregations after they have provided a minimum 10 percent down payment for a land purchase, existing facility purchase, or new facility construction project. A congregation's down payment combined with a CEF matching grant allows the mission congregation to move forward with a more manageable loan payment. \$154,000 has been approved for matching grants through the first half of fiscal year 2012–13. We anticipate up to \$2.4 million of additional grant approvals to 14 congregations by the end of the fiscal year. Since 1993, more than \$24.8 million in CEF matching grants have been disbursed to mission congregations across North America and the West Indies.

Cumulative CEF grants disbursed to mission congregations and Home Missions



Special grant to Home Missions

WELS CEF provided WELS Board for Home Missions (BHM) a special grant in the amount of \$1 million in fiscal year 2010–11 to support the development of new mission congregations. Six congregations were selected to receive portions of the special grant to assist with land and facility projects. Five of the six congregations have now obtained land and/or facilities as a result of the CEF special grant to BHM and additional CEF financing. A summary follows:

- **Peace in Jesus, Boise, Idaho:** Purchased an existing building and renovated for their ministry purposes (dedication in September 2012)
- **Trinity, Woodbridge, Va.:** Purchased an existing building and renovated for their ministry purposes (dedication in January 2013)
- **Amazing Love, Frankfort, Ill.:** Purchased an existing building (June 2012) and currently renovating for ministry purposes
- **Christ, Denver, Colo.:** Purchased an existing building (December 2011) and currently renovating and building out for ministry purposes
- **Beautiful Savior, Moncks Corner, S.C. (new mission):** Purchased land (August 2012) and currently working on new facility construction loan request for Spring 2013
- **Spirit of Life, Caledonia, Mich.:** Currently working on new facility construction loan request for Spring 2013

A look ahead

We pray that by God's grace WELS CEF will continue to benefit from positive operational results and be able to provide additional special grants over and above our matching grant programs to assist more mission congregations. We anticipate that our loan portfolio will see significant growth over the next few years if we can keep interest rates competitive and with our renewed emphasis on providing loans to mission-minded self-supporting congregations. WELS CEF anticipates 16 land purchases and 40 construction projects over the next 3 years, resulting in \$30.2 million of new loans and \$5.3 million of new grants. We continue to encourage individual WELS members, congregations, and affiliated organizations to invest in CEF loan, savings, and retirement/IRA certificates and consider gifts and bequests to WELS CEF to help support our mission and close partnership with Home Missions.

For more information on WELS CEF loan and investment programs, contact us by phone at 866-511-7793 or by e-mail at cef@wels.net. You may also visit our Web site at cef.wels.net for more information on our programs, resources, and work with Home Missions.

Mr. Jared Justman, reporter

Board of Directors:

Mr. Paul Beitlich, chairman
Mr. David Waldek, vice chairman
Mr. Kenneth Zehm, secretary
Mr. Rodney Christ
Rev. Timothy Gauger
Mr. John Tappe
Mr. Joseph Worischeck

Advisory:

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

Officers:

Mr. Ron Hillmann, president
Mr. Jared Justman, vice president
Mr. Kenneth McGhee, vice president
Mr. Gene Williams, vice president
Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer

WELS Foundation, Inc. Floor Committee #18

Our calling

WELS Foundation exists to help God's people support gospel ministry through WELS. It provides planned giving services and administrative support for gifts benefiting WELS congregations and ministries.

Established in 1965, WELS Foundation, Inc., is one of seven Support Services entities of WELS. As a WELS subsidiary, WELS Foundation serves God's kingdom by providing gift administration for complex gifts that ultimately benefit WELS congregations and ministries. WELS Foundation does not receive financial support from the synod's operating budget but instead relies primarily on unrestricted gifts and administrative fees to cover its operating costs.

WELS Foundation is the foundation of choice for members, entities, and affiliates of WELS. It is the only foundation whose purpose is to facilitate donors' desires to support WELS ministries. During calendar year 2012, WELS Foundation administered and distributed \$5.8 million in donor-directed gifts to various WELS ministries.

Our current situation

WELS Foundation provides various giving opportunities including charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, donor advised funds, and endowment administration.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, the total assets were \$77.2 million with net assets of \$48.2 million. The net assets held by WELS Foundation are managed for the benefit of the WELS ministries as designated by the donor. These ministries include WELS synodical ministries (i.e. Home and World Missions, Ministerial Education Schools—Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Martin Luther College, Luther Preparatory School, Michigan Lutheran Seminary), congregations, and numerous affiliated ministries such as area Lutheran high schools.

Charitable gift annuities

A charitable gift annuity is a contract between a WELS member and WELS Foundation, by which the member

makes a gift of cash or securities in exchange for fixed quarterly annuity payments for life. After the Lord calls him or her home, the remainder of the gift annuity is distributed to the congregation or ministry as designated. Income payments from a charitable gift annuity may begin immediately, may be deferred until a specific date in the future, or may be deferred until an unspecified date in the future.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, WELS Foundation administered 608 charitable gift annuities with a total market value of \$9.2 million.

Charitable remainder trusts

A charitable remainder trust is created when a donor transfers cash, securities, or real estate into a charitable trust, but keeps a specified income interest—usually for life. When the trust ends per the donor’s designation, the assets in the trust pass to the designated beneficiaries such as the church and/or synod.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, WELS Foundation serves as trustee for 170 charitable remainder trusts with a combined market value of \$25.9 million.

Donor advised funds

A donor advised fund is a charitable giving vehicle wherein an individual, family, or corporation makes an irrevocable, tax-deductible contribution of cash, securities, or other property to WELS Foundation and at any time thereafter can recommend grant distributions to qualified WELS ministries. The fund can be established with current gifts, deferred gifts (i.e. charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts), and testamentary gifts (i.e. wills, living trusts, beneficiary designations of life insurance policies, or retirement accounts).

The WELS Foundation donor advised fund program provides an alternative to a private family foundation. WELS members can accomplish many of the same goals but with far less administrative work and expense.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, WELS Foundation administered 35 donor advised funds with a total market value of \$1.8 million.

Endowment funds

Endowment funds are permanently restricted funds established to receive and administer all gifts that are designated by the donor(s) for an endowment from sources such as cash, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, bequests, life insurance, charitable gift annuities, insurance policies, trusts, real estate, personal property, or any other gift, whether current or deferred.

Lord willing, expenditures from endowments further the work of the church by providing ongoing financial support for ministry until the Lord returns.

WELS Foundation administers synodical endowment funds for WELS Ministerial Education and WELS Missions. In addition, donor-designated endowments have been established for the benefit of WELS congregations or ministries.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, WELS Foundation administered 29 endowment funds with a total market value of \$16.4 million.

Other gift administration services

WELS Foundation also provides gift administration for letters of instruction, gifts of securities, IRA Charitable Rollover, real estate, life insurance contracts, agricultural crops, and other donor designated gifts.

Educational Webinars

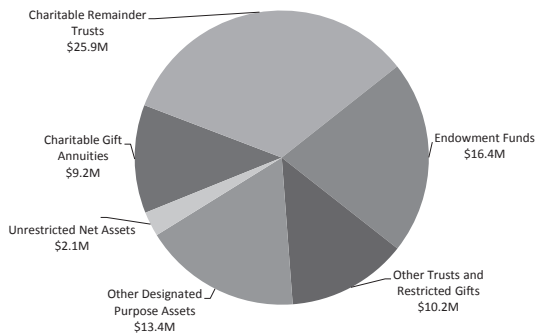
In 2012, WELS Foundation hosted a series of 12 educational Webinars offered by PG Calc. The monthly Webinars were timely presentations on various planned giving topics and made available by WELS Foundation at no cost to WELS Christian giving counselors, advancement officers, and congregational planned giving committee leaders. Contact WELS Foundation for recordings of past Webinars or to participate in future sessions.

A look ahead

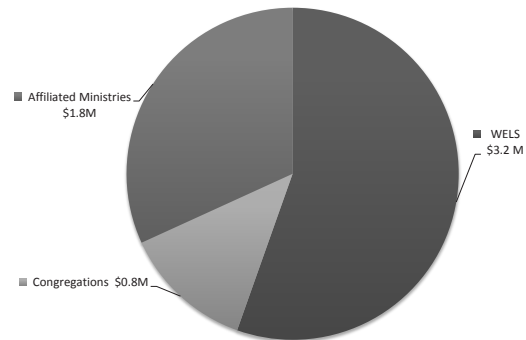
To carry out its mission, WELS Foundation will continue to identify the most cost-effective means to:

- Provide knowledgeable planned giving support to members through WELS Christian giving counselors and other WELS advancement representatives.
- Provide various planned giving opportunities including charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, donor advised funds, and endowment administration.
- Provide printed and online educational material regarding various planned giving opportunities for WELS and WELS-affiliated ministries.

**Total assets of \$77.2M
as of Dec. 31, 2012**



**Distributions to ministries of \$5.8M
Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2012**



Mr. James Holm, reporter

Board of directors:

- Mr. Paul Beitlich, chairman
- Mr. Donald Schuppe, vice chairman
- Mr. Mark Schulz, secretary
- Mr. Nathan Birkholz
- Mr. Tim Boerneke
- Mr. James Brenn
- Mr. Gene Knoll
- Mr. Tim McDonald
- Rev. Paul Prange

Officers:

- Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, president and director of WELS Ministry of Christian Giving
- Mr. James Holm, vice president and executive director
- Mr. Jeffery Grant, vice president
- Mr. Richard Wichinski, vice president
- Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer

WELS Investment Funds, Inc. Floor Committee #18

Our calling

The mission of WELS Investment Funds, Inc. (WIF), is to strengthen and enhance the ministries of WELS and WELS-affiliated organizations by providing professionally managed investment portfolios. WIF serves as the administrator of two investment portfolios: WELS Equity Fund and WELS Income Fund.

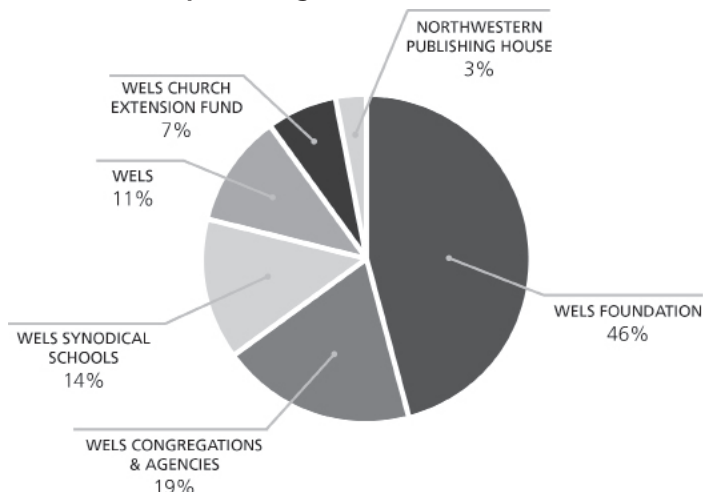
The WELS Equity Fund seeks long-term capital growth by investing in a portfolio of equity securities that is well diversified by industry and company size. The WELS Equity Fund may be appropriate for participating organizations who have a long investment horizon and are prepared to accept volatility associated with equity securities.

The WELS Income Fund seeks to provide current income by investing primarily in investment quality debt securities. The Income Fund may be appropriate for participating organizations having a desire for current income.

The WELS Balanced Allocation is not a WELS Fund but allows participating organizations to have their accounts automatically allocated, at the beginning of each calendar quarter, between the WELS Equity Fund (60 percent) and the WELS Income Fund (40 percent). As of June 30, 2012, approximately 90 percent of the total assets of the WELS Funds were allocated pursuant to the WELS Balanced Allocation.

Our current situation

Investors as a percentage of investments in WELS Funds



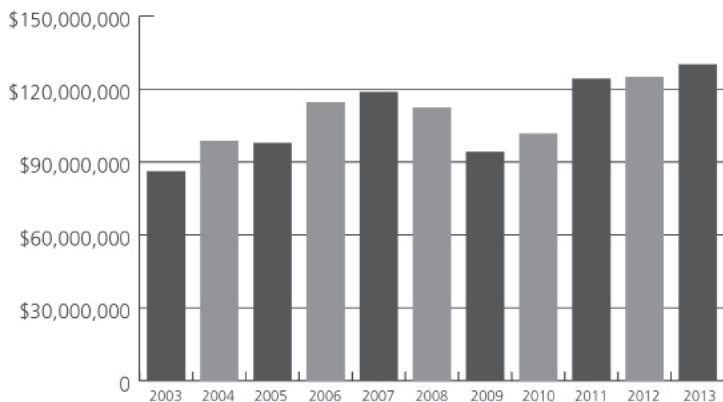
More than 165 WELS organizations invest in the WELS Funds. WIF has welcomed six new participant members during the first six months of fiscal year 2013.

WELS ministries invested \$1.96 million in WIF within the first six months of fiscal year 2013. \$1.14 million of the investments received came from congregations, \$122,000 came from synodical schools, and \$693,000 came from WELS Foundation, Inc.

In the first six months of fiscal year 2013, participant members utilized \$3.74 million to support their ministries.

As of Dec. 31, 2012, WIF's assets under management totaled \$130.2 million, an increase of \$5.1 million since June 30, 2012. Collectively, more than \$71.3 million has been invested by congregations and affiliates. The largest investor is WELS Foundation, Inc. WELS Foundation's \$58.9 million in charitable remainder trusts, charitable gift annuities, endowments, and donor advised funds represents approximately 46 percent of the total investment in the WELS Funds.

Assets under management



Performance summary

Average annual total return for the period ending Dec. 31, 2012

	6 months	1 year	3 years	5 years	10 years
WELS Balanced Allocation*	6.6%	13.6%	8.4%	3.3%	7.1%
WELS Equity Fund	8.5%	17.2%	8.3%	0.7%	7.6%
WELS Income Fund	3.8%	8.0%	7.6%	6.3%	5.6%

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Investment returns and principal value will fluctuate so that fund units, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost.

*Hypothetical returns that would have been received on an investment of 60% WELS Equity Fund and 40% WELS Income Fund for the period indicated.

A look ahead

Future activities include working with WELS Communication Services, WELS Technology, the Ministry of Christian Giving, and personally visiting WELS and ELS congregations and their affiliated organizations informing them about the investment portfolios available through WELS Investment Funds.

If your congregation or school has an endowment or scholarship fund and you desire more information about WELS Investment Funds, refer to the Web site, www.welsfunds.net. If you have further questions, please contact us at 1-877-888-8953 or by e-mailing WELSFunds@wels.net.

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. The performance data is current as of Dec. 31, 2012, and is subject to change at any time based on market and other conditions. Participating in a WELS Fund or the WELS Balanced Allocation is subject to investment risks, including possible loss of the principal amount invested. Withdrawals are payable by WELS Investment Funds exclusively from the net assets of the WELS Fund in which you participate. Accounts are not protected or insured by the FDIC or SIPC and are not guaranteed by WELS; WELS Foundation, Inc.; or any other person or entity. This is not an offer to sell or request to buy securities. The offering is made solely by the Offering Circular. At this time, the WELS Funds are NOT available to WELS-affiliated organizations located in Connecticut, Maryland, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Vermont, or Virginia.

Mr. Mark Arnold, reporter

Directors:

Mr. Jon Bruss, chairman
Mr. James Abitz, vice chairman
Mr. Charles Cairns
Mr. Joel Luehmann
Mr. Dennis Walters
Dr. Ronald White

Advisory:

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

Officers:

Mr. Mark E. Arnold, president
Mr. Jeffery Grant, vice president
Mrs. Monica Peavy, secretary
Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer

WELS Benefit Plans Floor Committee #19

Our calling

The WELS Benefit Plans Office serves synodical workers and organizations through the administration of the WELS Voluntary Employee Benefits Association (VEBA) and the WELS Pension Plan. Oversight of each plan is the responsibility of separate commissions appointed by the Synodical Council. Each commission is composed of four laymen, a pastor, and a male teacher from the active worker roster. Contributions toward the cost of plan benefits and operations are held in separate trusts, which are invested in diversified accounts with outside money managers overseen by an independent investment advisory firm. Both plans employ outside professionals providing benefit design, actuarial, consulting, banking, legal, and auditing services.

Our current situation

Over the past two years, Benefit Plans staff resources have been primarily focused on transitioning several administrative functions to a third-party administrator. Newly-outsourced functions include enrollment, billing, and customer service. This partnership has provided several service enhancements to workers and organizations,

including real-time access to benefit enrollment status, online processing of life events, and acceptance of electronic premium payments. With this transition complete, Benefit Plans staff is positioned to face the upcoming challenges presented by health care reform and to serve workers and organizations as an informative resource in this complex and dynamic environment.

Given rapidly-increasing premiums, decreasing membership, and concerns over the long-term viability of the group Medicare Advantage plan being offered to retirees, the VEBA Commission and Benefit Plans implemented a new Medicare program in 2013 insured by UnitedHealthcare. This program allows retirees the flexibility to choose from a variety of plans that best meet their health care and financial needs and is expected to reduce total out-of-pocket costs for many retirees.

The VEBA Plan rates increased by 8 percent and 11 percent for 2012 and 2013, respectively, which is consistent with a majority of national insurers over this time period. When total benefits and costs are considered, the VEBA Plan continues to compare favorably to other commercial insurance plans covering the same geographic areas. Plan enrollment has remained stable, averaging approximately 10,700 covered workers and dependents since 2011. The cost impact of upcoming health care reform provisions will be monitored by the VEBA Commission in its role of establishing affordable contribution rates while maintaining adequate plan reserves. In the coming years, new federal programs established by the Affordable Care Act will be funded by nearly all employer plans, including WELS VEBA. In addition, Benefit Plans will closely monitor developments regarding the mandate for non-profit organizations to cover contraceptives, certain forms of which are not supported by WELS doctrine.

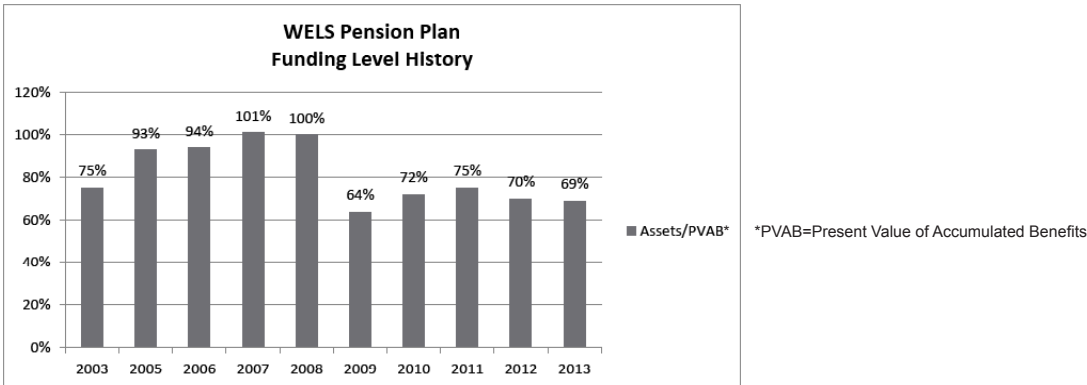
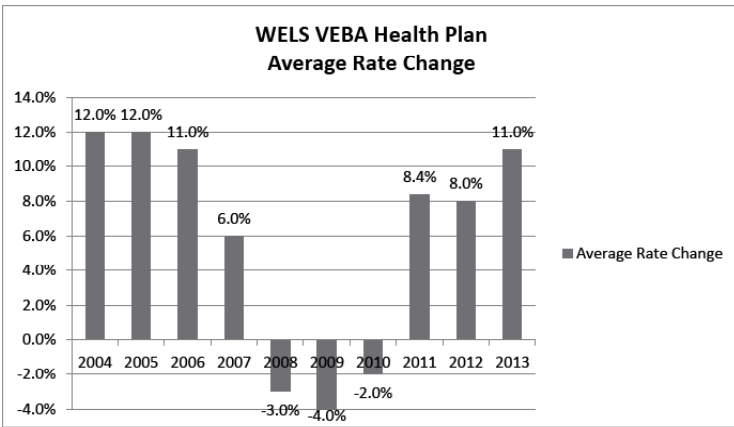
The Pension Plan, while funded to meet its benefit obligations to current in-benefit participants, faces long-term funding challenges primarily caused by aging participant demographics and volatile financial markets. These factors have caused the Plan's funding status (which compares the Plan's assets with the benefit payments earned by participants) to remain in the low- to mid-70 percent range over the past four years. The Pension Commission's key objective over the next few years is to improve the Plan's funding status through continued prudent management of its assets and liabilities while striking a balance between maintaining acceptable costs to organizations and meaningful benefits to participants. To that end, the commission has increased the annual contribution rates charged to organizations by 5.8 percent and 11.0 percent for 2012 and 2013, respectively, while providing small increases to the benefit basis for new retirees over the past two years. In addition, increased efforts will be made to improve timely payment and collection of Plan contributions.

With the exception of a downturn during the third quarter of 2011, both the VEBA and Pension trusts have realized significant investment performance gains over the past two years. Asset levels for both plans are now greater than assets prior to the 2008-09 financial market collapse. Final audited results from the 2011 plan years show net assets available for benefits in the VEBA and Pension trusts as \$21.7 million and \$111.4 million, respectively. In comparison, 2012 unaudited net asset values for each trust, VEBA and Pension respectively, are estimated at \$23.2 million and \$122.7 million. Both commissions continue to evaluate investment funds that are expected to achieve target returns with reduced risk.

A look ahead

Health care reform presents both a challenge and an opportunity for the VEBA Plan. Maintaining compliance with often-changing federal regulations and providing benefits in accord with WELS' religious beliefs will be necessary for the Plan's continued operation. However, we expect the early years of the new health insurance marketplace to reinforce the VEBA Plan as the most effective and cost-efficient method of delivering health care benefits to workers while strengthening the Plan's most important feature: providing health benefits to workers in a way that does not affect the divine call process.

Given the uncertain regulatory and economic environment and the impact on the VEBA and Pension Plans, Benefit Plans is mobilizing to become a more visible and accessible resource for workers and organizations to provide clear information on how potential changes will affect worker benefits and organization costs.



Mr. Joshua Peterman, reporter

WELS VEBA Commission:

- Mr. Richard Hudock, chairman
- Capt. Doug Miller, vice chairman
- Mr. Jeff Timm, secretary
- Mr. Charles Adrian
- Rev. Richard Agenten
- Teacher Chris Fischer

Advisory:

- Mr. Joshua Peterman, director of Benefit Plans
- Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer
- Ms. Lori Schrank, claims manager

WELS Pension Commission:

- Mr. Gene Szaj, chairman
- Rev. David Kolander, vice chairman
- Teacher Scott Uecker, secretary
- Mr. Robert Abramowski
- Mr. Scott Heins
- Mr. David McCulloch

Advisory:

- Mr. Joshua Peterman, director of Benefit Plans
- Mr. Todd J. Poppe, WELS chief financial officer

Committee on Constitutional Matters

Floor Committee #25

Our calling

The Committee on Constitution Matters (CCM) serves under the Conference of Presidents (COP) to interpret the constitution and bylaws for the synod and its constituency. It is responsible for maintaining and distributing accurate updates of these documents as changes are made by the synod in convention. The current WELS Constitution and Bylaws and the Constitution for the Districts are available on the WELS Web site, www.wels.net/about-wels/synod-reports. If you are unable to access the documents on the Web site, you may contact the President's Office to request a printed copy.

Our current situation

The delegates to the 2013 convention will have five proposed amendments to consider. All are printed as part of our report. Amendments 1 and 2 are intended to provide more flexibility for smaller, outlying districts. More information on these two amendments can be found in the report of the Conference of President on pp. 7 and 8. Amendment 3 would allow the congregations of WELS–Canada to organize into their own mission district. Both the Dakota-Montana and North Atlantic Districts submitted memorials requesting this change. Those memorials are printed on pp. 206 and 207. The rationale for amendment 4 is spelled out in an addendum to the Board for Ministerial Education report on pp. 152 and 153.

Since all these proposals involve amendments to the synod bylaws or the Constitution for the Districts, each will require a two-thirds majority vote for approval. In the amendments that follow, strikethrough indicates those words to be deleted from the current document, and underlining indicates those words to be added.

Proposed amendments to the bylaws and the Constitution of the Districts

Amendment #1: District council

Submitted by: The Conference of Presidents

ARTICLE XIII

District Council

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 chairmen 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 district nominating committee shall be done by the circuit pastors of the district in consultation with the district praesidium.

[and]

ARTICLE XVIII

Nominating Committee

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.

Amendment #2: District legislation committees

Submitted by: The Conference of Presidents

ARTICLE XVII

Legislation Committee

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 interests 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.

Amendment #3: Mission districts

Submitted by: The Dakota-Montana and North Atlantic Districts through Pres. Mark Schroeder

Synod Bylaws

Section 6.04

Mission Districts and District Mission Boards

(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]

District Constitution

ARTICLE XIV

Mission Districts and Mission Boards

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.

Amendment #4: Board for Ministerial Education

Submitted by: The Board for Ministerial Education

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 the 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.

Amendment #5: WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc.

Submitted by: Church Extension Fund Board of Directors

Synod Bylaws

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.

A look ahead

Our committee will meet as soon as possible after the convention to incorporate the amendments approved by the delegates and publish the revised Constitution and Bylaws. Notice will be given when the document is complete. It will be available, as now, at www.wels.net/about-wels/synod-reports or by contacting the President's Office for a printed copy.

Rev. Paul Naumann, reporter

Rev. Paul Naumann, chairman

Rev. Steven Korth

Judge Victor Manian

Memorials

Memorial (2013-01)

Subject: *Synodwide offering for debt elimination*

Floor Committee #1

- 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 \$700,000 towards debt elimination so that the debt now stands at [approximately] \$8.8 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; 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.

WELS Conference of Presidents

Memorial (2013-02)

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

Floor Committee #5

- 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 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 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) LBK-Norway became an independent church body in July 2009 when it peacefully separated from LBK-Sweden for practical reasons in order to carry out its church life on its own in Norway; and
- WHEREAS 5) LBK-Norway was officially received as a new member church 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.

WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Memorial (2013-03)

Subject: *Request for WELS-Canada to form its own mission district*

Floor Committee #10

- WHEREAS 1) a Canadian Mission District would provide the Canadian input, authority, and control deemed essential to addressing the uniqueness of conducting gospel ministry in Canada; and
- WHEREAS 2) empowered by the gospel, a Canadian Mission District would continue to equip Canadians for active involvement in the priesthood of all believers and would encourage Canadians to reach out to fellow Canadians with the message of life; and
- WHEREAS 3) Canada is currently administered by two district mission boards, which creates difficulties in coordinating Canadian outreach efforts; and
- WHEREAS 4) 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 5) one centralized Canadian Mission District would more effectively coordinate gospel ministry within Canada and more efficiently administer the \$350,000 gift from the Hallmark Foundation; and
- WHEREAS 6) the Board for Home Missions Executive Committee approved the concept of a Canadian Mission District in its March 22–24, 2012, meeting; and
- WHEREAS 7) the current WELS Constitution and Bylaws explicitly speak of the formation of a mission district only within a district and not one spanning multiple districts; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that the Dakota-Montana District recommends to the synod that the WELS congregations in Canada be organized as a Canadian Mission District; and be it finally

Resolved, b) that the Dakota-Montana District asks the WELS Committee on Constitutional Matters to consider making the necessary revisions to the WELS Constitution and Bylaws to accommodate the proposed Canadian Mission District.

Dakota-Montana District

Memorial (2013-04)

Subject: *Encouragements for WELS-Canada Board of Directors*

Floor Committee #10

- WHEREAS 1) the Dakota-Montana District recognizes the value and benefits of organizing the WELS congregations in Canada into a Canadian Mission District; and
- WHEREAS 2) the request from WELS-Canada to become a Canadian Mission District is interwoven with its plans to become an independent, national church body in fellowship with WELS and the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference; and
- WHEREAS 3) the WELS-Canada Board of Directors has identified 2015 as a target date for independence; and
- WHEREAS 4) the timetable presented by the WELS-Canada Board of Directors for implementation of a Canadian Mission District with this target date does not accurately reflect the approval process required for establishing a mission district; and
- WHEREAS 5) the additional time needed for the approval process greatly reduces the anticipated benefits of working as a Canadian Mission District prior to the transition to an independent church body; and
- WHEREAS 6) the action items listed under “WELS-Canada working as a Mission District” in the board’s “Next Steps” do not clearly differentiate between the responsibilities of the newly-formed Canadian

mission team and actions undertaken by the WELS-Canada Board of Directors, blurring lines of responsibility and accountability; and

WHEREAS 7) this lack of differentiation can also lead to a misunderstanding of a mission district's primary purpose of coordinating mission efforts, not serving as an administrative stepping stone toward independence; therefore be it

Resolved. a) that the Dakota-Montana District strongly urges the WELS-Canada Board of Directors to reformulate a target date for independence as a national church body that both reflects the time needed for approval of a Canadian Mission District and allows ample opportunity for the full implementation and operation of the newly-formed mission district; and be it further

Resolved. b) that the district encourages the WELS-Canada Board of Directors to revise its list of steps toward independence, differentiating between action items of the board and those of the Canadian mission team and delineating clear lines of responsibility and accountability; and be it finally

Resolved. c) that the district encourages the WELS-Canada Board of Directors to communicate clearly to the Canadian congregations the purpose and value of a Canadian Mission District apart from plans for independence.

Dakota-Montana District

Memorial (2013-05)

Subject: *WELS-Canada to form its own mission district*

Floor Committee #10

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 uniqueness 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 two different districts and their associated mission boards, which creates difficulties in coordinating outreach efforts within Canada; and

WHEREAS 6) the Board for Home Missions Executive Committee approved the concept of a Canadian Mission District in its March 22-24, 2012, meeting; and

WHEREAS 7) upon approval of this motion by both districts, WELS-Canada will petition WELS at its July 2013 convention to revise Synod Bylaw 6.04(b), allowing the Canadian Mission District to remain in both the North Atlantic and Dakota-Montana Districts for doctrine and practice oversight; therefore be it

Resolved. a) that the North Atlantic District recommends that WELS in convention approves the Canadian WELS congregations to be organized as a mission district; and be it finally

Resolved. b) that we of the North Atlantic District recommend that the Canadian Mission District be allowed by the districts to operate on a provisional basis with full accountability to, and oversight by, the Board for Home Missions until such time that synod approval is received at the synod convention in July 2013.

North Atlantic District

Memorial (2013-06)

Subject: *Additional associate director for the Commission on Lutheran Schools—Forward with Lutheran Schools/Second Wind*

Floor Committee #14

- WHEREAS 1) Jesus commands that we go and make disciples of all nations; and
- WHEREAS 2) WELS schools serve to assist in carrying out the Great Commission; and
- WHEREAS 3) WELS schools partner with parents in training children in the way they should go; and
- WHEREAS 4) WELS schools assist congregations in carrying out their ministries; and
- WHEREAS 5) 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 6) our church body has been blessed with 80-85 percent of its called workers and many of its lay leaders being educated in WELS schools; and
- WHEREAS 7) there is tremendous potential to share the gospel of Jesus Christ through our growing ministries of early childhood education; and
- WHEREAS 8) there is the potential of the expansion of early childhood ministries into Lutheran elementary schools; and
- WHEREAS 9) there is the potential for the growth of Lutheran elementary schools—both in number of students served and in the number of educational units—as church and school leaders work to enroll a greater percentage of their member children and work to utilize their school as a component of their evangelism efforts in their communities; and
- WHEREAS 10) since July 2011, more than 30 congregations have asked the Commission on Lutheran Schools 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 11) since July 2011, more than 25 congregations have asked the Commission on Lutheran Schools for assistance with their labors to expand or revitalize their early childhood ministry and/or Lutheran elementary school; and
- WHEREAS 12) 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 13) realizing the Lord will bless as he sees fits, school growth also comes in the form of improvement and strengthening, regardless of enrollment statistics; and
- WHEREAS 14) Second Wind (SW), a school revitalization effort funded and staffed from 2007–09, had served and supported many schools facing significant challenges; and
- WHEREAS 15) due to the 2009 defunding of FWLS and SW, the Commission on Lutheran Schools is not staffed to the level necessary to assist these congregations and schools proactively and systematically; and
- WHEREAS 16) efforts to maintain the services of FWLS and SW with full-time called workers who are serving in local settings have not been adequate to meet the requests from congregations; and
- WHEREAS 17) the Task Force on Lutheran Schools, established by the 2011 synod convention, has identified many critical issues facing our Lutheran schools; and
- WHEREAS 18) the WELS Task Force on Lutheran Schools, the Commission on Lutheran Schools (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 and SW; and

- WHEREAS 19) 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 the Conference of Presidents extends 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 and Second Wind; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that sufficient support staff be provided for Forward with Lutheran Schools and Second Wind; 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.

Task Force on Lutheran Schools

Memorial (2013-07)

Subject: *Improvement planning in WELS schools*

Floor Committee #14

- WHEREAS 1) our Lord teaches us that parents are to train their children in the way they should go; and
- WHEREAS 2) for more than 150 years, WELS schools have assisted parents with their God-given responsibility and privilege to instruct their children in God’s Word; and
- WHEREAS 3) WELS schools are blessings from the Lord to children, families, congregations, and to our entire church body; and
- WHEREAS 4) WELS congregations and schools enjoy the blessings that come with our traditional operational model of local autonomy; and
- WHEREAS 5) the model of local autonomy can also lead to ministry complacency, which can result in an environment and culture that lacks coordinated improvement planning; and
- WHEREAS 6) the model of local autonomy can lead to a lack of an appropriate accountability system among the called workers and lay leaders associated with the school; and
- WHEREAS 7) significant challenges and opportunities, as detailed in the report from the Task Force on Lutheran Schools, exist in WELS Christian education; and
- WHEREAS 8) our desire as a church body is that WELS schools thrive, even during this time of educational and societal challenge and change; and
- WHEREAS 9) motivated and empowered by the gospel, servant/leaders connected with every area of ministry will want to strive for continual improvement; and
- WHEREAS 10) 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 11) 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 12) 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 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 five years; and be it further
- Resolved, e) that if a school chooses not to seek and maintain accreditation, we will encourage them to strive for a culture of continual improvement through the use of appropriate tools, such as the Task Force on Lutheran School's Foundational Principles and Guiding Statements for WELS Schools and *Foundations*; and be it further
- Resolved, f) that we encourage each school's principal or director to submit an annual school improvement plan to the district school coordinator; and be it finally
- Resolved, g) that we ask the Lord to continue to bless the work of WELS schools and all who labor in and for them.

Task Force on Lutheran Schools

Memorial (2013-08)

Subject: *NIV2011 and Translation Evaluation Committee work*

Floor Committee #21

- WHEREAS 1) the publication of NIV2011 requires the synod to make a decision about which translation it will use in its publications; and
- WHEREAS 2) we recognize that the NIV2011 contains many improvements but also contains many passages which unnecessarily weaken the translation; and
- WHEREAS 3) many passages dealing with Messianic prophecy are rendered in a questionable or unacceptable way; and
- WHEREAS 4) some of the use of gender-inclusive language is welcome but some depart from the original meaning of the Greek or Hebrew text; and
- WHEREAS 5) some translations of passages dealing with gender roles obscure the biblical doctrine of the roles of men and women (Acts 6:3 and others); and
- WHEREAS 6) the undersigned believe that fidelity to the meaning of the original text is ultimately more important than the flow and currency of its English expression; and
- WHEREAS 7) the latest version of An American Translation (AAT, Beck) is very readable, is faithful to the original Greek and Hebrew, is better than most translations in its treatment of Messianic prophecy, and is excellent in its treatment of gender-inclusive language especially in passages dealing with the roles of men and women; and
- WHEREAS 8) it is the understanding of the undersigned that the Beck family would be agreeable to have any perceived translation deficiencies of AAT (Beck) revised and updated over time by WELS; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that the New International Version 2011 not be considered as the translation WELS will use in its publications; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that we urge the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in its 2013 convention to adopt An American Translation (AAT, Beck); and be it finally
- Resolved, c) that WELS secure a copyright of this translation and as a broad mission effort produce it electronically, then make it available widely to retail outlets and the general public.

Holy Cross, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Memorial (2013-09)

Subject: NIV2011

Floor Committee #21

- WHEREAS 1) our sister synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, through its Doctrine Committee, has strongly recommended against the use of the NIV2011 by its congregations and members, with one of the main reasons being this translation's way of using gender neutral language; and
- WHEREAS 2) the Committee on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod has also strongly discouraged the use of the NIV2011 in that church body for the same reason; and
- WHEREAS 3) there has been very little independent discussion and analysis of this usage conducted at the grassroots level within local circuits and congregations of WELS; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we respect the serious concerns other confessional Lutherans have expressed over the NIV's use of gender neutral language; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that we thoroughly explore, discuss, and evaluate those concerns before we decide whether or not to recommend the NIV2011 to our church body and mandate its use in our synodical publications; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that the synod praesidium prepare and disseminate a study document presenting its understanding of the NIV2011's use of gender neutral language, also including in this study the faithfully reproduced objections of fellow confessional Lutherans regarding this use, so that pastors and congregations can objectively discuss and evaluate both positions on this subject of neutral gender language; and be it finally
- Resolved. d) that the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod at its 2013 biennial convention not recommend the NIV2011 for use in its official synodical publications for the time being and postpone the decision about which translation of the Bible to use for this purpose until such discussion and evaluation take place.

Chiricahua Circuit of the Arizona-California District

Memorial (2013-10)

Subject: Procedure for selecting a translation at convention

Floor Committee #21

- WHEREAS 1) the 2011 synod in convention "adopted the floor committees' proposal to set the matter [of choosing a translation] before the 2012 district conventions for a vote in order to discover whether the NIV11 or any other version enjoyed the approval of two-thirds of those polled" (Translation Evaluation Committee's *Report to the Districts*, May 2011, p. 3); and
- WHEREAS 2) the 2011 synod in convention resolved that if no version received a two-thirds majority the final decision on the matter was to be deferred either to a special synod convention or to the regular 2013 convention (TEC *Report to the Districts*, May 2011, p. 3); and
- WHEREAS 3) in the event that the decision of choosing a Bible translation for WELS publications falls to the 2013 synod convention the procedure for reaching a decision has not yet been discussed; therefore be it
- Resolved. that for the purpose of achieving consensus the Michigan District in convention urge the synod in convention to require a two-thirds majority vote for any Bible version to be accepted for synod publications.

Michigan District Convention

Memorial (2013-11)

Subject: Rejection of the NIV2011 as the official translation for use by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) for publications

Floor Committee #21

- WHEREAS 1) WELS has historically taken a stand for the inerrancy and inspiration of God's Holy Word; and

- WHEREAS 2) the NIV2011 includes numerous changes to the inspired Word of God for the purpose of promoting gender neutrality; and
- WHEREAS 3) the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Doctrine Committee recommends against the use of the NIV2011 because “it makes significant changes to the text of the NIV (1984)” and further states that “These changes have diminished the accuracy of the NIV;” and
- WHEREAS 4) the ELS Doctrine Committee used material provided by WELS pastors as part of the basis for their statement rejecting the use of the NIV2011; and
- WHEREAS 5) the executive staff of the Missouri Synod’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations has issued a statement about the NIV2011 stating, “We find the NIV’s Committee on Bible Translation decision to substitute plural nouns and pronouns for masculine singular nouns and pronouns to be a serious theological weakness and a misguided attempt to make the truth of God’s Word more easily understood. The use of inclusive language in NIV2011 creates the potential for minimizing the particularity of biblical revelation and, more seriously, at times undermines the saving revelation of Christ as the promised Savior of humankind. Pastors and congregations of the LCMS should be aware of this serious weakness. In our judgment this makes it inappropriate for NIV2011 to be used as a lectionary Bible or as a Bible to be generally recommended to the laity of our church;” and
- WHEREAS 6) WELS is called to be faithful to the Word of God; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that WELS reject the NIV2011 for use in synod publications; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that serious consideration be given to the use of the NKJV and AAT translations as alternatives to the 1984 NIV; and be it finally
- Resolved, c) that synod leaders and lay members refocus their commitment to the Lutheran Confessions as being true and faithful to the teachings of God’s Word.

*Ray Koenig and Jami Thomas, Aurora, Ore.**

**Note: This memorial is a combination of almost identical memorials submitted by those listed above.*

Memorial (2013-12)

Subject: *Rejection of the NIV2011 as the official translation for use in WELS publications*

Floor Committee #21

- WHEREAS 1) WELS has historically taken a stand for the inerrancy and verbal inspiration of God’s Holy Word; and
- WHEREAS 2) the NIV2011 includes numerous changes to the inspired Word of God for the purpose of promoting gender neutrality; and
- WHEREAS 3) the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Doctrine Committee recommends against the use of the NIV2011: “Many congregation of the ELS currently use the NIV (1984) Bible for worship and Christian education. This edition of the NIV will no longer be available for purchase at the end of 2011. It has been replaced with the NIV (2011) which makes significant changes to the text of the NIV (1984)” and further states that “these changes have diminished the accuracy of the NIV. Therefore, based on preliminary study of the NIV (2011), the Doctrine Committee recommends against the use of the NIV (2011). The Doctrine Committee recommends for use in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod translations such as: New King James Version (NKJV), English Standard Version (ESV), An American Translation (Beck, AAT), and the New American Standard Bible 1995 (NASB95). These translations are accurate and understandable. If a new Lutheran translation is prepared in the future this also could be an option for use in the ELS. The following essay from the WELS Web site is suggested for further study on this matter. (Other essays at that site are also of benefit.) <http://www.wels.net/sites/wels/files/Essay%20-%20Keller.pdf>;” and
- WHEREAS 4) the ELS Doctrine Committee used material provided by WELS pastors as part of the basis for their statement rejecting the use of the NIV2011; and

- WHEREAS 5) in August 2012, the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod issued the following statement regarding the NIV2011: “the executive staff of the Missouri Synod’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations has issued a statement about the NIV2011 and its use of inclusive language. It’s four pages long, but the bottom line is in the final paragraph. We find the NIV’s Committee on Bible Translation decision to substitute plural nouns and pronouns for masculine singular nouns and pronouns to be a serious theological weakness and a misguided attempt to make the truth of God’s Word more easily understood. The use of inclusive language in NIV2011 creates the potential for minimizing the particularity of biblical revelation and, more seriously, at times undermines the saving revelation of Christ as the promised Savior of humankind. Pastors and congregations of the LCMS should be aware of this serious weakness. In our judgment this makes it inappropriate for NIV2011 to be used as a lectionary Bible or as a Bible to be generally recommended to the laity of our church. This is not a judgment on the entirety of NIV2011 as a translation—a task that would require a much more extensive study of NIV2011—but an opinion as to a specific editorial decision which has serious theological implications;” and
- WHEREAS 6) Northwestern Publishing House is considering a “translation neutral” approach for *Christ-Light*; and
- WHEREAS 7) WELS is called to be faithful to the Word of God; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that WELS reject the NIV2011 for use in synod publications; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that serious consideration be given to the use of the NKJV and AAT translations as alternatives to the 1984 NIV; and be it finally
- Resolved. c) that synod leaders and lay members refocus their commitment to the Lutheran Confessions as being true and faithful to the teachings of God’s Word.

*Soral Nold, Graham, Wash.
Vernon Kneprath, Damascus, Ore.*

**Note: This memorial is a combination of almost identical memorials submitted by those listed above.*

Memorial (2013-13)

Subject: *Rejection of the NIV2011 as the official translation to be used in WELS publications*
Floor Committee #21

- WHEREAS 1) the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) Doctrine Committee recommends against the use of the NIV2011. In early 2012, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod issued a statement regarding the NIV2011: “Many congregations of the ELS currently use the NIV (1984) Bible for worship and Christian education. This edition of the NIV will no longer be available for purchase at the end of 2011. It has been replaced with the NIV (2011) which makes significant changes to the text of the NIV (1984)” and further states that “these changes have diminished the accuracy of the NIV. Therefore, based on preliminary study of the NIV (2011), the Doctrine Committee recommends against the use of the NIV (2011). The Doctrine Committee recommends for use in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod translations such as: New King James Version (NKJV), English Standard Version (ESV), An American Translation (Beck, AAT), and the New American Standard Bible 1995 (NASB95). These translations are accurate and understandable. If a new Lutheran translation is prepared in the future this also could be an option for use in the ELS. The following essay from the WELS Web site is suggested for further study on this matter. (Other essays at that site are also of benefit.) <http://www.wels.net/sites/wels/files/Essay%20-%20Keller.pdf>,” and
- WHEREAS 2) in August of 2012, the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod issued the following statement regarding the NIV2011: “the executive staff of the Missouri Synod’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations has issued a statement about the NIV2011 and its use of inclusive language. It’s four pages long, but the bottom line is in the final paragraph. We find the NIV’s Committee on Bible Translation decision to substitute plural nouns and pronouns for masculine singular nouns and pronouns to be a serious theological weakness and a misguided attempt to make the truth of God’s Word more easily understood. The use of inclusive language in NIV2011 creates the potential for minimizing the particularity of biblical revelation and, more seriously, at times undermines the

saving revelation of Christ as the promised Savior of humankind. Pastors and congregations of the LCMS should be aware of this serious weakness. In our judgment this makes it inappropriate for NIV2011 to be used as a lectionary Bible or as a Bible to be generally recommended to the laity of our church. This is not a judgment on the entirety of NIV2011 as a translation—a task that would require a much more extensive study of NIV2011—but an opinion as to a specific editorial decision which has serious theological implications,” and

- WHEREAS 3) Northwestern Publishing House is considering a “translation neutral” approach for *Christ-Light*: “Furthermore, NPH has said that it does not want its publication needs in any way to drive a final decision on translations and will find alternate solutions if necessary. For example, in the *Christ-Light* materials, NPH is considering a ‘translation neutral’ approach, printing only Bible references and not the passages themselves.”—President Mark Schroeder, Feb. 3, 2012; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that WELS take a bold stand in our 62nd biennial convention and proactively, formally, join other significant Lutheran church synods to recommend against use of NIV2011; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that funds and resources of WELS are used to reach out to lost souls throughout the world rather than studying and developing yet another Bible translation funded by WELS members; and be it finally
- Resolved, c) that in the interim, WELS continues to use the NIV 1984 translation of the Bible until decided by our WELS leaders which already available translation of the Bible most closely mirrors the original Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions as being true and faithful to the teachings of God’s Word and is the formally adopted translation, replacing NIV 1984.

David E. Krueger, Mulino, Ore.

Memorial (2013-14)

Subject: *The impropriety of the NIV2011 for use in the Wisconsin Synod*
Floor Committee #21

- WHEREAS 1) Jesus himself strongly urged that we should first see him in the Old Testament Scriptures (Matthew 13:17; Luke 24:25-27,44-47; John 5:39,46; John 8:56); and
- WHEREAS 2) the apostles confessed that Jesus came to fulfill the Old Testament Scriptures and save the world from sin by his life, death, and resurrection (Acts 13:27; Acts 26:22,23,27; 1 Peter 1:10-12; Hebrews 11:13); and
- WHEREAS 3) the Church of every age has recognized and acknowledged that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures, including Psalms 2, 8, 16, and 45, and Isaiah 7:14; and
- WHEREAS 4) our synod has raised several legitimate concerns about the NIV2011’s translation of clearly Messianic prophecy in the Old Testament (Psalm 2:2,6,7,12; Psalm 8:4-6; Psalm 16:10; also footnotes in Psalm 45:6 and Isaiah 7:14); and
- WHEREAS 5) the Committee on Bible Translation had as one of its goals a review of gender language in its translation (<http://www.niv-cbt.org/niv-2011-overview/translators-notes>); and
- WHEREAS 6) some NIV2011 passages where gender-inclusive language was chosen undermine our biblical stance on the complementary roles of men and women in God’s world as it has been clearly confessed and taught in our church body to this day (e.g. Acts 1:16,21,23,26; Acts 6:3); and
- WHEREAS 7) there is concern about the ambiguous change in the NIV2011 from “have authority” to “assume authority” in 1 Timothy 2:12; and
- WHEREAS 8) in a December 2011 statement the doctrine committee of the ELS recommended against the use of the NIV2011, stating that significant changes “have diminished the accuracy of the NIV” (<http://www.evangelicallutheransynod.org/News/presidents-newsletter-january-2012>); therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that we deem the NIV2011 as an inappropriate translation for use by our synod; and be it finally

Resolved. b) that we remove the NIV2011 as a translation option for use in our synod publications.

Rev. David Naumann, St. Peter, Minn.; Rev. Matthew Frey, Montrose, Colo.; Rev. William Monday, Excelsior, Minn.

Memorial (2013-15)

Subject: *Production of WELS Bible translation*

Floor Committee #21

- WHEREAS 1) a search is underway for a new translation of the Holy Scriptures, written and preserved in the original Hebrew and Greek texts as available to us today, that is presented in language commonly in use today; and
- WHEREAS 2) WELS desires a translation that accurately expresses the true meaning of the Lord's Word as written and preserved in the Hebrew and Greek texts, one that is doctrinally sound in all aspects and consistent with all the teachings of the Word interpreting Scripture with Scripture; and
- WHEREAS 3) a translation of the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts must also be as faithful to the original Hebrew and Greek wording as much as possible but without significantly detracting from accurately expressing the correct scriptural thought or deterring ease of understanding in today's language; and
- WHEREAS 4) it appears that we may not be able to reach overwhelming consensus on any of the translations currently available, and no translation available today provides the level of accuracy that we desire or expect in a translation; and
- WHEREAS 5) it is likely worldly influence on future non-conservative Lutheran translations will add further doctrinal and literal translation inaccuracies instead of removing them; therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that we establish a translation committee to commence the work of producing a new or revised translation for use by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that the translation committee develop a constitution that provides the necessary guidance and establishes the requirements of this translation; and be it further
- Resolved. c) that we encourage our membership to prayerfully and actively support this work; and be it finally
- Resolved. d) that we zealously undertake this project calling upon our gracious Lord to bless this work and to give us the faith to accomplish it.

Mr. Glenn M. Brunner, Kewaunee, Wis.

Memorial (2013-16)

Subject: *Congregation and school budgeting for called worker continuing education*

Floor Committee #23

- 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 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 the WELS further affirmed such support by adopting the WELS Long-Range Plan (*Proceedings* 2011, p. 55), which encourages congregations to "support formal and informal programs for the spiritual, personal, and professional growth of called workers" (*Book of Reports and Memorials* 2011, p. 61); and

- WHEREAS 4) a 2012 Martin Luther College survey revealed that 49 percent of K-12 teachers and 52 percent of early childhood teachers receive \$500 or less in 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.

Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee

Memorial (2013-17)

Subject: *Support for school leaders (principals and directors)*

Floor Committee #23

- 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 30 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; 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 Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation (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; 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 the recommended WELSSA standard of 1 hour for every 7.5 students; and be it further
- Resolved. b) that district presidents encourage congregations and schools toward this amount of administrative release time, with encouragement to meet the standard if they are below, 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 principals so that young men can train for the principal position before being called into it.

Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee

Memorial (2013-18)

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

Floor Committee #23

- 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 *Book of Reports and Memorials*, p. 186, lines 1021–1024); and
- WHEREAS 8) the Sixty-first Biennial Convention of WELS adopted a resolution (*Proceedings* 2011, p. 59) 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;” 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
- Resolved, c) that this task force also keep in mind what is unique about the divine calls of teachers, pastors, and staff ministers 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 Martin Luther College'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.

Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee

Memorial (2013-19)

Subject: *Classification of "communicant" members*
Floor Committee #24

- WHEREAS 1) membership in the Holy Christian Church is granted solely by the working of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace—the gospel in Word and sacrament—most commonly today through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism; and
- WHEREAS 2) this Sacrament of Baptism is in no way incomplete but grants to us the fullness of God's blessings of forgiveness, new life, and salvation; and
- WHEREAS 3) membership in congregations of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is granted solely through this same Sacrament; and
- WHEREAS 4) the portion of our baptized membership that has been declared to be prepared to receive the Lord's Supper among us has been commonly referred to as "communicant" membership; and
- WHEREAS 5) this practice has caused considerable confusion regarding the membership status of pre-communicant members, i.e., many feel they are not "real" members until they are confirmed; and
- WHEREAS 6) this confusion diminishes understanding, appreciation, and respect for the Sacrament of Baptism, as though it were incomplete to grant membership to our congregations and were awaiting its completion in confirmation; and

- WHEREAS 7) classifying members contingent on their confirmation gives undue weight to an extra-biblical tradition; and
- WHEREAS 8) “communicant” is seen by most as a synonym for “adult” member, even though there is significant difference in the two terms; and
- WHEREAS 9) while this confusion has been fostered, little, if anything, may be gained by use of the classification “communicant;” therefore be it
- Resolved. a) that WELS cease classifying its members as “communicant;” and be it further
- Resolved. b) that WELS instead categorize its members simply as “adult members” (for those who have reached adulthood) and “youth members” (for those who have not yet reached adulthood); and be it further
- Resolved. c) that WELS amend its reports accordingly; and be it further
- Resolved. d) that WELS encourage its member congregations to do the same; and be it finally
- Resolved. e) that WELS continue to study its practices of confirmation, to ensure our young people are being served to the best of our God-given abilities.

Rev. Richard Krahn, Neenah, Wis.

Memorial (2013-20)

Subject: *Salary considerations for experienced pastors*

Floor Committee #24

- 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.

Rev. D. T. Rawerts, Aberdeen, S.D.

Memorial (2013-21)

Subject: *Toward a thorough study of the doctrine of the divine call*

Floor Committee #24

- WHEREAS 1) the 2009 convention of WELS was urged in an unprinted memorial to conduct a thorough study of the doctrine of the divine call; and
- WHEREAS 2) that convention resolved to ask the Conference of Presidents (COP) to undertake “a study of the doctrine of the call on the exegetical and historical level, with special emphasis on reasons for termination of a call” (2009 *Proceedings*, p. 16); and
- WHEREAS 3) the COP appointed a three-man committee to study the doctrine of the call, giving attention to appropriate passages of Holy Scripture and to the testimony of Lutheran church history; and

- WHEREAS 4) that study committee returned to the COP a divided opinion, with the majority report expressing the view that, as a general practice, Scripture does not support what some have called “elective termination” (i.e., termination of a divine call for which no biblical grounds are cited, carried out solely at the discretion of the calling body); and
- WHEREAS 5) in its five-page report, *The Doctrine of the Divine Call: With special consideration of the elimination of called positions in our synod due to finances or changing ministerial needs* (presented to the 2011 WELS convention), the COP expressed its view that the practice of such discretionary termination (e.g., for “financial reasons”) is biblically correct, stating: “In the case of a mediate call, God entrusts the calling body to determine the scope (what needs to be done) and duration (how long that work is to continue) of a particular divine call” (p. 3); and
- WHEREAS 6) in its report, the COP chose not to present a thorough exegetical or historical study but rather to offer what has been characterized by a COP member as “a report describing the practical applications and practices of the call (in relation to terminations for financial reasons);” and
- WHEREAS 7) the COP’s 2011 report does not answer the concerns about such elective terminations raised by the majority report of the COP’s appointed study committee; and
- WHEREAS 8) the COP’s 2011 report includes assertions (such as that quoted in Whereas 5 above) that appear to be without precedent in the prior writing of the Lutheran church on these issues; and
- WHEREAS 9) the COP has indicated that it has no plans at this time to extend its official study of the divine call or of issues pertaining to elective termination; and
- WHEREAS 10) an unofficial count reported in the October 2011 issue of *Forward in Christ* (p. 23) indicates that, synodwide, the faithful and capable called workers whose families suffer the ordeal caused by elective termination number in the dozens each year and in the hundreds over a ten-year period; and
- WHEREAS 11) there is evidence that, among the calling bodies of our synod, a diversity of practices and procedures exists in matters pertaining to the termination of divine calls; and
- WHEREAS 12) greater unity in practice is desirable but can only flow from unity in doctrine; and
- WHEREAS 13) establishing unity and clarity on Scripture’s doctrine of the call has broad implications for the ongoing mission and ministry of our synod, especially its core work of missions and ministerial education; and
- WHEREAS 14) a thorough biblical, confessional, and historical study of the doctrine of the divine call, which produces a range of statements useful both to the theologically-trained and to the average lay reader (as was done by our synod in the 1990s with regard to God’s roles for men and women) would be of great value in bringing together our understanding and our application of Scripture’s teaching on this vital matter; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that the synod in convention instruct our synod president to appoint a five-man study committee of theologically capable and experienced men to carry out a thorough biblical, confessional, and historical study of the doctrine of the call, including all matters pertaining to the initiation and termination of a divine call; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that, while these committee members shall be responsible for delivering the formal report(s) of their study, they be permitted and encouraged to select others from among our fellowship to assist them in whatever phases of the development of their reports they deem appropriate; and be it further
- Resolved, c) that the committee be tasked with producing (or arranging for the production of) three documents:
- Document 1: A comprehensive report of its study, including biblical, confessional, and historical support for its findings;
- Document 2: A summary of Scripture’s teaching on the divine call, with attention

to both the initiation and termination of calls, written in a manner easily understood by non-theologically trained readers;

Document 3: A Bible study on the doctrine of the call, suitable for use in local congregations, at secondary schools, and in similar circumstances;

and be it further

Resolved.

d) that the committee regularly report on its progress to the COP, that it provide a preliminary report on its progress to the 2014 district conventions of WELS; and that its comprehensive report (Document #1) be presented to the 2015 synod convention, with Documents #2 and #3 to be offered to the synod in the ensuing biennium; and be it finally

Resolved.

e) that every congregation of WELS be encouraged to petition our gracious God to supply his gracious guidance and blessing for the conduct of this important study.

Rev. Marcus P. Manthey, Saginaw, Mich.

WISCONSIN EPISCOPAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
 Constituting Synods of Australia
 Year Ended June 30, 2012

	Financial Statement										
	WELS	M.L.C.	W.L.S.	W.L.S.	W.L.S.	W.L.S.	W.L.S.	W.L.S.	W.L.S.	W.L.S.	W.L.S.
	Member Support and Revenue										
Member support	4,041,299	754,243	527,424	60,266	61,489	-	443,028	-	-	468	5,241,209
Gifts and donations	181,219	123,123	123,123	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	327,465
Revenue	6,852,718	877,366	650,547	60,266	61,489	-	443,028	-	-	468	5,568,674
Total member support	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PROPERTY	340,299	305,179	87,269	22,881	90,895	-	1,254,282	-	-	-	5,009,277
Advances and real value	619,170	1,042,823	254,769	63,791	7,8173	-	619,289	-	-	-	912,962
Interest/dividends	47,279	82,289	254,119	90,860	90,860	68,470	41,891	-	-	620,119	71,368
Net realized and unrealized gain on investments	-	704,547	140,640	-	117,889	-	-	-	-	620,119	-
Change in value of fixed investments	-	2,224	98,698	-	-	-	5,167	-	-	-	81,779
Realized/Unrealized gain/loss	-	(1,479)	3,262	-	-	-	(66,277)	-	-	-	(64,164)
Other	19,279	(1,479)	3,262	-	-	-	66,277	-	-	-	81,779
Transfer from other funds	351,022	61,348	27,743	2,426	28,269	88,270	28,133	-	-	8,133	1,261,961
Total revenue	7,203,717	1,040,923	781,182	85,574	99,354	88,740	537,438	-	-	8,133	6,719,765
Decreasing value	(1,184,547)	(2,000,000)	(1,115,200)	(55,179)	(90,860)	(8,470)	(27,743)	-	-	(8,133)	(5,568,674)
Net assets increased from restrictions	6,019,170	838,923	665,982	30,395	8,494	80,270	509,695	-	-	-	1,151,091
Change in Net Assets	4,834,623	2,788,923	550,782	25,216	1,504	1,261,961	281,712	-	-	8,133	5,568,674
Net Assets (2012) - Beginning of year	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000	2,250,000
Net Assets - End of year	7,084,623	5,038,923	2,800,782	22,416	3,704	3,511,961	2,531,712	-	-	8,133	7,818,674

WISCONSIN EPISCOPAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
 Consolidating Schedule of Activities
 Year Ended June 30, 2012

	Particularly Beneficial									
	W.C.	W.L.S.	W.L.B.	L.P.S.	W.L.B. CWP	W.L.S. Provisional	W.L.S. Funds	W.P.H.	W.M.S./P.W.S.	Consolidated
Member support and payments										
Member support	187,228	14,048	-	6,705	-	64,427	-	-	-	268,408
Gifts and materials	20,320	20,320	-	-	-	20,320	-	-	-	61,360
Expenses	(27,267)	(27,267)	-	(3,735)	-	(3,735)	-	-	-	(62,004)
Total member support	180,281	10,081	-	2,970	-	81,012	-	-	-	206,334
Revenue	64,470	204,408	26,091	1,460	-	5,462	-	-	-	316,131
Change in value of fund investments	(1,000)	200	-	-	-	(2,000)	-	-	-	(2,800)
Other	10,000	20,000	20,000	1,000	-	20,000	-	-	-	71,000
Total revenue	73,470	224,608	46,091	2,460	-	23,462	-	-	-	346,151
Decrease/overrun	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	-	(10,000)	-	-	-	(50,000)
Net amount received from realizations	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	-	20,000	-	-	-	80,000
Change in Net Assets	1,651	1,651	1,651	1,651	-	1,651	-	-	-	6,654
Net Assets (beginning - beginning of year)	1,651	1,651	1,651	1,651	-	1,651	-	-	-	6,654
Net Assets - end of year	3,302	3,302	3,302	3,302	-	3,302	-	-	-	13,308

Member support and payments
 Member support
 Gifts and materials
 Expenses
 Total member support

Revenue
 Change in value of fund investments
 Other
 Total revenue
 Decrease/overrun
 Net amount received from realizations
 Change in Net Assets
 Net Assets (beginning - beginning of year)
 Net Assets - end of year

