

Book of Reports and Memorials

June 2009

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398
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Published 2009
Printed in the United States of America

Foreword

Convention theme

The theme of the 2009 WELS Convention is “Christ’s Love, Our Calling.” This phrase is not only the theme of the convention, but it also appears as a part of the new WELS logo. It’s a fitting theme both for the convention and for our synod, since it is Christ’s love, brought to us through the means of grace, that makes us who we are; and since Christ’s love has redeemed us and made us his people, we will naturally recognize the lives and mission to which he has called us. Everything we discuss in this convention, then, will focus on what God in grace has done for us and on what he has now called us to do.

The *Book of Reports and Memorials*

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

Floor committees

The convention business will be addressed by 25 floor committees. Each committee is assigned a specific area to address or task to perform during the convention. The floor committees, along with the names of their chairmen, are listed on p. 1.

Floor committees will function during the convention as required by their assignment. Floor committee chairmen are responsible for scheduling the times of the meetings and for seeing to it that the committee is provided with the informational resources it needs to conduct its business.

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 are available to all floor committees as resources. Generally, advisory members may attend any floor committee upon consultation with the floor committee chairman. Floor committee chairmen may at any time request that the committee conduct sessions without the presence of advisors.

Contents of BORAM

The arrangement of this BORAM is slightly different than in recent years. Instead of appearing at the end of the book, memorials are included with the information that will be dealt with by the floor committee to which the memorial is assigned. Miscellaneous memorials are assigned to Floor Committee #18 and are printed in the section entitled “Miscellaneous memorials” (see p. 159).

Some memorials are submitted after the publication of BORAM. These are referred to as “unprinted memorials.” Once accepted, they will be printed and distributed to the delegates later in the summer.

Table of contents

Convention floor committees	1
Ministry Support	3
Conference of Presidents (Floor Committee #1)	7
WELS Support Committee (Floor Committee #1)	10
Commission on Inter-Church Relations (Floor Committee #5)	10
Ministry of Christian Giving (Floor Committee #6)	13
Communication Services (Floor Committee #7)	15
Nominating Committee (Floor Committee #17)	17
Synodical Council (Floor Committee #2)	21
Convention compliance	25
WELS Archives	27
Committee on Relief	27
Publication Coordinating Commission	28
Accounting Oversight Committee	29
Finance and budget (Floor Committee #4)	31
Financial reports	31
Proposed budget	48
WELS Compensation Guidelines	58
Memorial (2009-1), "Withdrawal of funding from prep schools"	62
Support Services (Floor Committee #8)	63
Financial Services	63
Technology	64
Human Resources	68
Board for World Missions (Floor Committee #9)	71
Board for Home Missions (Floor Committee #10)	81
Joint Mission Council (Floor Committees #9 and #10)	89
Board for Ministerial Education (Floor Committee #11)	91
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary	104
Martin Luther College	110
Luther Preparatory School	113
Michigan Lutheran Seminary	114
Board for Parish Services (Floor Committee #12)	117
Commission on Evangelism	122
Commission on Worship	124
Commission on Adult Discipleship	127
Commission on Youth Discipleship	130
Commission on Parish Schools	132
Commission on Special Ministries	135
Parish Assistance	139

Subsidiaries (Floor Committee #13)	141
WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc.	141
WELS Foundation, Inc.	142
WELS Investment Funds, Inc.	144
Northwestern Publishing House	145
WELS Benefit Plans Office	147
WELS Historical Institute	148
Constitutional Matters (Floor Committee #14)	151
Committee on Constitutional Matters	151
Proposed amendments to the bylaws	152
Miscellaneous memorials (Floor Committee #18)	159
Memorial (2009-2), "Dealing with allegations of sexual impropriety"	159
Memorial (2009-3), "Eligibility of called workers whose calls have been rescinded"	159
Memorial (2009-4), "Flood geology"	160
Memorial (2009-5), "Reconciliation process"	160
Report and recommendations of the Ad Hoc Commission.	163
Introduction (Floor Committee #20)	164
Expansion of mission efforts (Floor Committee #20)	172
Synodical budget and finances (Floor Committee #21)	173
Strengthening congregations and their members (Floor Committee #22)	177
Pursuing excellence among called workers (Floor Committee #23)	184
Synodwide theological study (Floor Committee #23)	187
Structure and organization (Floor Committee #24)	189
Synod and district conventions (Floor Committee #24)	193
Synodical communications (Floor Committee #24)	194
The cost of ministerial education (Floor Committee #25)	195
Addendum: Bylaw revisions	198
Memorial (2009-6), "Ad Hoc Commission redistricting proposal" (Floor Committee #22)	209
Memorial (2009-7), "Chairmen of the areas of ministry continuing to serve as voting members of the Synodical Council" (Floor Committee #24)	209

Convention floor committees

Committee	Assignment	Chairman
#1	Conference of Presidents	Pastor Daniel Voigt
#2	Synodical Council	Pastor Harland Goetzinger
#3	President's Report	Pastor Mark Henrich
#4	Finance and Budget	Pastor Joel Otto
#5	Inter-Church Relations	Prof. John Hartwig
#6	Ministry of Christian Giving	Teacher Paul Wichmann
#7	Communications	Teacher Justin Gregorius
#8	Support Services	Pastor Alois Schmitzer
#9	World Missions	Pastor Wayne Uhlhorn
#10	Home Missions	Pastor Mark Bitter
#11	Ministerial Education	Pastor Mark Voss
#12	Parish Services	Pastor Fred Piepenbrink
#13	Subsidiaries	Mr. Tom Teteak
#14	Constitutional Matters	Pastor Martin Bentz
#15	Resolutions	Teacher John Kolander
#16	Membership and attendance	Teacher William Pekrul
#17	Elections	Teacher Bert Falak
#18	Miscellaneous memorials	Pastor Norm Seeger
#19	Steering	Pastor John Guse
#20	Ad Hoc Commission	Pastor Kevin Wattles
	<i>Introduction/Preamble</i>	
#21	Ad Hoc Commission	Pastor Jeffrey Bovee
	<i>Budget and Finance</i>	
#22	Ad Hoc Commission	Pastor Joel Jenswold
	<i>Strengthening Congregations</i>	
#23	Ad Hoc Commission	Prof. Thomas Nass
	<i>Pursuing Excellence</i>	
#24	Ad Hoc Commission	Pastor Joel Spaude
	<i>Structure, Conventions, Communication</i>	
#25	Ad Hoc Commission	Pastor Phil Schupmann
	<i>Cost of Ministerial Education</i>	

Ministry Support

The Ministry Support area of the budget includes a wide variety of groups and functions that either carry out specific synodical functions or that support other areas of ministry. Included in this area are:

President's Office

- Compensation for the president
- Office staff that serves the president, the vice presidents, the Conference of Presidents, and the Synodical Council
- Travel and meeting expenses for the president and vice presidents and standing committees
- Special support provided for displaced called workers
- Colloquy expenses
- Commission on Inter-Church Relations and Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference
- Moving cost subsidies for small congregations
- Synod convention

Conference of Presidents

- Funding for regular meetings and meetings of the Assignment Committee
- Travel and other activities related to the duties of the district presidents
- Pastoral assistants or vicars provided for the district presidents

Ministry of Christian Giving

- Ministry of Christian Giving administration and staff
- Deferred gift counselors' salaries and travel expenses
- Current gift counselors' salaries and travel expenses

Communication Services

- *WELS Connection*, "Together" electronic newsletter, *Forward in Christ*
- WELS Annual Report
- *Book of Reports and Memorials*, *Report to the Twelve Districts*, and *Proceedings*
- Web site content management
- Publication coordination and management

Synodical Council

- Funding for regular meetings (three per year)
- Synodical legal fees and insurance
- Accounting Oversight Committee

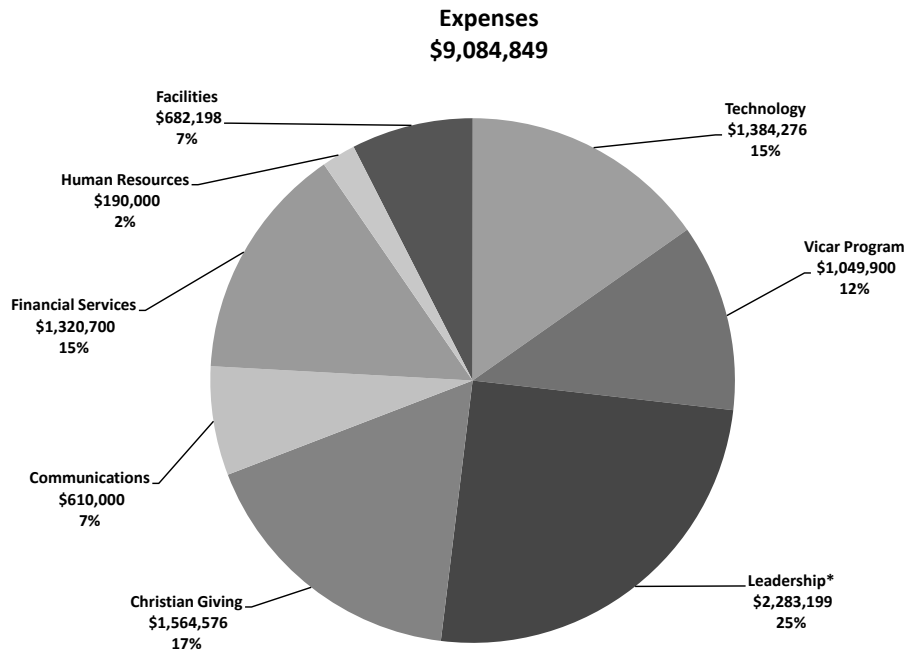
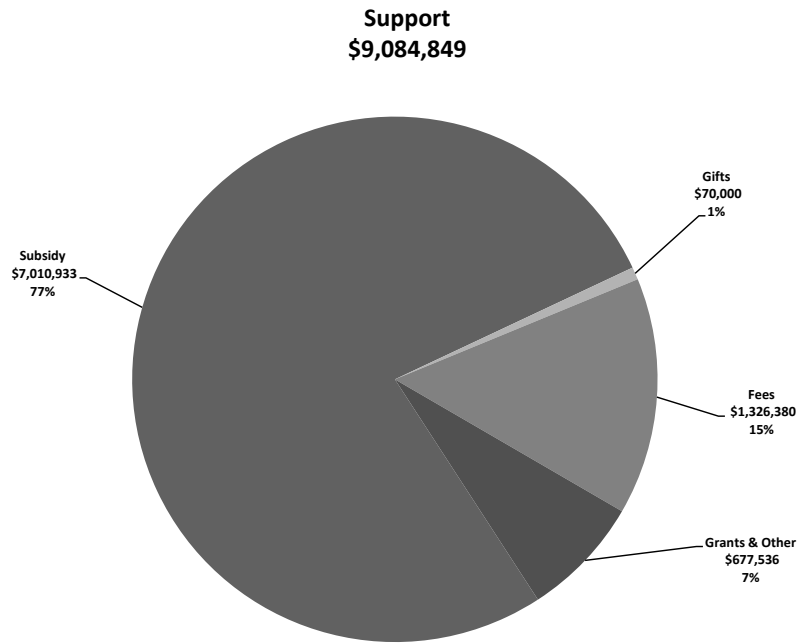
Financial Services

Technology

Human Resources

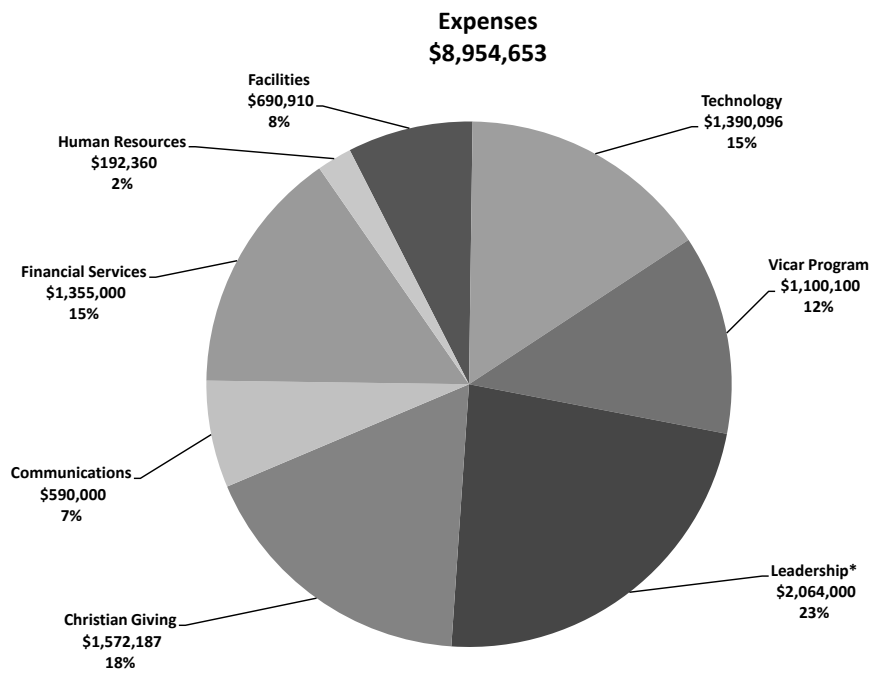
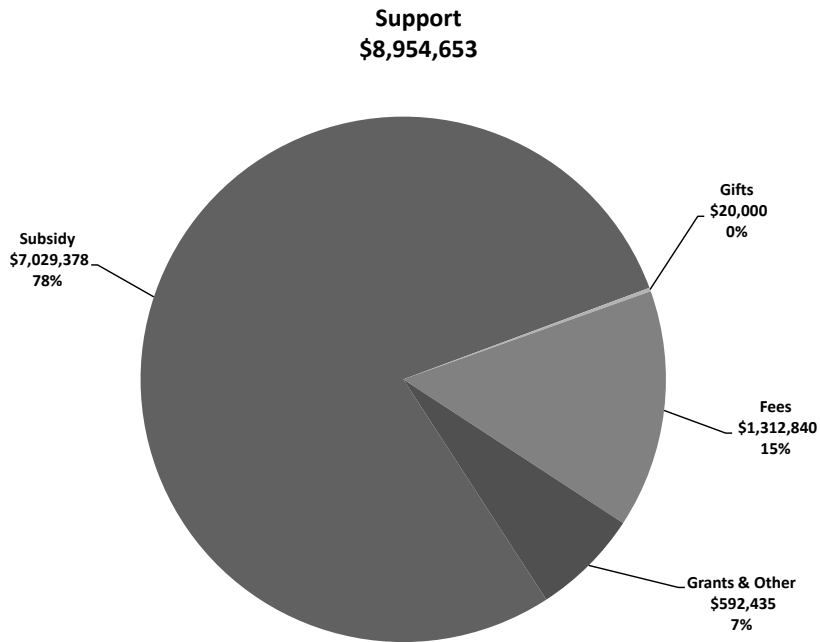
Facilities management

Ministry Support Budget FY 2009-10



* "Leadership" includes the President's Office, Conference of Presidents, Synodical Council, and general administrative programs and expenses.

Ministry Support Budget FY 2010-11



* "Leadership" includes the President's Office, Conference of Presidents, Synodical Council, and general administrative programs and expenses.

Conference of Presidents

Floor Committee #1

The Conference of Presidents (COP) is composed of the 12 district presidents (elected by their respective districts), the synod vice presidents, and the synod secretary (elected by the synod in convention). The synod president serves as chairman. The COP meets in person four times annually as well as in monthly teleconferences. The COP and the Synodical Council (SC) are the two primary leadership groups in the synod. They work in cooperation and consultation with each other, but each group is assigned specific and distinct areas of responsibility by the synod's constitution. The COP has responsibility in the following areas:

- Supervising, maintaining, and strengthening the unity of doctrine and practice.
- Overseeing and coordinating the calling process and matters affecting called workers and congregations.
- Encouraging congregations to provide financial support for the synod's mission.
- Promoting the synod's mission and ministry in the districts.

Three members of the COP also serve as voting members of the Synodical Council.

As the COP discusses many practical issues involving the direction of the synod—the calling process, the challenges facing congregations and called workers, and the unity in our doctrine and practice—the ultimate purpose of its work is always to encourage and equip our synod to carry out its mission in the most faithful way.

Doctrine and practice

The COP has devoted considerable time to discussing the biblical principles of fellowship and their application. The COP has encouraged pastoral conferences and circuits to continue to study these biblical principles and to review previous statements adopted by the COP or the synod (*Doctrinal Statements of the WELS*, pp. 25-37; COP policies from 1999, 2000, and 2003).

The COP has also discussed issues relating to forms and practices in the areas of worship, outreach, and congregational organization. The COP maintains that our practice in all of these areas should always be consistent with our doctrine and should reflect a unified understanding of scriptural principles as well as our commitment to reaching the lost with the gospel. The COP is convinced that brotherly discussion of these matters, based on a study of God's Word, is essential to maintaining our unity, our understanding of Christian freedom, and our clear identity as a confessional Lutheran church body. The COP has resolved to establish a committee to frame the issues and to produce scriptural study materials that will guide the discussion. As of this writing, the committee has not yet been established.

The Commission on Inter-Church Relations, which serves the COP, has been involved in continuing brotherly discussions with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) in an ongoing effort to maintain and strengthen the fellowship enjoyed by the two synods (see p. 10). The next meeting between the Commission on Inter-Church Relations and representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod will take place in September. The Commission on Inter-Church Relations maintains brotherly contact with other confessional Lutheran church bodies around the world in fellowship with WELS. Its members also observe and report developments in other Lutheran church bodies that are not currently of our fellowship.

Ministry

In 2008 the COP resolved to re-establish the Committee for the Continuing Education of Called Workers. In preparation for this, Second Vice President James Huebner gathered a "think-tank" committee to discuss overall direction and to provide initial recommendations. The Ad Hoc Commission is also submitting recommendations in this area to this convention. The Committee for the Continuing Education of Called Workers, once reconstituted, will work to implement any recommendations approved by the convention, as well as those made by the committee assembled by Second Vice President Huebner.

In its role as the Assignment Committee of the synod, the COP continually monitors the number of graduates available at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The vast majority of those assignments are made in May, with others being made at the time of mid-year graduations from Martin Luther College. In cases where assignments

cannot be made in May or December, assignments are made as appropriate divine calls become available. In recent years our synod has been blessed with a sufficient supply of well-trained pastor, teacher, and staff minister candidates.

The COP also works closely with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in overseeing the assignment of vicars. In recent years, the Board for Home Missions has also been a part of the process, since a number of vicars are assigned each year to congregations in mission settings. Funding for the Vicars in Mission Settings program is provided by the Board for Home Missions and by the seminary, as well as by varying levels of contributions from mission congregations receiving a vicar.

Several recommendations coming to this convention from the Ad Hoc Commission address how ministry is carried out and supervised in the districts. The COP was represented on the Ad Hoc Commission by South Central District President Vilas Glaeske. The COP was also given opportunities for input as the commission carried out its work. One important area of the commission's discussion involved the circuit pastor system. Recognizing the importance of the circuit pastor, the COP has already begun discussions regarding ways to improve the circuit pastor ministry.

The COP has recognized the value of the Parish Ministry Enhancement program that was discontinued a number of years ago. In this program pastors were brought back to the seminary after one year and 15 years of service to discuss issues that would assist them in carrying out their ministry. The COP has expressed a desire to reinstate this program if and when funding becomes available.

Administration

Since the COP and the Synodical Council serve important leadership functions, it is vital that these two groups work in cooperation with each other. Efforts have been made to keep each group informed about the work of the other. A joint meeting of the two groups took place in November 2008 to help both groups understand the role of the other. It also provided an opportunity for joint discussion of the budget process, the synod's financial situation, and a number of recommendations that would be included in the Ad Hoc Commission report.

Funding

While the Synodical Council is responsible for recommending a synod budget, the COP is responsible for funding the programs adopted by the synod in convention. The 2007 convention added approximately \$2.65 million to the budget that had been originally recommended by the Synodical Council for 2008-09 (the second year of the biennium). A combination of increased congregational offerings, as well as favorable and unforeseen positive financial developments, resulted in a budgetary surplus of \$3.4 million in the first year of the biennium (2007-08). Since the fall of 2008, however, the deteriorating economic situation in our country has impacted a number of sources of financial support. Combined financial support from all sources (congregations, individuals, foundations, etc.) fell drastically, resulting in a potential budgetary shortfall of approximately \$6 million in 2008-09. The Synodical Council addressed the shortfall by the use of the \$3.4 million surplus of 2007-08, with surplus bequest money in the synod's buffer fund, with a \$1 million gift from WELS Church Extension Fund, and by underspending by areas of ministry.

This decision of the 2007 convention required a major committed effort on the part of the district presidents to encourage congregations to increase their support for the synod's mission and ministry. The COP dedicated itself to that task during the second half of 2007 and early 2008. The response to the COP's gospel encouragement to congregations was very positive, as offerings in 2007-08 increased substantially, and congregations gave more in actual offerings than they had committed. This changed in 2008, as congregations' performance in Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) in calendar year 2008 was 98.3 percent of what was committed. Even though this was a shortfall, the performance is a blessing in view of the economic crisis that began in the United States early last fall.

The COP is committed to the principle that Congregation Mission Offerings should be the primary means to support the work of the synod. The COP will continue to encourage congregations to dedicate themselves to increasing support for the wider work of the church. The COP believes that steady and sufficient support provided through Congregation Mission Offerings, along with other plans put in place by the Synodical Council, will alleviate the need for special need-based offering appeals in the future.

Year of Jubilee offering

The 2007 synod convention authorized the COP to plan and conduct a synodwide offering to address the \$22.4 million capital debt of the synod. The COP decided that such an offering would benefit the synod and approved a plan to carry it out. The COP determined that this offering should be a short-term effort, and planning and execution of the offering would be done by the Ministry of Christian Giving rather than through the use of an outside agency.

The WELS Year of Jubilee debt retirement offering was introduced at the district conventions in summer 2008. The offering began in fall 2008, with congregations having flexibility in how the effort would be carried out locally. As of the middle of April 2009, congregations and individuals gave approximately \$3.2 million for the Year of Jubilee offering. Coupled with the budgetary payments made toward the debt during the last two years, it is estimated that by the time of the 2009 convention the debt will have been reduced to approximately \$15 million. The COP would like to express its thanks to God and to the congregations and members of the synod for this significant blessing. The offering will officially conclude at the 2009 convention.

Proposed bylaw revisions

The COP is submitting proposals for amending the synod bylaws. The first involves an amendment to the district bylaws, Article X, Section 2. This change is intended to clarify that a circuit pastor is to be an *active parish pastor*.

The second recommendation for a bylaw amendment addresses the structure of the synod's Committee on Constitutional Matters. As currently constituted, the synod constitution committee is composed of seven members, three of whom serve as an executive committee. The current bylaws call for the functioning of the full committee only in rare cases where matters are disputed. In practice, the full committee has not functioned for many years. The COP is recommending an amendment to the bylaws (Section 4.70) that would reflect more accurately the way in which the committee functions. The COP is recommending the reduction in the size of the committee from seven to three. By making this change, the four members who are now a part of the constitution committee, but who have not functioned, will be free to serve in other appointed synodical positions. The recommendation includes provision for handling controversial cases.

Both of these recommendations have been referred to Floor Committee #14 (Constitutional Matters).

Completion of faithful service

First Vice President Wayne Mueller accepted a call to the parish ministry in fall 2008. District Presidents Larry Cross and Paul Janke also completed service on the COP in 2008. We are thankful for their years of service to the synod.

Christ's Love, Our Calling.

God has blessed us richly. He has shown us his amazing love in sending his Son to save us. He has preserved his precious gospel among us and given us his powerful means of grace to use and to share. He has given our synod faithful leaders, dedicated called workers, and a committed laity. He continues to give us new opportunities to declare his praises to a world that needs to hear the message of Christ. As the members of the COP carry out their far-reaching and multifaceted work, they ask that you keep them in your prayers. Ask God to help them remind us that all we do, whether large or small, short- or long-term, flows from our desire as a synod and as individuals to be faithful in our service to him. We live in Christ's love; we welcome the opportunity to carry out the work he has called us to do.

Rev. Mark Schroeder, reporter

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president and chairman

Rev. James Huebner, second vice president

Rev. Robert Pasbrig, secretary

Rev. Jon Buchholz, Arizona-California District

Rev. Peter Naumann, Dakota-Montana District

Rev. John Seifert, Michigan District

Rev. Charles Degner, Minnesota District

Rev. Joel Frank, Nebraska District

Rev. Joel Petermann, North Atlantic District

Rev. Douglas Engelbrecht, Northern Wisconsin District

Rev. Theodore Lambert, Pacific Northwest District

Rev. John Guse, South Atlantic District

Rev. Vilas Glaeske, South Central District

Rev. David Rutschow, Southeastern Wisconsin District

Rev. Herbert Prah, Western Wisconsin District

WELS Support Committee

Floor Committee #1

The Synod Support Committee exists to assist retired called workers of WELS and/or their surviving spouses who do not have the financial resources to meet their cost of living needs. The committee consists of five district first vice presidents. The first vice president in every district is the contact person for the Support Committee. The committee works to identify those individuals who have financial needs so WELS can provide them with the level of financial support that allows them to live with dignity and in reasonable comfort. 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 resign 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.

At the beginning of 2009, 35 family units were receiving support calling for a monthly expenditure of \$25,414 and an annual budget of \$304,968. To this amount a contingency fund is added to enable the committee to consider requests for help that are received during the course of the year. End-of-the-year total disbursements depend on increases or decreases in monthly payments. New requests add to the total, and deaths and moves to assisted living arrangements end the assistance received from the Support Committee.

Rev. Philip Zarling, reporter

Rev. Philip Zarling, chairman

Rev. Mark Lindner

Rev. Paul Naumann

Rev. John Steinbrenner

Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Floor Committee #5

Our calling

The Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) is chartered 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 in order to ‘extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,’ ” and to “keep itself informed on the doctrinal trends in other church bodies.”

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 about 130 congregations. World mission fields of the ELS include Peru, Chile, India, and South Korea.

In the past biennium the ELS Doctrine Committee and WELS' Commission on Inter-Church Relations have met twice.

The main topic of discussion has been the issue of women communing women. Although both synods are agreed in their resolve to refrain from the practice, discussions continue on the biblical principles that lead to this application.

In October 2008 the biennial Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Forum took place. The meeting involves 12 leaders from WELS and the ELS. Through the forum and our other contacts, we work to maintain good relations with our sister synod and to encourage and support each other in our work.

The ELS made a major decision in 2008 by deciding to bring the Thoughts of Faith mission society under its direct control beginning on Jan. 1, 2010. Now the ELS is working to put in place the necessary administrative structure. Thoughts of Faith has been instrumental in the establishment of churches in Latvia, Czech Republic, and Ukraine.

Baltic and Eastern Europe

After tapering off in recent years, the Commission on Inter-Church Relations' correspondence with the Confessional Lutheran Church in Latvia increased during the past biennium, especially this last year. Unfortunately there was a separation in the Confessional Lutheran Church in Latvia, with three pastors being suspended. Now the suspended pastors and congregations have formed a new church body called the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Latvia. Discussions are underway between WELS and both of these Latvian Lutheran church bodies. The optimal outcome would be reconciliation between the Confessional Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church and restoration of peace and brotherly unity for confessional Lutherans in Latvia.

In the past biennium, WELS has also gotten more directly involved in assisting our sister church in Ukraine. Acting in response to appeals for aid by the bishop of the Ukrainian Lutheran Church, WELS, through its Committee on Relief, provided medical funds for Ukrainian Lutheran Church workers and their dependents and also supported Pastor Nikolai Badrusev of Belarus. In addition, this past November WELS forwarded a gift of \$50,000 from an individual to meet needs of Ukrainian Lutheran Church personnel in a time of reduced support from Thoughts of Faith and rapidly rising prices everywhere in Ukraine.

Pastor Neal Schroeder's term on the Commission on Inter-Church Relations, as well as his service as contact man to the Baltic and Eastern Europe, expired. The new contact man is Pastor Peter Prange.

Scandinavia

The CICR continues regular contact with two small church bodies in the Nordic countries. The Lutheran Confessional Church in Finland has two congregations, one near Helsinki and the other near Oulu, served by three pastors. They have begun talks with another independent Lutheran congregation in the city of Vaasa with hopes that they may be able to establish church fellowship. Each July the Lutheran Confessional Church in Finland meets for a family camp and church convention. WELS will be represented at these meetings by its Scandinavia contact man, Pastor John Vieths.

The Lutheran Confessional Church in Sweden and Norway consists of nine congregations—three in Norway and six in Sweden—with an additional mission in Bergen, Norway. A disagreement over the doctrine of church fellowship sadly led to the departure of some individual members last year. The church body is still studying the issue with the hope of providing its members a solidly biblical and evangelical understanding of this teaching. The Commission on Inter-Church Relations has remained in regular communication with the leaders there as they address these matters. Pastor John Vieths will present a paper on the doctrine of church fellowship at the summer meetings of the Lutheran Confessional Church in Sweden and Norway.

This summer it also looks as though this church body will undergo a reorganization into two church bodies. The Norwegian congregations will hold a constituting convention to form their own synod July 17-19.

WELS continues to encourage these small churches through friendly counsel and assisting in the education of its pastors. Professors from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Martin Luther College regularly teach courses at the Lutheran Confessional Church in Sweden and Norway's seminary in Ljungby, Sweden. In addition, funds are available for these pastors and pastoral students to attend courses at WELS schools. Together we are working to strengthen the presence of confessional Lutheranism in these nations, which once were strongholds of the Lutheran faith.

Germany

The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany remains faithful in its calling to feed Jesus' sheep and lambs. It is a daunting task for a church body of only 1,500 members in 37 congregations and preaching stations. This church body is served by 14 pastors, with Pastor Rolf Borszik serving as president.

Despite its relatively small size, the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany maintains its own Concordia Bookstore; a seminary in Leipzig; a thriving Kindercamp; and their “Stephanus Project,” a charitable arm of the synod.

Perhaps their most ambitious project remains their parochial school, Martin Luther School in Zwickau. Now in its eighth year of operation, the school is blessed to have more than 140 students in grades 1 through 4. A large staff, including Pastor Uwe Klaerner who serves as the school’s full-time pastor, shares Christ’s love with his precious lambs. In the first five years of this school, special, non-budgetary gifts from WELS served as a critical bridge until the time when government funding became available for the school. Because the German government now provides significant funding for this school, WELS non-budgetary gifts are no longer being solicited for this school.

The Commission on Inter-Church Relations, through its Germany contact man, seeks to maintain and strengthen the ties of fellowship between WELS and the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany. For the past 10 years, Pastor Glenn Schwanke served as the Commission on Inter-Church Relations’ contact man for Germany. The new contact man is Prof. John Brenner.

The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference

The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference consists of 21 confessional Lutheran church bodies throughout the world, including WELS. Members of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations have consistently participated at the conference’s triennial meetings. These gatherings provide wonderful opportunities for representatives of the various confessional Lutheran churches to cultivate friendships with, share information with, and seek counsel from each other on a wide variety of topics.

The most recent triennial meeting took place in June 2008 in Kiev, Ukraine. This meeting marked the 15th anniversary of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference. Participants heard five papers on the topic of outreach led by pastors from Ukraine, Norway, Russia, Japan, and Mexico.

The convention also established the Theological Education Transfer and Augmentation Commission. This commission will help sister churches around the world with the tasks of training national pastors and developing nationals for positions of theological leadership. Prof. Thomas Nass, chairman of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations, was elected as secretary of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference. Prof. Kenneth Cherney, another commission member, was appointed to the Theological Education Transfer and Augmentation Commission. The minutes and essays from the 2008 convention may be found at www.celc.info.

Convention observers

Commission members attend the conventions of several Lutheran church bodies. During the past biennium Prof. Thomas Nass attended the annual conventions of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, while Pastor Peter Prange attended the convention of the Church of the Lutheran Confession. We see 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.

Liaisons to Puerto Rico and Indonesia

The Board for World Missions has asked the Commission on Inter-Church Relations to begin contacting our sister churches in Puerto Rico and Indonesia as these churches move from mission status funded by World Missions to independent churches not funded or served by World Missions.

Two parish pastors have consented to serve as our liaisons to these sister churches—Pastor Timothy Satorius to the Lutheran Church of Puerto Rico and Pastor Thomas Glende to *Gereja* Lutheran of Indonesia. As liaisons, these men will provide encouragement and assistance with field visits and regular contact. Both of them made their first visits as Commission on Inter-Church Relations liaisons during the past year.

In Indonesia it seems that the transition will be gradual, as Missionary Pieter Reid will continue his work indefinitely. In Puerto Rico, however, the transition will be taking place immediately because World Mission’s support and missionary presence are ending.

CICR special funds

The Commission on Inter-Church Relations oversees four special funds that are used to cover our contact expenses and to help sister churches in specific areas. The funds are the Baltic Eastern Europe Fund, the Germany Support Fund, the Puerto Rico Fund, and the Scandinavia Fund. Gifts may be sent to the Synod Administration Building.

A look ahead

In the next biennium the Commission on Inter-Church Relations is being asked to provide guidance and support in another field where the Board for World Missions is reducing its financial subsidy and involvement—the Lutheran Church of Portugal.

In the next biennium we will send personnel as observers to the conventions of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Church of the Lutheran Confession, the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, and possibly the Prot stant Conference. In addition, contact men will make field visits to their specific areas of responsibility.

Finally, commission personnel will continue monitoring more than 20 Lutheran publications to stay informed on the Lutheran scene in North America and around the world.

Prof. James Pope, reporter

Prof. Thomas Nass, chairman

Prof. Paul O. Wendland, vice chairman

Prof. James Pope, secretary

Prof. John Brenner

Prof. Kenneth Cherney Jr.

Rev. Thomas Jeske

Rev. Peter Prange

Rev. Neal Schroeder

Rev. Glenn Schwanke

Rev. John Vieths

Advisory:

Rev. James Huebner, second vice president

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president

Ministry of Christian Giving

Floor Committee #6

Our calling

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) works on behalf of the Conference of Presidents to encourage members to excel in the grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7) and assist them in making planned gifts to their congregations, synod, and WELS agencies.

God promises to provide for his people, and it is the “love of Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:15) through the Holy Spirit that compels believers to return a portion to the Lord. Therefore we discourage a “scarcity mentality,” which rejects these truths and shows itself in a hesitation to preach and grow in good stewardship practices.

We realize faith in Christ comes only through the Word (Romans 10:17). Therefore all of our encouragement to give to the work of the church is rooted in the Bible.

Our department’s theme passage is Hebrews 10:23-25: “Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 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.”

Our current situation

The work of our department to fund the synod’s ministries can be split into encouraging gifts under two main categories—Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) and Individual Mission Offerings (IMO).

We emphasize Congregation Mission Offerings through direct contact with our congregations via letters and statements, and by providing biblical materials to assist churches with encouraging giving among their members.

We emphasize Individual Mission Offerings especially through our Christian giving counselors; direct appeals, including larger emphases like Walking Together, our annual emphasis on WELS' endowment funds, and the current Year of Jubilee effort to eliminate our synod's debt; and the Mission Partners program.

Ten deferred Christian giving counselors are serving the 12 districts of WELS. The main focus of our deferred counselors is assisting members with will and estate planning awareness. They also assist congregations with the establishment of planned giving committees, which teach members about giving options, and endowment funds, which provide a stable, long-term source of funding to the congregation. These past two years have been record years for deferred expectancies: \$35,024,641 in 2007 and \$37,435,450 in 2008. We are on the same pace for 2009.

Eight current Christian giving counselors are serving the 12 districts of WELS. The main emphasis of their ministry is gathering gifts to fund WELS' current priorities. In addition to our ministerial education schools, missions, and Parish Services, the Ministry of Christian Giving also helps to fund the following organizations with which we have a collaborative agreement: Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School, New Ulm, MN; Lutheran Institutional Ministry Association, Austin, MN; Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix, AZ; and Shoreland Lutheran High School, Somers, WI. According to *WELS Statistical Report*, WELS received \$36.6 million in additional gifts in 2007 and \$32 million in 2008. "Additional gifts" include foundation grants, bequests, irrevocable instruments to WELS Foundation, appeal gifts, and other immediate gifts.

Thanks to help from WELS Human Resources, starting in 2008 we were able to give our counselors the option to semi-retire. This arrangement allows retirement-age veterans to remain on staff serving in a part-time capacity while sharing their experience with newer counselors. Among the 10 deferred counselors, three are semi-retired and one more will semi-retire in July 2009. Among the eight current counselors, one is semi-retired and two others will semi-retire in July 2009. Under this arrangement, for every two semi-retirements MCG would be allowed to call one new counselor. However, the financial challenges facing our synod have halted the process of calling new counselors.

The following are other highlights of our work:

- We appreciate the move by the 2005 synod convention to improve the work of WELS administration through technological enhancements. The use of Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge development software and the hiring of a full-time donor relations coordinator to navigate the system have greatly enhanced our reporting capabilities.
- Because of the technological enhancements, we were able to bring together the development databases of MCG and the four ministerial education schools. In 2008 we were able, for the first time, to provide donors to WELS with a comprehensive annual giving statement including gifts made directly to these schools. Before this, gifts to the schools were excluded.
- We launched the Year of Jubilee in 2008, spending roughly \$50,000 to administer the offering. God has blessed this special offering with more than \$3 million in gifts as of April 2009.
- A Joint Ministry Operations Team consisting of members from the Ministry of Christian Giving and our ministerial education development staffs works to coordinate development efforts taking place at WELS and at each of our worker training schools.

The Ministry of Christian Giving is also appreciative of the work of our synod's Technology office. Joint efforts between MCG and Technology have led to improved efficiency in the following areas:

- The WELS Web site, www.wels.net, includes an improved donations page, which allows new functionality like making multiple gifts in one transaction, recurring gifts, anonymous gifts, and tracking of online giving.
- The processes both of collecting Congregation Mission Offering pledges (aka "subscriptions") and statistics from congregations are now done online rather than by mail, which has saved mailing costs without hampering goals to have the majority of all of our churches participating.
- Because of these efficiencies we could reduce MCG's office staff size from five full-time equivalents to 3.5.
- Instead of printing the 2008 *WELS Statistical Report* we made it available online with printing, exporting, and navigation tools, which saved WELS \$13,000 in printing costs.

A look ahead

MCG will continue encouraging joyful stewardship among members with our *An Encouraging Word* e-newsletter. Subscribing congregations receive valuable tips, articles, and prayers every other month. We also will continue with our annual Walking Together service to emphasize the benefits of united efforts as a synod and provide people the opportunity to make a special offering to their synod. Our annual emphasis on endowment funds is intended to teach

congregations about a method for securing longer term funding through planned gifts while at the same time building up our WELS endowments funds. The goal is to have \$300 million in endowment gifts gathered by 2018.

The Mission Partners program continues to provide people with a way to learn more about specific WELS missions and ministries while supporting WELS with offerings and prayers.

We continue to encourage full congregational participation in our collection of Congregation Mission Offering subscriptions, actual gifts, and statistics. We encourage congregations to implement the 10/10 Plan to increase their giving to WELS to 10 percent of all offerings received or by 10 percent over last year's offerings.

The Ministry of Christian Giving has received a grant from Thrivent to coordinate the training of WELS circuit pastors in 2010, which should enhance communication between the synod and WELS congregations.

Our commission has the following concerns regarding our proposed budget, which would cut our work by 34 percent:

- Replacing all mailed appeals with e-appeals with the exception of Walking Together would save \$200,000 in initial costs but result in an approximate \$600,000 reduction in gifts to WELS.
- Based on records for 2007 and 2008, for each full-time deferred counselor position we eliminate (each counselor costs roughly \$100,000) we will put at risk \$4 million in deferred expectancies, \$300,000 in immediate gifts, and 200 substantial, hour-long, face-to-face "calls" with donors regarding giving opportunities. For each full-time current counselor position we eliminate we will put at risk \$1.5 million in immediate gifts, \$300,000 in expectancies, and 450 calls.
- To work within the reduced budget, we would continue to put on hold the calling of a current counselor for the Michigan District. In addition three full-time current counselors have semi-retired, and two others would have to be released from service. Based on previous years' numbers, this would result in a reduction of \$6,750,000 in current gifts, \$1,350,000 in expectancies, and 2,025 fewer substantial calls to donors regarding giving opportunities.
- One deferred counselor would semi-retire, resulting in \$150,000 less in current gifts, \$2 million less in expectancies, and 100 fewer calls made.
- The estimated total reduction in revenue due to budget cuts of the Ministry of Christian Giving is \$7.5 million in immediate gifts, \$3.4 million in deferred gifts, and 2,125 fewer calls made.

Rev. Dave Liggett, reporter

Mr. Mark Neumann

Rev. Kevin Schultz

Mr. Alfred Schwan

Mr. Jerry VonDeylen

Mr. David Voss

Mr. Dennis Walters

Advisory:

Rev. Dave Liggett, director of Ministry of Christian Giving

Communication Services

Floor Committee #7

Our calling

The Communication Services Commission 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 offices.

Developments

A considerable percentage of Communication Services' efforts and energy over the last year have been devoted to

developing a new synodwide identity—culminating in the new synod logo and the tagline “Christ’s Love, Our Calling” receiving its first widespread visibility at this synod convention. This new tagline is no mere slogan or convention theme; rather, it is an attempt to clearly articulate in a concise way and for the foreseeable future who we are as a church body—both to our own people and to the world.

A key component of this identity initiative is the synod’s redesigned Web site, www.wels.net, which is being test marketed in “Beta” form this summer and scheduled for full functionality this fall. Developed in partnership with WELS Technology, the site is designed to reach laypeople and “seekers,” those outside our fellowship looking to know more about Christ in general and our church body in particular. Funding for this project comes from both outside grants and budgetary sources.

We are convinced that a Web design with “seekers” in mind will be an extremely valuable resource both for WELS congregations and individuals for sharing what our church body is about and what we have to offer. We are eager to begin a dialogue with those who don’t yet know their Savior.

Another key development since the 2007 synod convention has been the launch of the bi-weekly e-newsletter “Together.” Delegates resolved to encourage the director of communications to continue “to promote the mission, vision, objectives, and plans of our synod through print media, video resources, Web messages, and electronic and surface-mail news/information releases,” and “to work toward streamlining communications between the synod administration and the congregations.” “Together” is a result of that resolution. It is e-mailed to 5,100 called workers and a growing list of lay subscribers. Surveys indicate that more than half of the responding congregations are using a print version of “Together,” either in part or in whole in their Sunday worship folders or other publications.

“Together” represents a concerted effort by the Communication Services staff to provide the most essential synodwide developments on a consistent, timely basis. Until “Together,” the primary ways to deliver synod news were through sporadic news releases e-mailed to called workers or through the monthly print publication *Forward in Christ*, prepared months in advance.

In an effort to consolidate electronic communications, Communication Services now sends out an electronic bulletin board once each month. Called workers should notice a significant reduction in e-mail clutter from various areas of ministry since promotional announcements that were once broadcast to all of their e-mail addresses are now consolidated in this once-a-month bulletin.

Looking forward

Efforts to reduce budgets across synod through the next biennium have had a direct impact upon Communication Services, as well as every other area of ministry.

- The position of director of media has been eliminated, reducing the number of full-time staff members from five to four. The elimination of the position means that all other areas of ministry will no longer have access to low-cost, in-house video production services. Any production needs will have to be outsourced to outside vendors.
- Funding has also been eliminated for the consulting expertise needed to help market and promote the redesigned WELS Web site to the outside world. This next step in the ongoing identity initiative will have to wait until grant dollars can be secured.

Plans are moving forward to develop a new communications platform to engage our congregations in a common purpose—and in the process promote all other synod communications. The plan is reflected in the 25 percent increase in the operating budget allocation for Communication Services for fiscal year 2009-10.

Our intent is to use a percentage of the funding that had been directed toward monthly appeals from the Ministry of Christian Giving and funding that had supported the quarterly *Mission Connection* newspaper for a new platform to be shipped monthly to each congregation. It will be directly tied to the *WELS Connection* video presentation to help “continue the conversation” and provide our membership with a call to action—suggestions and encouragement for acting upon what they’ve seen in the video.

The director of communications is working to develop a plan for fully integrating this new platform with all continuing internal communication platforms, including

- *WELS Connection*, the monthly video production viewed in about 900 congregations;
- *Forward in Christ*, WELS’ official monthly publication with more than 47,000 subscriptions;

- “Together” e-newsletter, e-mailed bi-weekly to more than 5,100 called workers; and
- www.wels.net, the synod’s official Web site, which has more than 70,000 unique visitors monthly.

In the months ahead, look for a more unified approach across each of these platforms—both in graphic look and editorial content—with a priority on information that highlights elements of our WELS identity and the ministry we do collectively as a synod.

Also look for a more unified look and feel to all other synodical resources—from all other areas of ministry—under the new theme “Christ’s Love, Our Calling.”

Communication Services remains committed and staffed to develop content for all other essential internal communication tools, including

- *Report to the Twelve Districts*;
- *Book of Reports and Memorials*;
- *Proceedings*, the official record of each synod convention;
- live video streaming and reporting of convention proceedings; and
- WELS Annual Report.

Mr. Joel Hochmuth, reporter

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president and chairman

Rev. Michael Duncan, secretary

Prof. Daniel Leyrer, *Forward in Christ* consultant

Advisory:

Rev. John A. Braun, *Forward in Christ* executive editor

Mr. Joel Hochmuth, director of communications

Mrs. Alicia Neumann, communication projects manager

Mr. Martin Spriggs, chief technology officer

Mrs. Julie Wietzke, communication projects manager

Nominating Committee

Floor Committee #17

These candidates have been chosen by the synod Nominating Committee to be presented to the delegates of the 60th 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 (*).

Board for Ministerial Education

Chairman (parish pastor)

William Brassow, Saginaw, Mich.

Philip Hirsch, Manhattan, Kan.

James Janke, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Parish pastor

Douglas Free, Rapid City, S.D.

Marc Frey, New Carlisle, Ohio

Philip Hirsch, Manhattan, Kan.

James Naumann, Vassar, Mich.

Layman

James Leonard, West Richland, Wash.

Tracy Linn, Bozeman, Mont.

Jerry Turney, Scottsdale, Ariz.

Teacher

Gregory Diersen, Watertown, S.D.
Kurt Rosenbaum, Phoenix, Ariz.
Daryl Weber, Germantown, Wis.

Martin Luther College Governing Board chairman (parish pastor)

Paul Naumann, Benton Harbor, Mich.
Michael Schultz, Lawrenceville, Ga.
Michael Woldt, Jackson, Wis.

Board for World Missions**Layman**

Dennis Hanink, Hudson, Ohio
Keith Moore, Flagstaff, Ariz.*
Gerald Zimpelmann, Eagle River, Wis.

Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors**Laymen (vote for 2)**

Kenneth Forfinski, Farwell, Mich.
Patrick Mulrain, Tomah, Wis.
James Petrie, Navan, Ontario, Canada
Christopher Snyder, Milwaukee, Wis.
Kevin Traub, Middleville, Mich.
Edward Wolf, Slinger, Wis.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary professor

Stephen Geiger, Mequon, Wis.
John Hartwig, Mequon, Wis.
James Korthals, Mequon, Wis.

Synodical Council**Teacher-at-large**

Paul Bertolus, Watertown, Wis.
James Moeller, Watertown, Wis.
Frederick Uttech, Watertown, Wis.

Synod Board of Appeals**Pastor**

James Aderman, Milwaukee, Wis.
Gregory Hermanson, Antioch, Ill.
John Vieths, Dallas, Tex.

Layman

Peter Dorn, Portland, Ore.*
Mark Schulz, Milton, Wis.
Dale Wierschke, Green Bay, Wis.

Teacher

David Hackmann, Greenfield, Wis.
David Sauer, Spokane, Wash.
William Zeiger, Saginaw, Mich.

Board for Parish Services**Chairman (parish pastor)**

Harland Goetzinger, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Thomas Kock, Johnson City, Tenn.
Joel Leyrer, Wauwatosa, Wis.*

Layman

Tom Griepentrog, Milwaukee, Wis.
Gerald Maas, Laramie, Wyo.
Michael Valteau, Maplewood, Minn.

Commission on Youth Discipleship chairman (pastor, teacher, or layman)

Pastor Nathan Kassulke, Tucson, Ariz.
Pastor Thomas Schneider, Stevensville, Mich.*
Pastor Anthony Schultz, Watertown, Wis.

Commission on Adult Discipleship chairman (pastor, teacher, or layman)

Pastor William Heiges, New London, Wis.
Pastor Randy Hunter, Middleton, Wis.*
Pastor Richard Starr, Bay City, Mich.

The following elections will only take place if restructuring of the Synodical Council is approved by the convention.

Synodical Council

Pastor (vote for 4)

Thomas Behnke, North Fond du Lac, Wis.
Wayne Hilgendorf, Woodville, Wis.
Thomas Jeske, Omaha, Neb.
Bruce McKenney, Lake Mills, Wis.
John Qualmann, Fletcher, N.C.
Paul Rydecki, Las Cruces, N.M.
Jonathan Schroeder, Sharpsburg, Ga.
Jonathan Stern, Flagstaff, Ariz.

Teacher (vote for 2)

Paul Bertolus, Watertown, Wis.
James Moeller, Watertown, Wis.
Justin Gregorius, Van Dyne, Wis.
Nathan Kieselhorst, Watertown, Wis.
Scott Monroe, Sun Prairie, Wis.
Frederick Uttech, Watertown, Wis.

Rev. Robert Pasbrig, reporter

Rev. Robert Pasbrig, chairman
Rev. Donald Buch
Rev. Joel Gaertner
Rev. Raymond Kimbrough Jr.
Rev. Dale Raether
Rev. D. Thomas Rawerts
Rev. Richard Schleicher
Rev. Paul Schmeling
Rev. Alois Schmitzer III
Rev. Dale Schulz
Rev. Paul Schulz
Rev. Philip Spaude
Rev. Vaughn Vogel

Synodical Council

Floor Committee #2

The Synodical Council (SC) is composed of the following 22 members: one lay member elected by each of the 12 districts of the synod, three district presidents elected by the Conference of Presidents, six at-large members elected by the synod in convention (one pastor, one teacher, and the four chairmen of the areas of ministry). The synod president serves as chairman. Advisory members include the synod vice presidents, the administrators of the four areas of ministry, the chief financial officer, the chief technology officer, the director of the Ministry of Christian Giving, and the director of communications. In order to address the wide range of issues that come before it, the Synodical Council is organized into three committees: Administration, Fiscal, and Ministry.

The synod's constitution and bylaws assign to the Synodical Council the following responsibilities:

- The SC shall be responsible for all activities of the synod in pursuit of its mission, other than those specifically conferred on the Conference of Presidents.
- The SC has the authority to act on behalf of the synod between conventions in keeping with the directives and resolutions of the convention.
- The SC 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.
- The SC prepares and submits for approval a budget to the synod, in keeping with fiscal integrity. In this process, the SC evaluates all programs and recommends a budget that reflects sound planning and faithful stewardship.
- The SC is responsible for the management of all synodical property, funds, and investments.
- The SC oversees and approves long-range and strategic planning conducted by all areas of ministry.

The Synodical Council holds regularly scheduled meetings three times per year as it works to carry out its broad responsibilities. Special face-to-face or teleconference meetings are scheduled if necessary. In the time since the district conventions last summer, the Synodical Council has addressed a wide range of issues.

Ad Hoc Commission's report

The SC met via teleconference on Aug. 28, 2008, to discuss the districts' reactions to the Ad Hoc Commission's report. Additional discussion took place at the regular meetings in November and February. The SC forwarded comments and questions to the Ad Hoc Commission for consideration.

At its April meeting the SC addressed three areas of concern relating to the final report of the Ad Hoc Commission. It passed a resolution discouraging the adoption of the commission's recommendation to undertake a study of synodical redistricting. Secondly, the SC approved a resolution in memorial form to the convention expressing its opposition to the commission's recommendation to alter the membership structure of the SC. Finally, the SC forwarded concerns about possible misunderstanding or misinterpretation of some of the wording in the report's section dealing with Parish Services. Pending the response of the commission to this concern, the SC may bring an additional recommendation to the convention.

The SC did not speak directly to most of the recommendations in the report. Silence on these issues implies neither support nor opposition.

Joint meeting with the Conference of Presidents

In an effort to increase communication and cooperation between the two leadership groups of the synod, the Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents (COP) held a joint meeting in November 2008. Major items discussed were the preliminary report of the Ad Hoc Commission and the synod's financial situation, as well as ideas for increased coordination between the SC and the COP. Both groups concluded that annual joint meetings would be beneficial and desirable.

Subsidiary organizations

The Synodical Council hears regular reports from the Benefit Plans Office, Northwestern Publishing House, WELS Church Extension Fund, WELS Investment Funds, and WELS Foundation. The SC provides general oversight to

these entities as they carry out their specific ministry tasks. The SC has submitted several recommendations for amendments to the synod's bylaws related to the subsidiary organizations. These amendments are included in the report of the Committee for Constitutional Matters (p. 151).

In 2007 the SC authorized an independent analysis of our current Voluntary Employees' Benefit Association (VEBA) health care system. Initial and preliminary reports indicated that a group plan like VEBA is the preferred type of approach in view of the various needs of our synod. There are several reasons for this, but one factor seems to stand out. Since our plan underwrites our entire group of workers rather than individual workers, it enables us to provide a uniform cost of health care for all workers. It may be true that younger, healthier workers can be insured outside of the VEBA system for less money, but older workers or those in poor health would be far more expensive. Covering all workers at a uniform cost ensures that the cost of health insurance will not become a hindrance to our call system, with calling bodies avoiding the calling of older or less healthy workers because of the high expense of insuring them. The SC remains concerned that as congregations choose to insure younger and healthier workers outside of the VEBA plan, the cost of insurance increases for all congregations that remain in the VEBA plan. Additionally, if congregations leave VEBA for all or some of their workers, it could result in dramatically higher costs for those congregations once their workers grow older or less healthy.

Compensation Review Committee

The Compensation Review Committee was established by the Synodical Council in 2007 to review and make recommendations in all salary and compensation matters. The committee initially recommended a salary increase of 1 percent in the base rate for synodical workers in 2009-10 and a 1 percent increase in 2010-11. The committee also recommended that the schedule expand the years of service increments to include a 31st year in 2009-10 and a 32nd year in 2010-11.

The SC originally approved these recommendations, but in light of subsequent financial developments, the SC is now proposing a salary freeze for all synodical workers for the first year of the next biennium. The freeze means that there will be no increase in either base rate or increases in compensation for additional years of service. The salary proposal also eliminates the added increase for the 31st year of experience in 2009-10.

The proposed budget also incorporates an increase in the health insurance deductible for synodical employees from \$500 to \$1,000. This decision will provide approximately \$400,000 in annual savings.

The committee has also begun to address other issues involving benefits and severance policies.

Synodical debt

As of April 2009, the Year of Jubilee Offering has resulted in offerings of approximately \$3.2 million from congregations and individuals. Coupled with the regular budgetary payments made toward the debt since the 2007 convention, it is estimated that by the time of the 2009 convention the \$22.4 million capital debt will have been reduced to approximately \$15 million. We join in thanking God for the significant progress that has been made as a result of the thank offerings of God's people in these challenging economic times.

Strategy for budget stabilization

Looking ahead to the next biennium, the Synodical Council has adopted a new strategy for providing stability to the synod's process for providing funding for its mission and ministry. The SC agrees with the Conference of Presidents and recent conventions that Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) are the foundational support for the work of the synod. Offerings from congregations represent the gifts of God's people given in support of the mission we jointly carry out. The SC acknowledges the significant blessings that also come through non-CMO gifts such as the financial support provided by individual Christians, special offerings, foundations, and other organizations.

The SC recognizes that while Congregation Mission Offerings are generally stable and predictable, the funding from non-CMO sources can vary greatly from year to year. It is a special blessing when funds are abundant, but it presents special challenges when expected support from those sources decreases suddenly, as happened in fall 2008 and winter 2009. Since the synod has typically planned ministry based on *anticipated* funding from both CMO and non-CMO sources, we have at times been faced with the need to discontinue ministry programs suddenly and without adequate time for planning.

To address this problem, the SC has adopted a plan to create a "Financial Stabilization Fund." Essentially this strategy will ensure the spending of non-CMO dollars only in the year *after* they have actually been received. In other words,

ministry planning will be based on the dollars that we actually have on hand rather than on dollars we hope to receive in the future. This will not necessarily prevent the need to make reductions in our ministry program, but it will enable us to have at least one year's advance notice that reductions will be necessary.

To implement this strategy, the formation of the Financial Stabilization Fund for the first year of the biennium (2009-10) will be made possible by utilizing unrestricted dollars now held in various synodical accounts and special funds. The budget presented to the 2009 convention will be based on this funding strategy. Approximately \$8.3 million from unrestricted dollars on-hand and accumulated bequests will be used as conversion funding in the first year of the biennium to supplement funding from Congregation Mission Offerings. This will enable all non-CMO gifts received in 2009-10, projected at \$8.5 million, to flow into the Financial Stabilization Fund for the following year.

Relocation of the Synodical Administration Building

In 2007 and 2008 the Synodical Council received periodic reports from a committee studying various options regarding the potential sale of the Synod Administration Building and relocation of the synod's offices. The committee recommended that, if a relocation is to take place, only proceeds from the sale of the current building and other dollars on hand should be used to fund the project. Since the fall of 2008, however, interest in the purchase of the current administration building has waned, and there are no plans in place to move forward with relocation.

Mission and ministry

The SC is charged with the overall supervision of the mission and ministry of the synod. A substantial portion of each SC meeting is dedicated to receiving reports from the various areas of ministry, discussing the blessings and challenges before us as we carry out our multifaceted work, and providing counsel and direction to the areas of ministry as they carry out their responsibilities. The SC recognizes that a renewed effort needs to be made to plan for the short- and long-term mission and ministry efforts of the synod. This task has been made more difficult by the recent financial challenges, but the areas of ministry will be asked to initiate the strategic planning process so that a comprehensive plan can be presented to the 2011 convention.

2007 convention compliance

The Synodical Council is committed to carrying out the directives and resolutions of the 2007 synod convention. The Convention Compliance List follows this report to indicate the status of those activities.

Appreciation for faithful service

John Freese and Don Sutton will be leaving the SC after the 2009 convention. We thank them for their faithful service and pray for God's continued blessings on them and their families.

Recommendations for convention action

1. The Synodical Council recommends that auditing firms can be rehired if they have rotating personnel (see the Accounting Oversight Committee report, p. 29).
2. The Synodical Council is proposing several recommendations for bylaw changes (see the report of the Committee for Constitutional Matters, assigned to Floor Committee #14, p. 151).
3. The Synodical Council recommends the adoption of its proposed budget, with the convention determining whether to follow Option A or Option B. Both options in the proposed budget include the following features, and the adoption of the budget would include the adoption of the following:
 - a. The Synodical Council recommends that the capital debt be refinanced for ten-and-a-half years at an interest rate of 2 percent.
 - b. The Synodical Council recommends the approval of the synod salary schedules for the 2009-10 and 2010-11 fiscal years (see p. 58).
 - c. The Synodical Council recommends that the health insurance deductible for synodical workers be increased from \$500 to \$1,000.

For more information, refer to the budget proposal submitted to Floor Committee #4, Finance and Budget (p. 48).

Rev. Mark Schroeder, reporter

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president and chairman
Mr. Dale Anderson, South Atlantic District
Mr. Rodger Anderson, North Atlantic District
Mr. Kurt Austad, Nebraska District

Mr. Warren Ehlke, Pacific Northwest District
Rev. Douglas Engelbrecht, Conference of Presidents
Dr. John Freese, teacher-at-large
Mr. Seth Hansen, Dakota-Montana District
Mr. Philip Hempel, Michigan District
Mr. Ron Hillmann, Northern Wisconsin District
Mr. Paul Holzhueter, Minnesota District
Rev. Philip Koelpin, chairman of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Joel Leyrer, chairman of WELS Board for Parish Services
Rev. Peter Naumann, Conference of Presidents
Rev. David Rutschow, Conference of Presidents
Mr. Tom Schlittenhart, Arizona-California District
Mr. Timothy Snyder, Southeastern Wisconsin District
Rev. Donald Sutton, chairman of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Mr. John Tappe, Western Wisconsin District
Mr. Robert Timmermann, South Central District
Rev. Earle Treptow, pastor-at-large
Rev. Charles Westra, chairman of WELS Board for Home Missions

Advisory:

Rev. Harold Hagedorn, administrator of WELS Board for Home Missions
Mr. Joel Hochmuth, director of communications
Rev. James Huebner, second vice president
Rev. David Kehl, acting administrator of WELS Board for Parish Services
Rev. Dan Koelpin, administrator of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Dave Liggett, director of Ministry of Christian Giving
Mr. Todd Poppe, chief financial officer
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Mr. Martin Spriggs, chief technology officer

Convention compliance

Floor Committee, Resolution	Responsible Group	Resolution Description	Due By	Compliance
2-1	President, Conference of Presidents, Synodical Council	Urge all to be in the Word; build confidence in synod; affirm connection with people	2009	Ongoing via <i>WELS Connection, Together</i> , new Bible studies and stewardship materials being produced, initial discussions for improving circuit pastor system
2-1	Synodical Council, Board for World Missions, Board for Home Missions, Board for Ministerial Education	Expand outreach; support Ministerial Education system	2009	BWM calls two missionaries to prepare for service in Mozambique; BHM approves several new mission starts and plans for additional pending funding; BME expansion of recruitment, efforts to minimize tuition increases, and the ongoing evaluation of faculty levels
2-1	Conference of Presidents	Foster unity	2009	Encouragement of various doctrinal and practical studies; studying use of circuit pastor system; support for WELS Symposium at WLS
2-1 and 5-1	Synodical Council, Board for Ministerial Education	Step up recruitment	2009	New MLC initiatives with Lutheran high schools; additional manpower added at MLC
2-1 and 6-4	President, Director of Communications	Improve communications	2009	<i>Together</i> newsletter, coordinated communications strategy, <i>WELS Connection</i> focusing on synodical efforts and ministries
3-2	Conference of Presidents	Publish framework of fellowship guidelines	2009	Encouraging study of papers in conferences
3-3	Conference of Presidents	District discussion of Great Commission Study	2009	Encouraging study of papers in conferences
3-5	Conference of Presidents, Ministry of Christian Giving	Study "needs-based" stewardship programs	2009	COP and MCG encourage congregations to increase CMO with good initial results; COP statement that the Year of Jubilee Offering, along with other plans put in place, should reduce the need for special offerings
3-9	Conference of Presidents	Next convention to be held in Saginaw, MI	2009	Completed; arrangements being made by MLS
4-1	Board for Home Missions	Fill mission counselor positions	2009	Calls issued and accepted; four mission counselors serving
4-2	President, Board for Home Missions	Publicize past and current efforts	2009	Home Missions efforts highlighted in presentations, <i>Together, Forward in Christ, WELS Connection</i>
4-3	President, Board for World Missions	Publicize past and current efforts	2009	World Missions efforts highlighted in presentations, <i>Together, Forward in Christ, WELS Connection</i>
5-3	Board for Ministerial Education	Increase financial assistance	2009	Studies in progress; efforts to minimize tuition increases; increased financial aid dependent on additional funding sources

Convention compliance (cont.)

5-4	Synodical Council	Continue financial support for Board for Parish Services	2009	Budget allocations made for current biennium; special funding appeals authorized for civilian chaplain in Europe and for National Worship Conference; vacancies filled
6-1	President	Appoint Reformation 500 th Anniversary Committee and have committee report progress to the 2009 convention	2008	Committee appointed in spring 2009
6-5	Publications Coordinating Commission	Finish hymnal supplement	2008	Hymnal supplement and supporting materials completed and available for use
7-6	Conference of Presidents	Encourage CMO; consider special debt offering	2008	District presidents active in encouragement to congregations; new electronic system for submitting CMO; Year of Jubilee offering carried out in all districts
7-7	President	Ad hoc commission appointed, functions, reports	2008	Commission appointed and completed its work. Preliminary report made to districts in 2008 and the final report submitted to the convention in 2009.
7-8	Synodical Council	Add \$2.0 million to the 2008-09 budget to restore funding for Michigan Lutheran Seminary and \$600,000 to restore funding for World Missions	2007	Completed
7-9	Synodical Council	Add \$60,000 for district president assistants	2009	Completed
8-2	Church Extension Fund	Publicize CEF program	2009	CEF publicized in <i>Forward in Christ</i> and <i>Together</i> , as well as at various conferences and meetings
9-3	President	Various appointments	2008	Completed
11-4	Board for World Missions	Implement restructuring	2008	Completed
11-5	Board for Parish Services	Implement restructuring of district commissions	2008	Completed
11-4, 11-5, 11-6, 7-8	Conference of Presidents, Committee on Constitutional Matters	Publish bylaw changes	2007	Completed

WELS Archives

Floor Committee #2

WELS Archives is the official repository for records of historical value created by and about WELS, its congregations and 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 administrators, WELS called workers, and WELS congregations.

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.

Grants were received in the past year from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and the Northwestern College Alumni Society that have allowed for the hiring of an assistant in the archives for nine months. Mark Tiefel has efficiently organized the space and continued to write archival descriptions of materials in the archives. Those can be accessed online at www.wls.wels.net/sections/library/resources.

The synod has recognized that the WELS archival program urgently needs additional space and had planned the construction of a new facility. However, those plans have been put on hold due to lack of funds. The current location of the archives is unsuitable for our synod's archival collection because it is full, and the temperature and humidity cannot be controlled. The collection is in need of a larger facility.

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 Hartwig, reporter

Committee on Relief

Floor Committee #2

Our calling

WELS Committee on Relief, the synod's "ministry of compassion," continues to bring physical relief to victims of natural disasters through gifts of cash grants, food, clothing, and medical supplies. The Committee on Relief is also the synod's instrument to carry out general humanitarian aid at home and all over the world. WELS Relief views this as a directive from God "to love our neighbor as ourselves." It also allows us to encourage our membership as well as give opportunity to exercise Christian lives of sanctification.

Current situation

Total income through March 2009 was \$1.45 million. Expenditures for relief efforts were \$2.1 million. The current assets of WELS Committee on Relief as of April 1, 2009, are \$887,000.

Major opportunities to provide relief in the past two years were centered in the Midwest, where almost half-a-million dollars was granted for relief from floods and tornadoes. In addition more than \$150,000 was provided for relief from major hurricanes in Louisiana and Texas. Fifty thousand dollars was used for wildfire relief in Wisconsin and California.

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

In May 2008 WELS Relief and many volunteers participated in a farewell service at Crown of Life, New Orleans, La. This brought to an end our largest relief endeavor to date. Hurricane Katrina brought more than 1,500 volunteers

from all over the country to help rebuild areas around the WELS church in New Orleans.

World relief activities included \$45,000 for relief from earthquakes in Peru and China, which was distributed through sister church bodies. Fifty thousand dollars was granted for relief from typhoons in Bangladesh and Myanmar through international relief agencies. Thirty-five thousand dollars was granted to provide relief from starvation in Africa through our mission efforts in Zambia. Another \$20,000 was given for general hunger relief in Africa.

Many thousands of dollars were also given to support areas of humanitarian aid through home and world missionaries.

Future activities

WELS Relief continues to look for ways to improve its communication to the synod. New video formats are being developed so that those who support our work can see firsthand how their dollars are being used. Our Web page, www.welsrelief.net, continues to offer timely information and a convenient way to donate online for disaster projects.

Rev. Philip Schupmann, reporter

Rev. Philip Schupman, chairman

Teacher Gary Thoma, secretary

Mr. Sam Izzat

Rev. Mark Lindner

Rev. John Zickuhr

Publication Coordinating Commission

Floor Committee #2

Our calling

The Publication Coordinating Commission coordinates and prioritizes the publishing and media production of the synod's boards and commissions and Northwestern Publishing House. Each year we solicit publishing proposals for materials that would not recover the cost of production and yet are deemed to be important. We review and evaluate those proposals and award funds from the Publication Fund to those we consider vital.

Our current situation

Over this past biennium we have made possible the publication of *Christian Worship: Supplement* and a vacation Bible school curriculum, and the streaming of video devotions for *LivingBold*. We also helped fund some of the publishing plans for Jesus Cares Ministries and Multi-Language Publications. In addition, the commission has subsidized several Northwestern Publishing House professional books for pastors including a commentary on Romans 1-8 and a study of church and ministry entitled *Ministry of the Word*. Without this subsidy these projects would never be completed. More than 50 projects have been completed over the years because of the commission's work, and more than 40 are currently in production.

One project had its origin within the commission. Several years ago we decided to present the gospel using the medium of a video program. Three members of the commission, Pastor Paul Hartman, Pastor David Kehl, and Pastor John Braun, drafted a script based on Luke's account of Jesus meeting two men on the way to Emmaus. We contracted a production company to produce the video. It is nearing completion. A Spanish version of the video is also part of the project. We think that the video can be used in other fields as well with an appropriate translation added. The commission is excited about the release of this video for use by our congregations and missions.

The Publication Fund was transferred to Northwestern Publishing House in the past biennium in order to make it easier to manage the fund. We also chose to move to a fiscal year so that the commission was operating on the same fiscal year as the synod.

A look ahead

Considering the current financial situation of the synod, the commission may have diminished funds for publication

of projects. The money in the fund may need to be used elsewhere for the good of our other synodical work. This will limit our ability to fund future 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 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 confessional standards.

Rev. John Braun, reporter

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

Teacher James Brandt, Board for Parish Services

Rev. Bryan Gerlach, Board for Parish Services

Rev. Paul Hartman, Board for World Missions

Rev. Curtis Jahn, Northwestern Publishing House

Rev. David Kehl, Board for Parish Services

Rev. Wayne Schulz, Board for Home Missions

Accounting Oversight Committee

Floor Committee #2

The Accounting Oversight Committee serves the synod, its subsidiaries, and its affiliates that are under the control of the Synodical Council. The committee shall serve the Synodical Council by assisting in ensuring appropriate accounting policies and internal controls are established and financial systems are efficient and effective; by retaining external auditors; by 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 Synodical Council informed of its action through the Synodical Council's appointed member of the committee. The committee shall keep subsidiary and affiliate boards, commissions, and committees informed of its actions and recommendations through the WELS chief financial officer.

Since the 2007 synod convention, the committee has engaged the independent audit firm of Virchow Krause & Company LLP to conduct the annual audit of the consolidated financial statements of synod and the financial statements of WELS Church Extension Fund, WELS Investment Fund, WELS Foundation, and Martin Luther College. In addition, the financial statements of Northwestern Publishing House, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Luther Preparatory School, and Michigan Lutheran Seminary are subjected to audit procedures as part of the audit of the consolidated financial statements of synod. For the fiscal years ended June 30, 2007 and 2008, all audit reports were issued within five months of year end, an improvement of eight months from fiscal year (FY) 2004 and two months from FY 2006. All entities received an unqualified opinion on the financial statements' compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. In addition, consolidated financial statements for the synod are now prepared quarterly. Copies of the annual financial statements, quarterly consolidated financial statements, and monthly operating fund financial statements are available at www.wels.net.

In addition to the annual financial statement audits, the committee engaged the independent accounting firm Clifton Gunderson, LLP to audit the WELS VEBA Group Health Plan and WELS Pension Plan. These plans received unqualified opinions on their financial statements. In addition, this firm was engaged on a contract basis as the synod's internal auditor. The firm studied the internal controls and processing efficiency of the synod, ministerial education schools, and subsidiaries' handling of gifts and support from individuals, congregations, and various activities supported by user fees. The report identified areas to enhance controls over misappropriation of funds and financial reporting. All entities are working diligently to respond to the recommendations contained in the report. Due to financial constraints, no internal audits are planned for the next biennium.

In 2003, the convention resolved that the synod's audit firm must be changed every five years. The committee believes that effective auditor independence, in fact and in appearance, can be achieved through audit firm personnel rotation as well as firm rotation. Accordingly, the committee proposed and the Synodical Council approved that at

least every five years the synod audits be put out for proposal and that the incumbent firm be invited to propose on the audits if the firm has a personnel rotation policy that demonstrates a level of auditor independence acceptable to the committee.

The committee is extremely thankful that the synod has moved proactively on the recommendations endorsed by the 2003 synod convention. Those recommendations included the creation of this committee, hiring a chief financial officer, and strengthening the synod's financial services functions. While the improvements are numerous and evident in many facets of the synod's financial operations, opportunities still remain for improved efficiency and effectiveness in the accounting and information technology support of financial systems and reporting for synod.

Mr. Tom Walters, reporter

Mr. Tom Walters, chairman

Mr. Jim Freer

Mr. Carl Rudolph

Advisory:

Mr. Todd Poppe, chief financial officer

Mr. Tom Schlittenhart, Synodical Council liaison

Finance and budget

Floor Committee #4

Financial results for 2007-09

The financial results for the biennium tell a story of stark contrasts. The 2007 convention approved a budget for fiscal year 2008-09 (the second year of the current biennium) that was \$2.6 million higher than the support forecast. The increase provided an additional \$2 million for ministerial education, enabling it to maintain its four schools; it also restored \$600,000 in reductions that had been planned for World Missions. The convention expressed the confidence that WELS congregations and members would provide the support needed to fund the adopted program of missions and ministry. That challenge seemed to have been met when financial support from all sources exceeded expenses by \$3.4 million in the first year of the biennium (2007-08). Here are examples of how this surplus was realized:

- Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) of \$22 million were \$900,000 more than the forecast and \$1.9 million higher than the prior year, an increase of 10 percent.
- Gifts from individuals (also known as Individual Mission Offerings or IMO) of \$2.6 million were \$800,000 more than the forecast and were \$700,000 more than the previous year, an increase of 38 percent.
- A positive change in the foreign exchange rate increased the value of a gift from a WELS member in Canada by \$500,000.
- Investment income and other revenues were a collective \$700,000 more than budgeted and \$70,000 more than the prior year.
- Underspending by World Missions and Ministry Support due to vacancies and underspending by Home Missions due to deferral of ministry starts.

The surplus of \$3.4 million was set aside into a buffer fund to offset the \$2.6 million increase in the budget approved for 2008-09. During this time, when all indications were that the synod would surpass the level of support required by the 2007 convention, the Synodical Council approved an increase of \$500,000 to the Home Missions budget.

The situation changed dramatically in fall 2008. Due to the downturn in the world economy, a series of events indicated that WELS would experience a sudden and unexpected reduction in the amount of support available for ministry, requiring an adjustment to the support forecast. These include

- the reduction of a gift from a WELS member in Canada in the amount of \$1 million,
- a reduction in gifts from individuals in the amount of \$850,000,
- a reduction in foundation grants amounting to \$460,000, and
- a downturn in anticipated Congregation Mission Offerings (\$130,000).

Additional downward adjustments in anticipated support were necessary in the winter of 2008-09. These include

- the loss of the balance (\$2 million) of an expected gift from a WELS member in Canada—effectively ending the gift after one year rather than the planned five years, and
- a decrease in expected Congregation Mission Offerings of \$400,000.

All of these factors combined to indicate that the total cumulative deficit, even after applying the \$3.4 surplus in the buffer fund, would be \$2.5 million by June 30, 2009.

In early 2009 the Synodical Council, in keeping with its responsibility to balance the budget by the end of the biennium, had a choice to make. It could either make reductions in ministry immediately or it could utilize other existing sources of funds to apply to the deficit. The Synodical Council chose the latter course and worked to achieve a balanced budget by applying the following resources:

- \$1 million provided by WELS Church Extension Fund to fund some Home Missions costs.

- \$1.1 million from previously received unrestricted bequests.
- \$300,000 in cost reductions by underspending in the areas of ministry.
- \$110,000 from various unrestricted special funds.

In order for the budget to remain balanced at the end of the 2008-09 fiscal year, it is vital that Congregation Mission Offerings keep pace with the commitments that congregations made in January. If Congregation Mission Offerings fall short, additional difficult adjustments will need to be made by the Synodical Council prior to the convention.

**WELS Operating Budget
2007-2009 Biennium**

	Actual FY 2007-08		Budget FY 2007-08		Variance Favorable/(Unfavorable)		Percent
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	
Support							
Gifts from Congregations	\$ 21,979,988	4.5%	\$ 21,032,000	4.5%	\$ 947,988	-11.5%	
Foundation Grants	7,850,000	0.6%	7,800,000	0.6%	50,000	-5.6%	
Gifts from Individuals	2,647,785	47.1%	1,800,000	47.1%	847,785	-38.9%	
Unrestricted Bequests	2,338,468	112.6%	1,100,000	112.6%	1,238,468	43.3%	
Fees ⁽¹⁾	3,393,426		2,550,000		843,426	-100.0%	
Other Revenue	443,862	121.9%	200,000	121.9%	243,862	125.0%	
Investment Income	172,509	91.7%	90,000	91.7%	82,509	-46.4%	
Total Support	38,826,038	12.3%	34,572,000	12.3%	4,254,038	-15.1%	
Other Sources (Uses)							
Educational Development Endowment							
Fund Allocation to Debt	375,332		-		375,332	-	
Transfers from Special Funds	-		-		-		
Prior Year Bequests	1,400,000	7.7%	1,300,000	7.7%	100,000	31.0%	
Defer Bequests to Future Years	(2,338,468)	112.6%	(1,100,000)	112.6%	(1,238,468)	-48.3%	
Total Support and Other Sources	38,262,902	10.0%	34,772,000	10.0%	3,490,902	-12.4%	
EXPENSES							
Home Missions	7,412,260	2.6%	7,610,700	2.6%	198,440	7.0%	
World Missions	7,152,276	1.8%	7,279,800	1.8%	127,524	1.4%	
Parish Services	1,652,669	0.1%	1,654,500	0.1%	1,831	-	
Ministerial Education ⁽²⁾	7,756,720	0.9%	7,828,400	0.9%	71,680	-	
Ministerial Education Debt Payments	-	100.0%	1,050,000	100.0%	1,050,000	-0.6%	
Mission Advancement	4,235,473	-7.5%	3,939,480	-7.5%	(295,993)	8.3%	
Support Services	1,685,421	16.4%	2,016,720	16.4%	331,299	2.2%	
Leadership ⁽³⁾	2,277,955	-5.4%	2,160,400	-5.4%	(117,555)	-22.8%	
Debt Repayment ⁽⁴⁾	2,700,000	-119.2%	1,232,000	-119.2%	(1,468,000)	3.5%	
Total Expenses	34,872,774	-0.3%	34,772,000	-0.3%	(100,774)		
Surplus (Deficit)	3,390,128		-		(3,390,128)		
Buffer Fund - Beginning of Year	3,390,128		-		-		
Buffer Fund - End of Year	-		-		-		

	April 2009 Forecast FY 2008-09		Budget FY 2008-09		Variance Favorable (Unfavorable)		Percent
	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	
	\$ 21,529,000		\$ 24,313,000		\$ (2,784,000)	-11.5%	
	7,725,000		8,180,000		(455,000)	-5.6%	
	1,100,000		1,800,000		(700,000)	-38.9%	
	1,720,000		1,200,000		520,000	43.3%	
	-		2,550,000		(2,550,000)	-100.0%	
	450,000		200,000		250,000	125.0%	
	75,000		140,000		(65,000)	-46.4%	
	32,599,000		38,383,000		(5,784,000)	-15.1%	
	110,872		-		110,872	-	
	1,500,000		1,145,000		355,000	31.0%	
	(620,000)		(1,200,000)		580,000	-48.3%	
	33,589,872		38,328,000		(4,738,128)	-12.4%	
	-		-		-		
	6,675,290		7,175,290		500,000	7.0%	
	7,122,060		7,222,060		100,000	1.4%	
	1,651,150		1,651,150		-	-	
	10,595,980		10,595,980		-	-	
	-		1,050,000		1,050,000	-0.6%	
	4,078,046		4,053,046		(25,000)	8.3%	
	1,931,094		2,106,094		175,000	2.2%	
	2,226,380		2,276,380		50,000	-22.8%	
	2,700,000		2,198,000		(502,000)	3.5%	
	36,980,000		38,328,000		1,348,000		
	(3,390,128)		-		(3,390,128)		
	3,390,128		-		-		

(1) Fees are primarily from the agreement with WELS Canada for world missionaries, which was made possible by \$3 million per year 5-year gift to WELS-Canada. The agreement was cancelled after one year due to the economy.
(2) The operating budget does not reflect \$1,925,000 in FY08 and \$675,000 in FY09 allocated by the Synodical Council from the Special Funds in support of the BME.
(3) Leadership includes the President, Vice President, Synodical Council, Conference of Presidents and their assistants, Support Committee, Special Support, Committee on Inter-Church Relations, and the Synod Convention.
(4) Debt Repayment includes only the operating budget allocation to debt retirement, so gifts for debt retirement from congregations and individuals are not included.

Proposed budget for 2009-11

Budget development for 2009-11

The budget development process began almost a year ago with the areas of ministry working on initial plans for their ministry programs. In view of the synod's positive financial situation at that time, they were encouraged to plan aggressively and to outline how they would maintain and expand their work.

Before budget planning for 2009-11 began, the Synodical Council adopted a new budgeting and reporting process that represented a major change in approach. The impetus for this new process flowed from discussion at the 2007 synodical convention.

In the past, budgetary discussion and decisions were based primarily on what was known as the synod's operating budget. At the same time, areas of ministry carefully utilized special "non-budgetary" funds under their supervision in order to supplement funds provided from the operating budget. The drawback to this approach was that the synodical budget presented to and adopted by the convention represented only a portion of the entire ministry being carried out.

In an effort to provide a more complete picture of how all synodical funds are used and to better incorporate all financial resources into good financial planning, there has been a significant change in the approach to budgeting and reporting for the 2009-11 biennium. In the formation and presentation of the budget for 2009-11, funding from all sources (those previously considered operating funds along with all special funds) are included in the proposed budget. We believe that this will provide a more complete and comprehensive picture of the totality of ministry carried out by the synod, regardless of the source of funds.

Financial challenges

In fall 2008 the synod's financial picture turned drastically negative due to the economy. As a result, the areas of ministry were asked to revisit and revise their plans in view of significantly lower support projections. Even though the Synodical Council had planned to adopt a proposed budget in February 2009, the changing financial picture and the required adjustment to the new realities made it necessary to delay the adoption of the proposed budget until the April meeting of the Synodical Council.

The seriousness of the budget situation facing us cannot be understated. The operating budget of the synod will have approximately \$8 million less support in 2009-10 than it did in 2008-09, a reduction of more than 20 percent. The scope of these reductions requires significant reductions in all areas of ministry, including discontinuation of numerous current ministries and mission efforts. Those reductions will be detailed later in this budget report.

Financial Stabilization Fund

As it addressed the short-term reductions that will be necessary for the coming biennium, the Synodical Council also felt compelled to address the long-term funding situation in the synod. One key aspect of this effort was the establishment of the Financial Stabilization Fund.

Currently the support forecast estimates the amount of support expected from Congregation Mission Offerings (based on subscriptions provided by the congregations and estimated adjustments in the following year) and non-Congregation Mission Offering sources. Estimates of anticipated Congregation Mission Offering support have been quite accurate in recent years, primarily because they are based on the congregational subscriptions. It is a somewhat different situation with non-Congregation Mission Offering sources of support. These sources include financial support provided by individuals, foundations, and bequests. Because these sources of support are difficult to predict and can vary widely with little advance notice, the Synodical Council concluded that good stewardship would indicate that it is preferable to spend these dollars only in the year *after* they are received, rather than in the year that they are expected to be received.

The purpose of the Financial Stabilization Fund is to ensure that funds from all non-Congregation Mission Offering sources are actually received and on hand in the year *prior* to their use. All unrestricted non-Congregation Mission Offering support received in one year will flow into the Financial Stabilization Fund and be spent only in the next year. The Synodical Council will determine what percentage of the fund should be spent on ongoing ministry and what percentage should be retained as either a buffer fund or as a growing fund from which other projects (capital, debt retirement, or other special programs) could be funded.

In order to establish the fund in Fiscal Year 2009-10, all non-Congregation Mission Offering operating support will be deposited into the Financial Stabilization Fund, while a similar amount of ministry will be funded by areas of ministry with unrestricted dollars in their special funds and accumulated bequests. In this way, non-Congregation Mission Offering support received in 2009-10 will be able to flow into the fund to be used along with Congregation Mission Offerings the following year (2010-11). Benefits of the Financial Stabilization Fund include the following:

1. It enables better planning because non-Congregation Mission Offering funding for the next year is already on hand.
2. It enables areas of ministry to have available funds from which to carry out approved ministry.
3. It provides up to a one-year advance notice if funding levels drop and reduces the likelihood of needing to cut back on ministry in the middle of a fiscal year.
4. It provides a mechanism for accumulating funds for capital and special projects.
5. It provides the Synodical Council with the flexibility to adjust to sudden changes in support.
6. It emphasizes the foundational nature of Congregation Mission Offerings while making wise use of the blessings of non-Congregation Mission Offering sources of support.

Conversion Funding

Unrestricted Bequests Carry-forward	2,300,000
WELS Building Fund	1,000,000
Publication Coordinating Commission	1,000,000
Divisional Fund - Administration	250,000
Divisional Fund - World Missions	2,000,000
Divisional Fund - Home Missions	800,000
Divisional Fund - Ministerial Education	500,000
Divisional Fund - Parish Services	50,000
Financial Services Improvement Plan	120,000
Campus Ministry Building Fund	250,000
Total Conversion Funding	8,270,000

Financial Stabilization Fund

FY 2009-10

Beginning Balance	\$ -
Foundation Grants	5,320,000
Gifts from Individuals	1,150,000
Unrestricted Bequests	1,400,000
Other Revenue	525,000
Interest Income	100,000
Ending Balance (available for FY2010-11)	8,495,000

FY 2010-11

Beginning Balance	8,495,000
Allocation to FY 2010-11 budget	(8,495,000)
Foundation Grants	4,620,000
Gifts from Individuals	1,200,000
Unrestricted Bequests	1,400,000
Other Revenue	450,000
Interest Income	125,000
Ending Balance (available for FY2011-12)	7,795,000

Key elements of the proposed budget

1. Reduction in administration and support

As the areas of ministry began evaluating the nature and scope of reductions, they were encouraged to consider reducing costs in administration, clerical support, and travel before making reductions in ministry programs. Significant reductions in these support areas have been made across all areas of ministry.

2. One budget, two options

The Synodical Council recognized that there are differing opinions and viewpoints regarding the levels of funding for various areas of ministry. Since it recognized that there are strong views on how best to allocate synodical resources, the Synodical Council concluded that meaningful and brotherly discussion could best take place if it presented two clear options, along with the corresponding implications of each. With discussion able to focus on the issues and facts, the Synodical Council believes that a God-pleasing decision can best be achieved.

In both options, (A and B), significant cuts are required of all areas of ministry. Ministerial Education receives \$1,000,000 more than it receives in Option B. In Option A, World and Home Missions each receive \$500,000 less than they receive in Option B. Essentially, Option A enables the synod to retain its two prep schools; in Option B, Ministerial Education has concluded that only one prep school would be able to be maintained after the first year of the biennium. In Option A, both World and Home Missions will need to make a significant number of reductions in mission programs and personnel; in Option B, reductions will still need to take place, but they will be fewer in number and scope.

3. Salary freeze for 2009-10

The proposed budget includes a salary freeze for all synodical workers in the first year of the biennium and a 1 percent increase on the base in the second year (an effective increase of 2.25 percent). The freeze in the first year is a true freeze, with no increase in the base and no added increments for years of service. For complete salary information, please refer to the salary schedules on pp. 58-61.

4. Health insurance deductible

The budget proposal incorporates an increase in the health insurance deductible for synodical workers from \$500 to \$1,000. This change provides an annual savings of approximately \$400,000, beginning Jan. 1, 2010.

5. Re-amortization of the debt

The budget proposal incorporates a re-amortization of the synod's debt (projected to be \$15 million by the end of the current fiscal year) over ten-and-a-half years at an interest rate of 2 percent. The proposed re-amortization forgoes debt repayment and interest accrual in 2009-10 and reduces annual debt service payments to \$1.6 million per year. This re-amortization provides immediate benefit from the Year of Jubilee offering, since it uses the \$2.7 million planned for debt in 2009-10 for ministry and reduces the amount needed for debt repayment by \$1.1 million beginning in 2010-11.

6. Financial Stabilization Fund and "conversion" funding

The budget proposal utilizes \$8.3 million in what is termed "conversion funding," in addition to the projected support from Congregation Mission Offerings, to fund an operating subsidy of \$29.6 million in 2009-10. Of this total, \$1.3 million has been designated as "ministry transition" funding. Ministry transition funding will be used as areas of ministry downsize programs and will provide support for workers who are displaced in the process.

In 2010-11 the Financial Stabilization Fund will provide \$8.5 million in funding. This is based on non-Congregation Mission Offering support forecasted to be received in 2009-10.

7. Ministry reductions prior to convention

The synod does not meet in convention until one month after the new fiscal year begins. Since synodical policy provides three months of salary and benefits to displaced called workers and severance compensation to lay workers, waiting until the convention to make all reductions in ministry would require funds to be budgeted for that purpose. For that reason, and recognizing that some reductions would be necessary even with changes that the convention could make to the proposed budget, the areas of ministry began to make limited reductions in ministry shortly after the Synodical Council adopted the proposed budget in April. Not to do so would have required even greater reductions in ministry in all areas.

Budgetary impact on areas of ministry

Please note that the number of positions listed below could change somewhat, depending on adjustments continually being made by the areas of ministry. For that same reason, specific mission fields and congregations, as well as specific faculty and staff positions are not identified in detail.

The budgetary figures listed below represent allocations from synodical subsidy and do not include funding from special funds, gifts, fees, or grants.

World Missions

Option A

- Overall 23.5 manpower positions are unfunded
- Of these, 23 are called positions; 0.5 is half of a hired support staff position that is shared with Home Missions
- Of the 23 positions, 15 existing missionaries will be recalled from the field, four are vacant positions that will not be filled, and four are planned positions that had been intended to restore previous strategic reductions but can no longer be funded
- All existing fields are affected but still served at a reduced level; one new field (Mozambique) is unable to be entered as planned

Option B

- Four missionary positions eliminated under Option A are able to be retained under Option B

Home Missions

Option A

- 38 called and 0.5 hired positions are impacted to some degree; some could possibly be maintained locally
- Of these 38 positions, 21 called positions (18 pastors and three staff ministers) likely cannot be maintained; two of these are currently vacant
- 13 mission fields are likely to be lost; return to those fields will not be possible for an extended period of time, if ever
- 0.5 is half of a hired support staff position that is shared with World Missions

Option B

- This retains 11 ministries that would be discontinued under Option A (including 7 of the 18 pastoral ministries listed above)
- Six of the 13 fields potentially lost under Option A would be retained

The fields facing defunding at the above levels run the entire gamut of ministries ranging from efforts to establish new congregations, to congregations needing just a bit more assistance, to cross-cultural outreach reflecting the ethnic makeup of North America, to those needing longer-term help in locations determined to be strategic, to those with a military chaplaincy connection, to those that were selected for enhanced gospel outreach efforts because of blessings received and an aggressive gospel outreach ministry plan. Many sacrificial efforts are being weighed to maintain as much ministry as possible.

Ministerial Education

Ministerial Education includes the Board for Ministerial Education office, together with the four ministerial education schools (Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Martin Luther College, Luther Preparatory School, and Michigan Lutheran Seminary).

Ministerial Education office

Option A

- This allows for only a minimum level of program maintenance (\$200,000) at the four schools
- It reduces financial assistance provided by the budget; assistance limited to travel equalization and to assistance provided to students from Wisconsin in the pastor track at Martin Luther College

- Enables the four schools to remain viable and able to carry out their mission but with significant reductions and limitations in all areas of operation
- Eliminates the one support staff person for the Board for Ministerial Education administrator in 2010-11, potentially diverting administrator from broader responsibilities
- Board for Ministerial Education meets for only one face-to-face meeting per year

Option B

- The Board for Ministerial Education sees significant and possibly irreparable damage to the ministerial education system under this option
- Depletes capital maintenance funds
- Likely removal of all financial assistance funding from the budget

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Options A and B

- Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary maintains existing faculty strength. While enrollment is lower than in recent years, faculty members are being asked to fulfill more non-classroom responsibilities.
- Several staff positions removed from the budget and funded from non-budgetary sources
- All areas of operation, including maintenance and various educational and co-curricular programs, reduced to the lowest possible level of funding

Martin Luther College

Option A

- Reduction of 25 faculty and staff positions (exact breakdown between faculty and staff positions still to be determined); 9.5 authorized positions are vacant
- Staffing reduced to levels significantly lower than at similar institutions
- Increased teaching loads required of faculty
- All areas of operation, including maintenance and various educational and co-curricular programs, reduced to the lowest possible level of funding

Option B

The Board for Ministerial Education has concluded that Option B would mean the defunding of Michigan Lutheran Seminary. Martin Luther College is concerned that the loss of one of the prep schools will affect Martin Luther College's enrollment, and, along with that, future revenue from tuition. Martin Luther College and the Board for Ministerial Education have tracked the negative effect on recruitment when prep schools have closed in Minnesota and South Dakota. One hundred Michigan Lutheran Seminary graduates currently attend Martin Luther College. Historical experience has shown that this number would drop to no more than 15 to 20 if a prep school did not exist in Saginaw, likely resulting in fewer candidates for ministry and lower tuition revenue at Martin Luther College.

Luther Preparatory School

Options A and B

- Six to seven faculty positions and five support staff positions eliminated; faculty reductions made through a combination of retirements, semi-retirements, and elimination of positions
- Average teaching hours increased from the current 20 to 30 to 25 to 35 for all faculty members
- All areas of operation, including maintenance and various educational and co-curricular programs, reduced to the lowest possible level of funding

Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Option A

- Eight faculty and six support staff positions eliminated; faculty reductions will come as a result of eliminating of positions, since no MLS faculty members are near retirement age
- Average teaching hours will be increased from the current 20 to 30 to 25 to 35 for all faculty members

- All areas of operation, including maintenance and various educational and co-curricular programs reduced to the lowest possible level of funding

Option B

- In the first year of the biennium, Michigan Lutheran Seminary is funded by a combination of reduced synod subsidy and Board for Ministerial Education special funds
- In the second year of the biennium, the school is not viable; all remaining faculty and staff positions are eliminated

Parish Services

Parish Services includes the Commissions for Parish Schools, Special Ministries, Evangelism, Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, and Worship. It also includes the Parish Assistance program.

Options A and B

- Eliminates position of the Board for Parish Services administrator, two unit administrators, and four support staff positions
- Prison Ministry Coordinator funded through special funds
- Most ministry functions supported by special funds and fees
- Retains Commissions for Parish Schools and Special Ministries as distinct entities with their own administrators; reconfigures remaining units of Parish Services into a new combined group (possibly called the Congregational Ministries Resource team) to carry out the functions of Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, Worship, Evangelism, and Parish Assistance
- Fewer programs and services developed and offered

Ministry Support

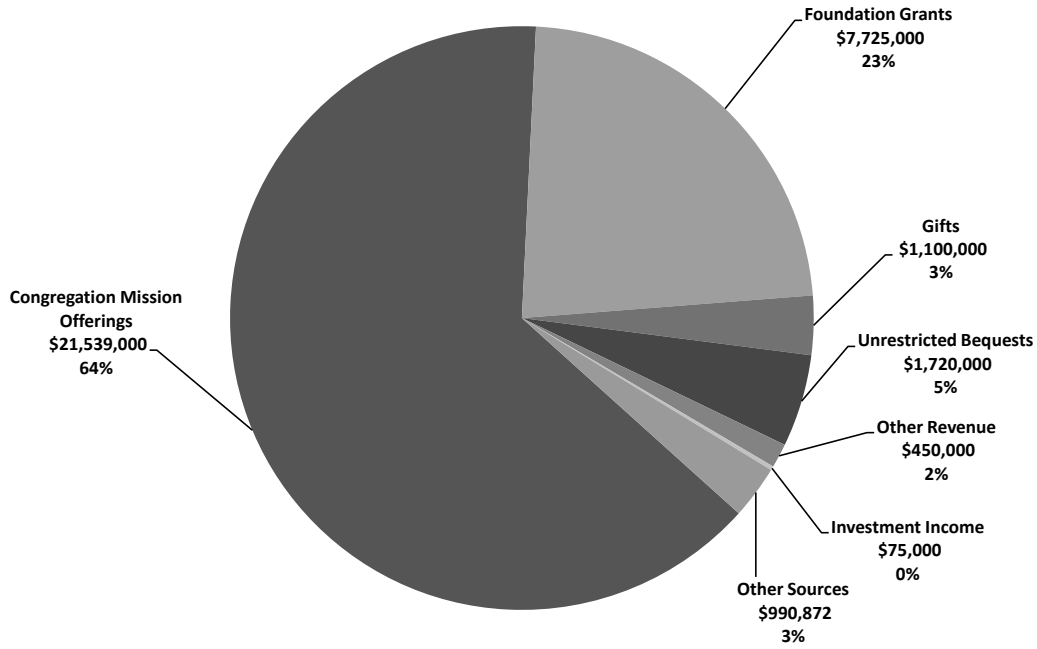
The Ministry Support area includes Facilities, Technology, Leadership (Conference of Presidents, Synodical Council, President's office, special support for called workers, insurance and legal fees, etc.), the Ministry of Christian Giving, Communications, Financial Services, and Human Resources.

Options A and B

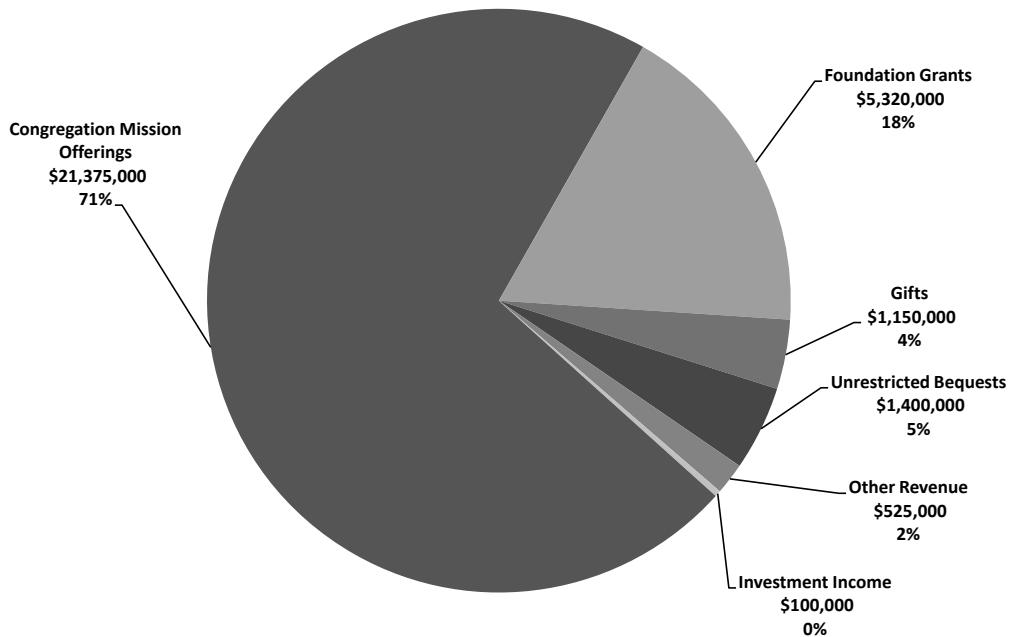
- Eliminates a total of 15 positions, reducing called and hired staffing from 71 to 56
- Facilities: 1.5 positions eliminated (mailroom clerk and partial custodial position)
- Technology: 2 positions eliminated (database administrator and help desk position); work distributed among remaining staff, resulting in delays in service and project development and completion
- Leadership: 1.5 positions eliminated (full-time vice president and part-time clerical); reduced travel and meeting funding; reduced operational budgets for district presidents; removal of contingency funds from the budget
- Ministry of Christian Giving: 6.7 positions eliminated (2 clerical staff eliminated; reduction of 6 Full-Time Equivalent current and deferred counselors through elimination or semi-retirement)
- Communications: 1 position eliminated (media technician)
- Financial Services: 2.4 positions eliminated (1.4 hourly support staff positions, 1 salaried position in special fund accounting); work distributed among remaining staff, which may delay reporting and weaken internal controls

Unrestricted support forecast

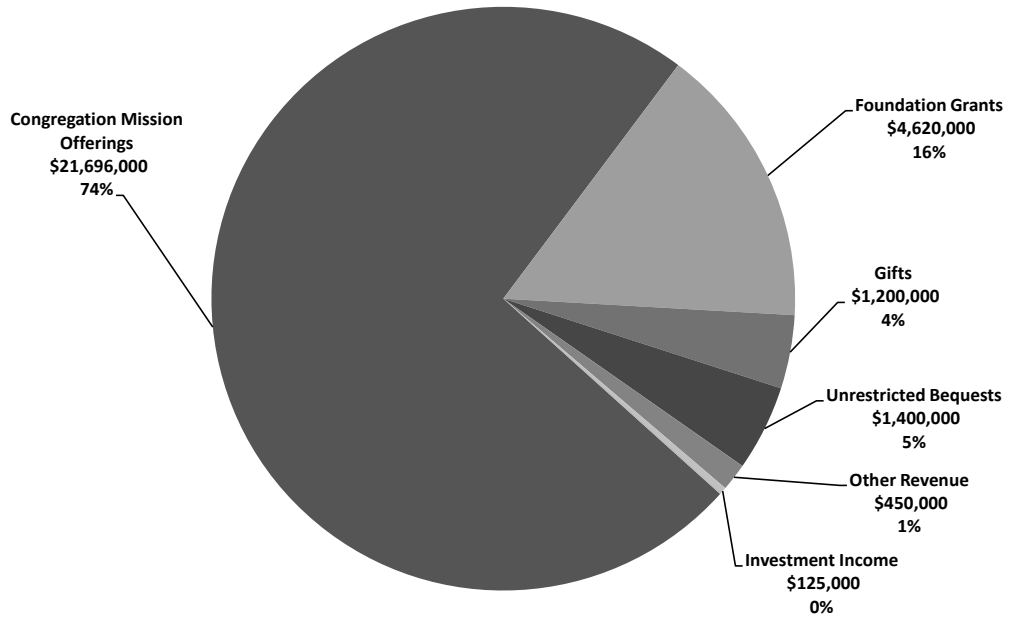
FY 2008-09 Unrestricted Support
\$33,589,872



FY 2009-10 Unrestricted Support
\$29,870,000



**FY 2010-11 Unrestricted Support
\$29,491,000**



FY 2008-09 & 2009-2011 Biennium

April 2009

<u>FY 2008-09</u>	<u>FY 2009-10</u>	<u>FY 2010-11</u>
\$33,589,872	\$29,870,000	\$29,491,000
-16.0%	-8.4%	-1.3%

This forecast relies heavily on past and current trends that may or may not continue in the future. The economic malaise has already had a profound impact on the synod's, congregations', and members' financial conditions. The length and breadth of this economic cycle is unknown but is sure to continue to create challenges going forward. The challenges are already becoming evident as Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) are about 8 percent below projected offerings for the first quarter of calendar year 2009. In addition, the Year of Jubilee offerings of \$3 million did not reach the hoped for \$22.4 million.

Gifts from congregations

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
FY09: \$21,529,000	-\$2,784,000
FY10: \$21,375,000	
FY11: \$21,696,000	

Gifts from congregations are exclusively Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO). For calendar year 2009, subscriptions are 0.5 percent less than actual CMO for calendar year 2008. The forecast for FY09 is based on actual receipts through December plus 44 percent—the amount historically given from January through June—of the 2009 subscription. The forecast for FY10 is based on receipt of the remaining 56 percent of the 2009 subscription and no increase in CMO subscriptions for 2010. The forecast for FY11 is based on a calendar year 2011 subscription increase of 3.0 percent.

Experts report that the economic difficulties are far from over and likely will not lessen until the fourth quarter of 2009. If correct, congregations may struggle to meet their subscriptions. This caution is supported by 2008 CMO results, where 370 congregations fell short of their subscriptions by a collective \$1.7 million. This shortfall was partially offset by the 425 congregations that exceeded their subscriptions by a collective \$1.3 million. Continuing economic pressures will challenge congregations to just meet their subscriptions much less exceed them.

<u>CMO history</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Change</u>
FY04	\$19,502,000	0.9%
FY05	19,476,000	-0.1
FY06	20,079,000	3.1
FY07	20,048,000	-0.2
FY08	21,980,000	9.6
FY09 Forecast	21,529,000	-2.1
FY10 Forecast	21,375,000	-0.7
FY11 Forecast	21,696,000	1.5
Three-year actual average:		4.2%
Five-year actual average:		2.7%

Foundation grants

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
FY09: \$7,725,000	-\$455,000
FY10: \$5,320,000	
FY11: \$4,620,000	

Schwan Foundation

The Marvin M. Schwan Foundation (Schwan) is the primary source of operating grants from foundations. Schwan's

grants are dependent on the performance of its investments. Schwan has not been spared from the economic downturn. In response, Schwan has reduced its annual grants to the seven Lutheran entities it supports by about 20 percent for its fiscal year (12/1/08–11/30/09) and has warned of even more drastic reductions (30 to 40 percent) if the economy doesn't improve. Additionally, Schwan will likely limit future grants, even if the economy improves, until its assets are partially or fully restored to their pre-2008 levels.

The forecast for FY09 is based on actual gifts and Schwan's grant commitment for January–June 2009. The FY10 forecast is based on Schwan's grant plans for July–November 2009 and the assumption that the annual grant will further decrease about 35 percent or to \$4.2 million based on the foundation's warning of even more drastic cuts if the economy doesn't improve. The FY11 forecast is based on a grant of \$4.2 million for 2010 and \$4.6 million for 2011, a 10 percent increase, on the assumption that the economy recovers in calendar 2010.

<u>Gift history</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Change</u>
FY04	\$6,600,000	-15.4%
FY05	\$7,300,000	10.6%
FY06	\$7,600,000	4.2%
FY07	\$8,200,000	7.9%
FY08	\$7,800,000	-4.9%
FY09 Forecast	\$7,500,000	-3.8%
FY10 Forecast	\$5,100,000	-32.0%
FY11 Forecast	\$4,400,000	-13.7%
Three-year actual average:		2.4%
Five-year actual average:		0.5%

WELS Foundation

The WELS Foundation was gifted an ownership interest in a private enterprise. The value of the gifts to date is \$11 million and produces an annual revenue stream of \$1.1 million that is to be used to support WELS ministries, including 20 percent to general operating support. While it is believed that the donor desires to annually add to this gift, no specific commitments have been made, so the value is assumed to remain constant for this forecast.

The forecast for FY09 is based on actual grants for July–December 2008 and planned grants for January–June 2009. The forecasts for FY10 and FY11 are based on 20 percent of the gift earnings as grants for operating support.

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change</u>
FY09: \$225,000	
FY10: \$220,000	-2.2%
FY11: \$220,000	0.0%

Gifts from individuals

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
FY09: \$1,100,000	-\$700,000
FY10: \$1,150,000	
FY11: \$1,200,000	

Gifts from individuals include Walking Together, Mission Partners, and other unrestricted gifts and memorials. The Year of Jubilee and other existing and/or new synod, Ministerial Education, and/or parasynodical gift programs have proven to result in a decrease for existing gift programs.

For FY08, 68 percent of gifts were received in the first six months of the fiscal year. For the first half of FY09, gifts are \$1.1 million less than for the same period of the prior year and further widened to \$1.3 million at the end of the third quarter. The forecast assumes that the economic challenges, the Year of Jubilee, and additional appeals for financial support across all of WELS will continue to create downward pressure on these unrestricted gifts to the synod.

Walking Together

The Walking Together gift program was instituted in May/June 2005 with a goal of raising \$1 million per year. The forecast for FY09 is based on gifts received July 2008–March 2009 and \$5,000-\$10,000 per month from the last three months of the fiscal year given the emphasis on Year of Jubilee through the synod convention. The forecast for FY10 and FY11 is based on the program focus shifting from an offering to a celebration of mission work done by the synod on behalf of all congregations and the improvement of the economy in 2010.

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from Budget</u>
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FY09: \$200,000	-\$250,000
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FY10: \$250,000	
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FY11: \$300,000	
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<u>Gift history</u>		<u>Change</u>
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FY05 (May–June)	\$732,000	
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FY06	\$727,000	-0.1%
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FY07	\$549,000	-24.5%
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FY08	\$773,000	41.1%
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FY09 Forecast	\$200,000	-74.1%
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FY10 Forecast	\$250,000	25.0%
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FY11 Forecast	\$300,000	20.0%
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Mission Partners

The Mission Partners gift program was instituted during spring 2001 with an expectation of \$3 million or more in annual gifts. The forecast for FY09 is based on gifts received July 2008–March 2009 plus the continuing decrease in emphasis on the program. The forecasts for FY10 and FY11 are based on further decreases in emphasis on the program.

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from Budget</u>
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FY09: \$250,000	-\$400,000
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FY10: \$200,000	
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FY11: \$100,000	
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<u>Gift history</u>		<u>Change</u>
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FY04	\$1,382,000	
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FY05	\$998,000	-27.7%
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FY06	\$771,000	-22.7%
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FY07	\$661,000	-14.3%
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FY08	\$680,000	2.9%
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FY09 Forecast	\$250,000	-63.2%
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FY10 Forecast	\$200,000	-20.0%
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FY11 Forecast	\$100,000	-50.0%
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Gifts and memorials

The synod has historically received unrestricted gifts and memorials from individuals. The forecast for FY09 is based on gifts received July 2008–March 2009 and about a 20 percent reduction in gifts from the prior year for April–June 2009. The forecasts for FY10 and FY11 are based on this amount remaining flat.

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
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FY09: \$650,000	-\$50,000
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FY10: \$700,000	
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FY11: \$800,000	
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<u>Gift history</u>		<u>Change</u>
FY03	\$1,110,000	364.2%
FY04	\$940,000	- 15.3%
FY05	\$1,225,000	30.3%
FY06 ⁽¹⁾	\$1,268,000	3.5%
FY07	\$707,000	- 44.2%
FY08	\$1,192,000	68.6%
FY09 Forecast	\$650,000	-45.5%
FY10 Forecast	\$700,000	7.7%
FY11 Forecast	\$800,000	14.3%

⁽¹⁾ Adjusted to exclude one-time \$412,000 write down of pledges receivable.

Unrestricted bequests

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
FY09: \$1,720,000	\$520,000
FY10: \$1,400,000	
FY11: \$1,400,000	

Unrestricted bequests represent estate gifts to the ministry of WELS. Bequests to specific areas of ministry or programs are not included in these amounts. These gifts may decline in the future as donors with known estate plans are encouraged to designate estate gifts to the missions and ministerial education endowment funds, and the value of estates has likely declined due to the economic challenges in both the financial and housing markets.

Through FY09, the use of bequests is deferred to the year(s) following receipt, and the amount that can be used is limited to \$1.5 million. Beginning in FY10, unrestricted bequests will be deferred to the year following receipt along with all other non-Congregation Mission Offering unrestricted gifts.

<u>Gift history</u>		<u>Change</u>
FY04	\$4,149,414	526.5%
FY05	\$930,504	- 77.6%
FY06	\$1,545,000	66.0%
FY07	\$2,001,000	29.5%
FY08	\$2,338,000	16.8%
FY09 Forecast	\$1,720,000	-26.4%
FY10 Forecast	\$1,400,000	-18.6%
FY11 Forecast	\$1,400,000	0.0%

Fees

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
FY09: \$0	-\$2,550,000
FY10: \$0	
FY11: \$0	

This category represented the fees to be paid by WELS-Canada for contracted world mission services and was contingent upon WELS-Canada receiving an annual gift of \$3 million from a donor. Due to the economic challenges, the donor was only able to make the gift one year rather than the planned five years. The forecast for FY09, FY10, and FY11 is based on Congregation Mission Offering contributions from Canadian congregations to WELS-Canada being used to pay its \$400,000 liability to WELS for world missionary services provided in FY08 that have not yet been paid.

Other revenue

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
FY09: \$450,000	\$250,000
FY10: \$525,000	
FY11: \$450,000	

This category includes revenues from a variety of sources such as for fees assessed and assistance rendered. Prior to FY08, most fee revenue was netted against expense in the related area of ministry. The forecast for FY09 is based on doubling the revenue from July–December 2008. The forecast for FY10 and FY11 is flat except that FY10 includes \$75,000 for convention fees.

<u>History</u>		<u>Change</u>
FY05	\$307,000	
FY06	\$80,000	- 73.9%
FY07	\$377,000	371.3%
FY08	\$444,000	17.8%
FY09 Forecast	\$450,000	1.4%
FY10 Forecast	\$525,000	16.7%
FY11 Forecast	\$450,000	-14.3%

Investment income

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
FY09: \$75,000	-\$40,000
FY10: \$100,000	
FY11: \$125,000	

This category includes interest earned net of the allocation of earnings to special funds and the assessment from funds with negative balances. Recent actions by the Federal Reserve Board have resulted in short-term rates from near zero to 1.5 percent in the overnight to six-month investment horizon. The forecast for all years assumes a continued depressed short-term interest rate environment.

<u>History</u>		<u>Change</u>
FY05	\$171,000	
FY06	\$212,000	24.0%
FY07	\$107,000	-49.5%
FY08	\$175,000	63.6%
FY09 Forecast	\$100,000	-42.9%
FY10 Forecast	\$100,000	0.0%
FY11 Forecast	\$125,000	25.0%

Other sources (uses)

<u>Forecast</u>	<u>Change from budget</u>
FY09: \$990,872	\$1,045,872
FY10: \$0	
FY11: \$0	

This category includes transfers from special funds to balance the FY09 budget, the deferral of a portion of current year bequests, and the application of prior year bequests in support of the operating budget. Beginning in FY10, unrestricted bequests will be deferred to the year following receipt along with all other non-Congregation Mission Offering unrestricted gifts.

<u>History</u>		<u>Change</u>
FY05	\$1,404,104	
FY06	- \$79,584	-105.7%
FY07	- \$247,291	-210.7%
FY08	-\$938,000	-278.3%
FY09 Forecast	\$990,872	205.6%

Proposed budget summaries

See pp. 48-57 for more details about the budget, including differences in the proposed budgets under Options A and B, support and expenses for all synod subsidized ministries, and synod subsidy allocations.

Proposed Budget Summary - Option A

	2008-2009				2009-10				2010-11			
	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total funding	FTE	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total funding	FTE
World Missions												
Board and Administration	341,560	459,800	801,360	6.00	562,300	344,700	907,000	4.65	563,100	336,500	899,600	4.65
Africa	2,368,800	744,000	3,112,800	21.00	1,594,300	691,900	2,286,200	13.00	1,575,600	628,800	2,204,400	13.00
Europe	705,000	218,700	923,700	4.25	648,700	187,700	836,400	3.25	721,000	217,000	938,000	3.25
Latin America	958,800	643,100	1,601,900	11.00	756,018	143,700	899,718	7.25	754,327	131,800	886,127	7.25
Native America	490,000	132,200	622,200	9.00	204,700	138,400	343,100	5.50	210,200	140,700	350,900	5.50
East Asia	691,400	475,100	1,166,500	9.00	632,325	634,000	1,266,325	8.00	665,533	495,400	1,160,933	8.00
South Asia	456,100	173,500	629,600	3.15	450,300	214,400	664,700	3.25	459,800	213,100	672,900	3.25
Asia-Pacific rim	555,100	608,100	1,163,200	10.00	356,900	274,400	631,300	5.00	358,500	189,100	547,600	5.00
Multi-Language Publications	387,700	63,500	451,200	3.00	541,200	52,000	593,200	3.00	540,600	52,000	592,600	3.00
Joint Mission Council	125,000	25,700	150,700		30,000		30,000		120,000		120,000	
Other	142,600	276,600	419,200	1.00	141,000	250,300	391,300	1.00	131,200	238,700	369,900	1.00
TOTAL	7,222,060	3,820,300	11,042,360	77.40	5,917,743	2,931,500	8,849,243	53.90	6,099,860	2,643,100	8,742,960	53.90
Home Missions												
Board and Administration	(160,989)	811,828	650,839	4.35	593,044	19,688	612,732	3.85	547,478	14,900	562,378	3.85
Multicultural ministry	2,327,823	416,900	2,744,723	2.00	1,688,872	662,399	2,351,271	2.00	1,716,700	517,443	2,234,143	2.00
Outreach ministry	4,234,383	327,000	4,561,383	4.00	2,542,276	599,470	3,141,746	4.00	2,563,956	500,438	3,064,394	4.00
Campus ministry	487,406	21,300	508,706	1.00	377,195	19,475	396,670	1.00	383,825	17,528	401,353	1.00
Joint Mission Council	286,667	188,000	474,667	4.00	30,000	607,350	637,350	4.50	120,000	754,040	874,040	4.00
TOTAL	7,175,290	1,765,028	8,940,318	15.35	5,231,387	1,908,382	7,139,769	15.35	5,331,959	1,804,349	7,136,308	14.85
Ministerial Education												
Board and Administration	1,185,980	1,251,500	2,437,480	2.00	360,100	431,200	791,300	2.00	215,000	513,000	728,000	1.00
Wisconsin Lutheran Sem	1,000,000	3,123,000	4,123,000	36.00	1,000,000	3,022,300	4,022,300	33.10	1,200,000	2,871,730	4,071,730	33.10
Martin Luther College	4,485,000	12,542,000	17,027,000	160.00	3,800,000	10,959,000	14,759,000	135.00	3,750,000	11,128,926	14,878,926	135.00
Luther Preparatory School	2,600,000	3,745,490	6,345,490	68.00	2,544,675	3,262,998	5,807,673	57.00	2,540,000	3,301,252	5,841,252	56.00
Michigan Lutheran Sem	2,000,000	2,318,776	4,318,776	51.00	1,454,100	2,004,540	3,458,640	37.00	1,430,000	2,209,316	3,639,316	37.00
TOTAL	11,270,980	22,980,766	34,251,746	317.00	9,158,875	19,680,038	28,838,913	264.10	9,135,000	20,024,224	29,159,224	262.10
Parish Services												
Board and Administration	166,450	37,550	204,000	1.00								
Parish Assistance	255,000	580,000	835,000	4.00								
Parish Schools	115,000	583,000	698,000	4.00	203,000	341,800	544,800	4.00	160,000	373,200	533,200	3.00
Special Ministries	215,000	239,000	454,000	5.00	148,190	745,481	893,671	3.00	152,103	370,000	522,103	3.00
Congregational Resource Team*					699,872	1,261,300	1,961,172	8.00	682,700	439,700	1,122,400	8.00
Evangelism	225,000	215,000	440,000	2.00								
Adult Discipleship	230,000	83,000	313,000	2.00								
Youth Discipleship	214,700	78,000	292,700	2.00								
Worship	230,000	282,000	512,000	2.00								
Total	1,651,150	2,097,550	3,748,700	22.00	1,051,062	2,348,581	3,399,643	15.00	994,803	1,182,900	2,177,703	14.00

*Congregational Resource Team would include current ministries of Evangelism, Worship, Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, and Parish Assistance.

Proposed Budget Summary - Option A												
	2008-2009				2009-10				2010-11			
	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total funding	FTE	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total funding	FTE
Ministry Support												
Facilities	290,000	686,596	976,596	3.20	191,758	490,440	682,198	1.70	193,331	497,579	690,910	1.70
Technology	1,497,012	92,800	1,589,812	15.50	1,310,000	74,276	1,384,276	13.50	1,310,000	80,096	1,390,096	13.50
Vicar Program	-	1,165,430	1,165,430		-	1,049,900	1,049,900		-	1,100,100	1,100,100	
Leadership	2,276,380	50,000	2,326,380	4.00	2,030,399	252,800	2,283,199	2.50	1,999,000	65,000	2,064,000	2.50
Christian Giving	2,153,334	210,500	2,363,834	23.00	1,462,076	102,500	1,564,576	16.30	1,469,687	102,500	1,572,187	15.70
Communications	402,700	-	402,700	5.75	506,000	104,000	610,000	4.75	510,000	80,000	590,000	4.75
Financial Services	1,649,094	-	1,649,094	17.70	1,320,700	-	1,320,700	15.30	1,355,000	-	1,355,000	15.30
Human Resources	167,000	-	167,000	2.00	190,000	-	190,000	2.00	192,360	-	192,360	2.00
Total	8,435,520	2,205,326	10,640,846	71.15	7,010,933	2,073,916	9,084,849	56.05	7,029,378	1,925,275	8,954,653	55.45
Debt Retirement	2,700,000		2,700,000						1,600,000		1,600,000	
Ministry Transition					1,275,000		1,275,000					
GRAND TOTAL	38,455,000	32,868,970	71,323,970	502.90	29,645,000	28,942,417	58,587,417	404.40	30,191,000	27,579,848	57,770,848	400.30

	Subsidy	Other	Total	FTE	Subsidy	Other	Total	FTE	Subsidy	Other	Total	FTE
SUMMARY												
World Missions	7,222,060	3,820,300	11,042,360	77.40	5,917,743	2,931,500	8,849,243	53.90	6,099,860	2,643,100	8,742,960	53.90
Home Missions	7,175,290	1,765,028	8,940,318	15.35	5,231,387	1,908,382	7,139,769	15.35	5,331,959	1,804,349	7,136,308	14.85
Ministerial Ed	11,270,980	22,980,766	34,251,746	317.00	9,158,875	19,680,038	28,838,913	264.10	9,135,000	20,024,224	29,159,224	262.10
Parish Services	1,651,150	2,097,550	3,748,700	22.00	1,051,062	2,348,581	3,399,643	15.00	994,803	1,182,900	2,177,703	14.00
Ministry Support	8,435,520	2,205,326	10,640,846	71.15	7,010,933	2,073,916	9,084,849	56.05	7,029,378	1,925,275	8,954,653	55.45
Debt Retirement	2,700,000	-	2,700,000		-	-	-		1,600,000	-	1,600,000	
Ministry Transition	-	-	-		1,275,000	-	1,275,000		-	-	-	
Grand Total	38,455,000	32,868,970	71,323,970	502.90	29,645,000	28,942,417	58,587,417	404.40	30,191,000	27,579,848	57,770,848	400.30

	2008-09	% of total	2009-10	% of total	% Change	2010-11	% of total	% change
Subsidy Allocation								
World Missions	7,222,060	18.8%	5,917,743	20.0%	-18.1%	6,099,860	20.2%	3.08%
Home Missions	7,175,290	18.7%	5,231,387	17.6%	-27.1%	5,331,959	17.7%	1.92%
Ministerial Ed	11,270,980	29.3%	9,158,875	30.9%	-18.7%	9,135,000	30.3%	-0.26%
Parish Services	1,651,150	4.3%	1,051,062	3.5%	-36.3%	994,803	3.3%	-5.35%
Ministry Support	8,435,520	21.9%	7,010,933	23.6%	-16.9%	7,029,378	23.3%	0.26%
Debt Retirement	2,700,000	7.0%	-	-	-100.0%	1,600,000	5.3%	-
Ministry Transition	-	0.0%	1,275,000	4.3%	-	-	-	-100.00%
Total	38,455,000		29,645,000		-22.9%	30,191,000		1.84%

	2008-09	% of total	2009-10	% of total	% change	2010-11	% of total	% change
Total Funding								
World Missions	11,042,360	15.5%	8,849,243	15.1%	-19.9%	8,742,960	15.1%	-1.20%
Home Missions	8,940,318	12.5%	7,139,769	12.2%	-20.1%	7,136,308	12.4%	-0.05%
Ministerial Ed	34,251,746	48.0%	28,838,913	49.2%	-15.8%	29,159,224	50.5%	1.11%
Parish Services	3,748,700	5.3%	3,399,643	5.8%	-9.3%	2,177,703	3.8%	-35.94%
Ministry Support	10,640,846	14.9%	9,084,849	15.5%	-14.6%	8,954,653	15.5%	-1.43%
Debt Retirement	2,700,000	3.8%	-	0.0%	-100.0%	1,600,000	2.8%	-100.0%
Ministry Transition	-	0.0%	1,275,000	2.2%	-	-	0.0%	-100.0%
Total	71,323,970		58,587,417		-17.9%	57,770,848		-1.39%

Proposed Budget Summary - Option B

	2008-2009				2009-10				2010-11			
	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total funding	FTE	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total funding	FTE
World Missions												
Board and Administration	341,560	459,800	801,360	6.00	562,300	344,700	907,000	4.65	563,100	336,500	899,600	4.65
Africa	2,368,800	744,000	3,112,800	21.00	1,827,500	691,900	2,519,400	15.00	1,820,300	628,800	2,449,100	15.00
Europe	705,000	218,700	923,700	4.25	648,700	187,700	836,400	3.25	721,000	217,000	938,000	3.25
Latin America	958,800	643,100	1,601,900	11.00	769,143	143,700	912,843	7.25	737,460	131,800	869,260	7.25
Native America	490,000	132,200	622,200	9.00	254,900	138,400	393,300	6.50	261,800	140,700	402,500	6.50
East Asia	691,400	475,100	1,166,500	9.00	835,800	634,000	1,469,800	9.00	886,100	495,400	1,381,500	9.00
South Asia	456,100	173,500	629,600	3.15	450,300	214,400	664,700	3.25	459,800	213,100	672,900	3.25
Asia-Pacific rim	555,100	608,100	1,163,200	10.00	356,900	274,400	631,300	5.00	358,500	189,100	547,600	5.00
Multi-Language Publications	387,700	63,500	451,200	3.00	541,200	52,000	593,200	3.00	540,600	52,000	592,600	3.00
Joint Mission Council	125,000	25,700	150,700		30,000	-	30,000		120,000	-	120,000	
Other	142,600	276,600	419,200	1.00	141,000	250,300	391,300	1.00	131,200	238,700	369,900	1.00
TOTAL	7,222,060	3,820,300	11,042,360	77.40	6,417,743	2,931,500	9,349,243	57.90	6,599,860	2,643,100	9,242,960	57.90
Home Missions												
Board and Administration	(160,989)	811,828	650,839	4.35	593,044	19,688	612,732	3.85	567,635	14,900	582,535	3.85
Multicultural ministry	2,327,823	416,900	2,744,723	2.00	1,936,850	685,699	2,622,549	2.00	1,975,274	517,443	2,492,717	2.00
Outreach ministry	4,234,383	327,000	4,561,383	4.00	2,794,298	599,470	3,393,768	4.00	2,785,225	500,438	3,285,663	4.00
Campus ministry	487,406	21,300	508,706	1.00	377,195	19,475	396,670	1.00	383,825	17,528	401,353	1.00
Joint Mission Council	286,667	188,000	474,667	4.00	30,000	607,350	637,350	4.50	120,000	754,040	874,040	4.00
TOTAL	7,175,290	1,765,028	8,940,318	15.35	5,731,387	1,931,682	7,663,069	15.35	5,831,959	1,804,349	7,636,308	14.85
Ministerial Education												
Board and Administration	1,185,980	1,251,500	2,437,480	2.00	360,100	431,200	791,300	2.00	645,000	-	645,000	1.00
Wisconsin Lutheran Sem	1,000,000	3,123,000	4,123,000	36.00	1,000,000	3,022,300	4,022,300	33.10	1,200,000	2,871,730	4,071,730	33.10
Martin Luther College	4,485,000	12,542,000	17,027,000	160.00	3,800,000	10,959,000	14,759,000	135.00	3,750,000	11,128,926	14,878,926	135.00
Luther Preparatory School	2,600,000	3,745,490	6,345,490	68.00	2,544,675	3,262,998	5,807,673	57.00	2,540,000	3,301,252	5,841,252	56.00
Michigan Lutheran Sem	2,000,000	2,318,776	4,318,776	51.00	454,100	3,004,540	3,458,640	37.00	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	11,270,980	22,980,766	34,251,746	317.00	8,158,875	20,680,038	28,838,913	264.10	8,135,000	17,301,908	25,436,908	225.10
Parish Services												
Board and Administration	166,450	37,550	204,000	1.00								
Parish Assistance	255,000	580,000	835,000	4.00								
Parish Schools	115,000	583,000	698,000	4.00	203,000	341,800	544,800	4.00	160,000	373,200	533,200	3.00
Special Ministries	215,000	239,000	454,000	5.00	148,190	745,481	893,671	3.00	152,103	370,000	522,103	3.00
Congregational Resource Team*					699,872	1,261,300	1,961,172	8.00	682,700	439,700	1,122,400	8.00
Evangelism	225,000	215,000	440,000	2.00								
Adult Discipleship	230,000	83,000	313,000	2.00								
Youth Discipleship	214,700	78,000	292,700	2.00								
Worship	230,000	282,000	512,000	2.00								
Total	1,651,150	2,097,550	3,748,700	22.00	1,051,062	2,348,581	3,399,643	15.00	994,803	1,182,900	2,177,703	14.00

*Congregational Resource Team would include current ministries of Evangelism, Worship, Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, and Parish Assistance.

Proposed Budget Summary - Option B												
	2008-2009			2009-10			2010-11					
	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total funding	FTE	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total Funding	FTE	Subsidy allocation	Special, gifts, tuition, fees	Total funding	FTE
Ministry Support												
Facilities	290,000	686,596	976,596	3.20	191,758	490,440	682,198	1.70	193,331	497,579	690,910	1.70
Technology	1,497,012	92,800	1,589,812	15.50	1,310,000	74,276	1,384,276	13.50	1,310,000	80,096	1,390,096	13.50
Vicar Program	-	1,165,430	1,165,430		-	1,049,900	1,049,900		-	1,100,100	1,100,100	
Leadership	2,276,380	50,000	2,326,380	4.00	2,030,399	252,800	2,283,199	2.50	1,999,000	65,000	2,064,000	2.50
Christian Giving	2,153,334	210,500	2,363,834	23.00	1,462,076	102,500	1,564,576	16.30	1,469,687	102,500	1,572,187	15.70
Communications	402,700	-	402,700	5.75	506,000	104,000	610,000	4.75	510,000	80,000	590,000	4.75
Financial Services	1,649,094	-	1,649,094	17.70	1,320,700	-	1,320,700	15.30	1,355,000	-	1,355,000	15.30
Human Resources	167,000	-	167,000	2.00	190,000	-	190,000	2.00	192,360	-	192,360	2.00
Total	8,435,520	2,205,326	10,640,846	71.15	7,010,933	2,073,916	9,084,849	56.05	7,029,378	1,925,275	8,954,653	55.45
Debt Retirement	2,700,000		2,700,000						1,600,000		1,600,000	
Ministry Transition					1,275,000		1,275,000					
GRAND TOTAL	38,455,000	32,868,970	71,323,970	502.90	29,645,000	29,965,717	59,610,717	408.40	30,191,000	24,857,532	55,048,532	367.30

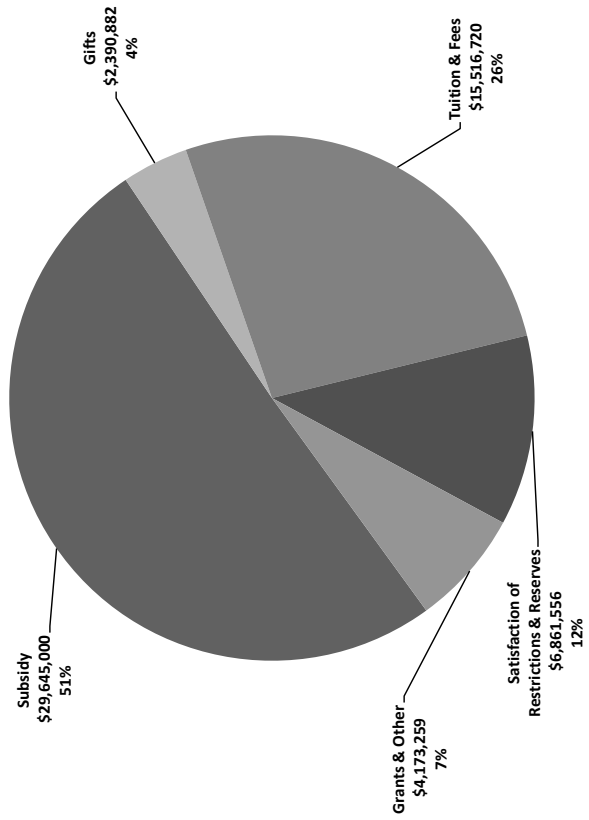
	2008-09			2009-10			2010-11					
	Subsidy	Other	Total	FTE	Subsidy	Other	Total	FTE	Subsidy	Other	Total	FTE
SUMMARY												
World Missions	7,222,060	3,820,300	11,042,360	77.40	6,417,743	2,931,500	9,349,243	57.90	6,599,860	2,643,100	9,242,960	57.90
Home Missions	7,175,290	1,765,028	8,940,318	15.35	5,731,387	1,931,682	7,663,069	15.35	5,831,959	1,804,349	7,636,308	14.85
Ministerial Ed	11,270,980	22,980,766	34,251,746	317.00	8,158,875	20,680,038	28,838,913	264.10	8,135,000	17,301,908	25,436,908	225.10
Parish Services	1,651,150	2,097,550	3,748,700	22.00	1,051,062	2,348,581	3,399,643	15.00	994,803	1,182,900	2,177,703	14.00
Ministry Support	8,435,520	2,205,326	10,640,846	71.15	7,010,933	2,073,916	9,084,849	56.05	7,029,378	1,925,275	8,954,653	55.45
Debt Retirement	2,700,000	-	2,700,000		-	-	-		1,600,000	-	1,600,000	
Ministry Transition	-	-	-		1,275,000	-	1,275,000		-	-	-	
Grand Total	38,455,000	32,868,970	71,323,970	502.90	29,645,000	29,965,717	59,610,717	408.40	30,191,000	24,857,532	55,048,532	367.30

	2008-09			2009-10			2010-11		
	Subsidy Allocation	% of total	Total	Subsidy	% of total	Total	Subsidy	% of total	Total
World Missions	7,222,060	18.8%	11,042,360	6,417,743	21.6%	9,349,243	6,599,860	21.9%	9,242,960
Home Missions	7,175,290	18.7%	8,940,318	5,731,387	19.3%	7,663,069	5,831,959	19.3%	7,636,308
Ministerial Ed	11,270,980	29.3%	34,251,746	8,158,875	27.5%	28,838,913	8,135,000	26.9%	25,436,908
Parish Services	1,651,150	4.3%	3,748,700	1,051,062	3.5%	3,399,643	994,803	3.3%	2,177,703
Ministry Support	8,435,520	21.9%	10,640,846	7,010,933	23.6%	9,084,849	7,029,378	23.3%	8,954,653
Debt Retirement	2,700,000	7.0%	2,700,000	-	-	-	1,600,000	5.3%	1,600,000
Ministry Transition	-	0.0%	-	1,275,000	4.3%	1,275,000	-	-	-
Total	38,455,000		71,323,970	29,645,000		59,610,717	30,191,000		55,048,532

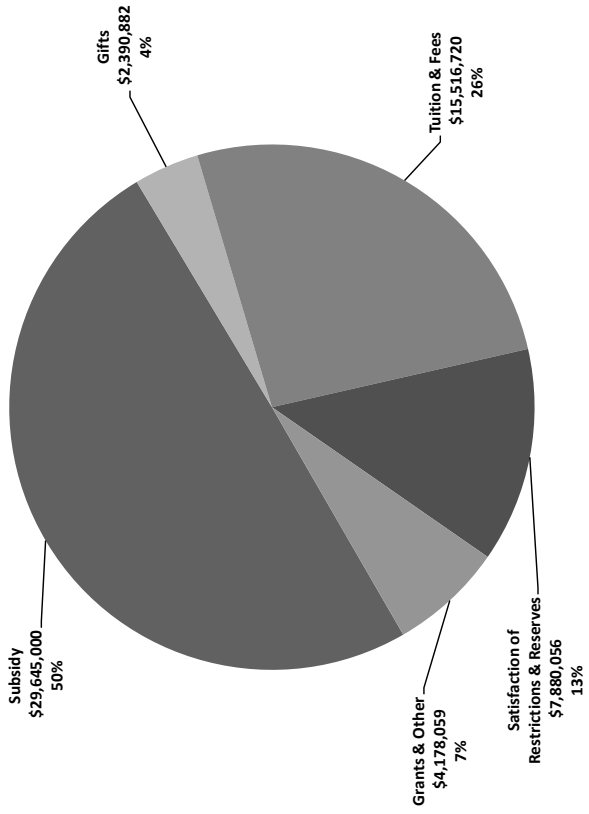
	2008-09			2009-10			2010-11		
	Total Funding	% of total	Total	Total Funding	% change	Total	Total Funding	% change	Total
World Missions	11,042,360	15.5%	11,042,360	9,349,243	-15.3%	9,349,243	9,242,960	-1.14%	9,242,960
Home Missions	8,940,318	12.5%	8,940,318	7,663,069	-14.3%	7,663,069	7,636,308	-0.35%	7,636,308
Ministerial Ed	34,251,746	48.0%	34,251,746	28,838,913	-15.8%	28,838,913	25,436,908	-11.80%	25,436,908
Parish Services	3,748,700	5.3%	3,748,700	3,399,643	-9.3%	3,399,643	2,177,703	-35.94%	2,177,703
Ministry Support	10,640,846	14.9%	10,640,846	9,084,849	-14.6%	9,084,849	8,954,653	-1.43%	8,954,653
Debt Retirement	2,700,000	3.8%	2,700,000	-	-100.0%	-	1,600,000	2.9%	1,600,000
Ministry Transition	-	0.0%	-	1,275,000	2.1%	1,275,000	-	-100.0%	-
Total	71,323,970		71,323,970	59,610,717	-16.4%	59,610,717	55,048,532	-7.65%	55,048,532

Total support for all synod-subsidized ministries

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$58,587,417

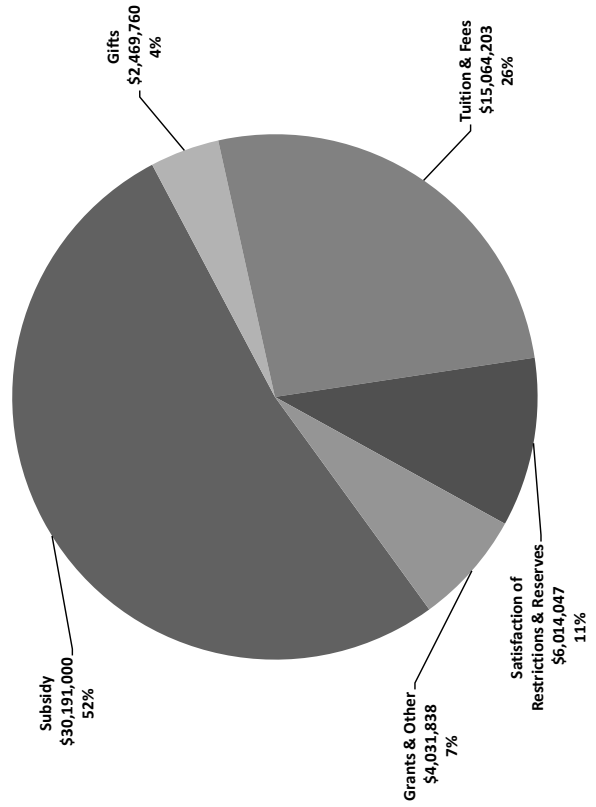


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$59,610,717

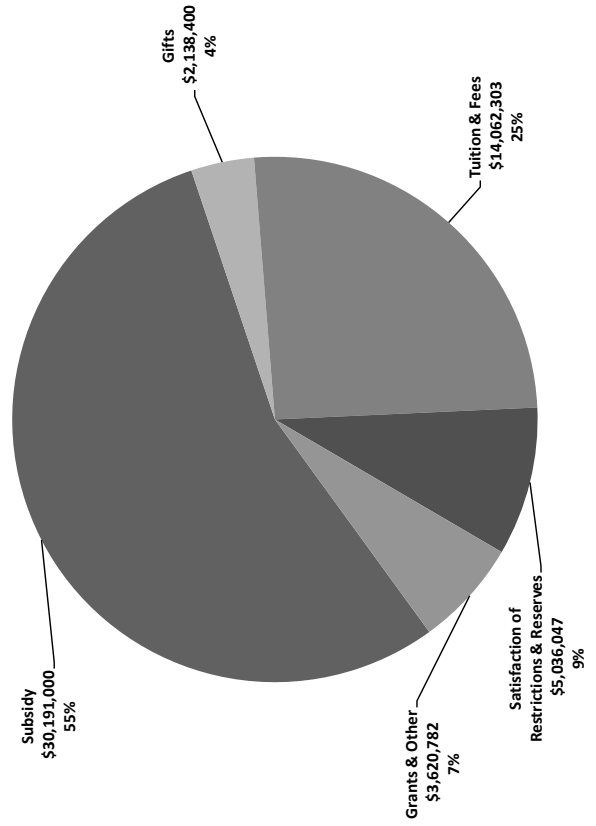


Total support for all synod-subsidized ministries

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$57,770,848

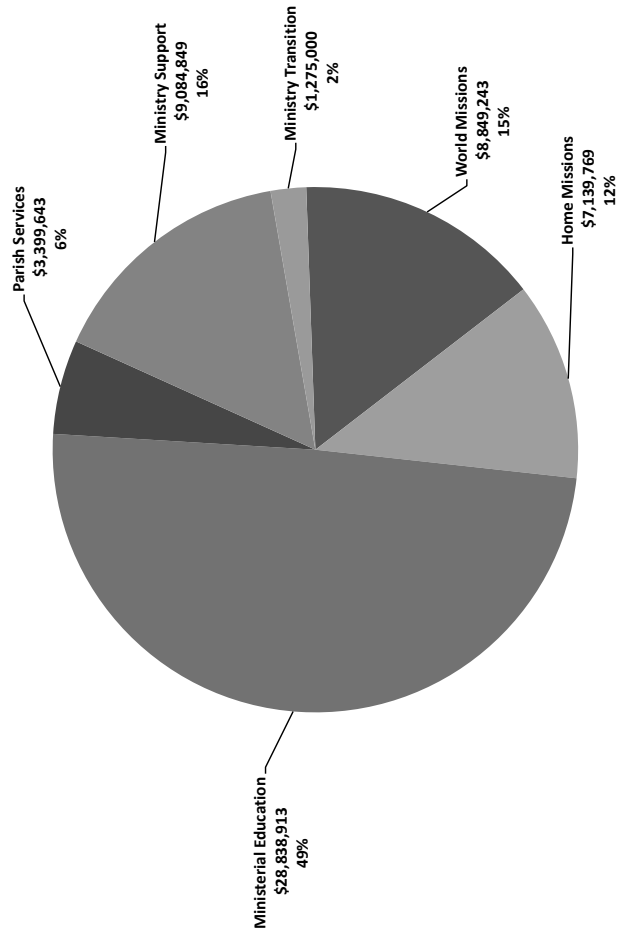


FY 2010-11 Option B
\$55,048,532

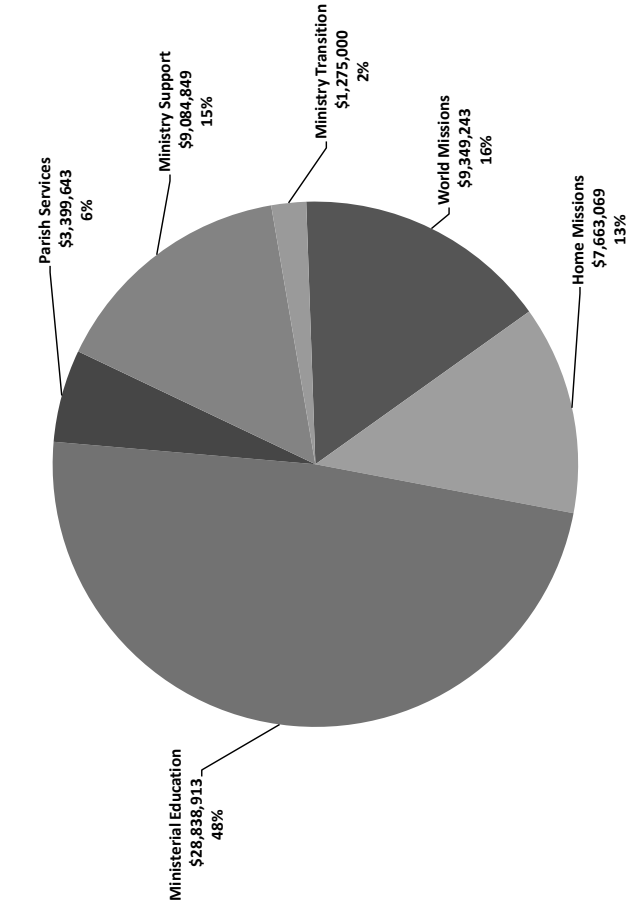


Total expenses for all synod-subsidized ministries

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$58,587,417

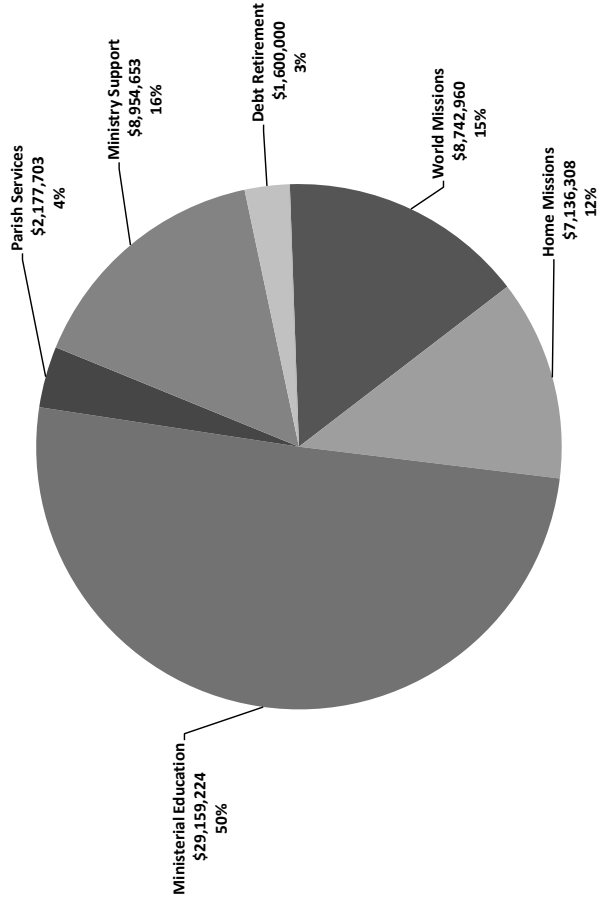


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$59,610,717

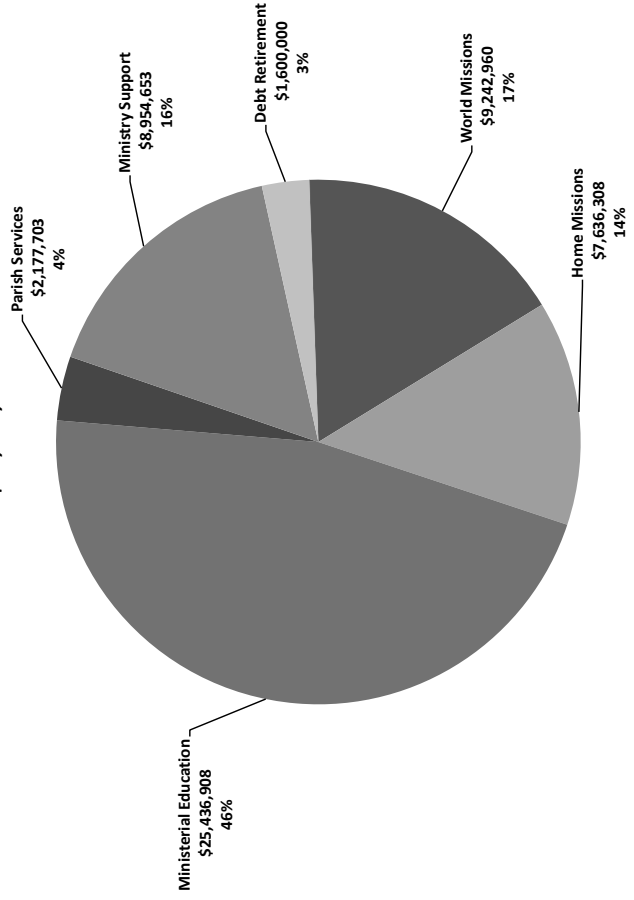


Total expenses for all synod-subsidized ministries

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$57,770,848

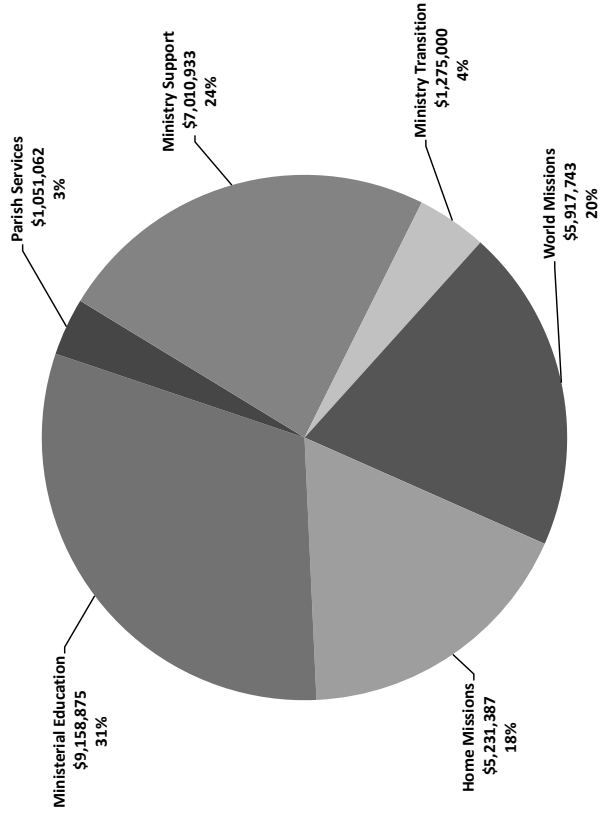


FY 2010-11 Option B
\$55,048,532

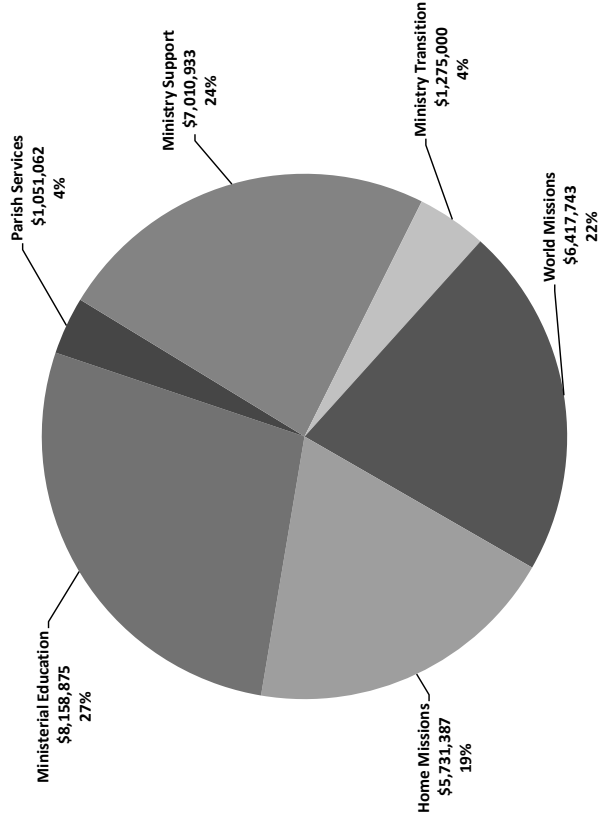


Synod subsidy allocation

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$29,645,000

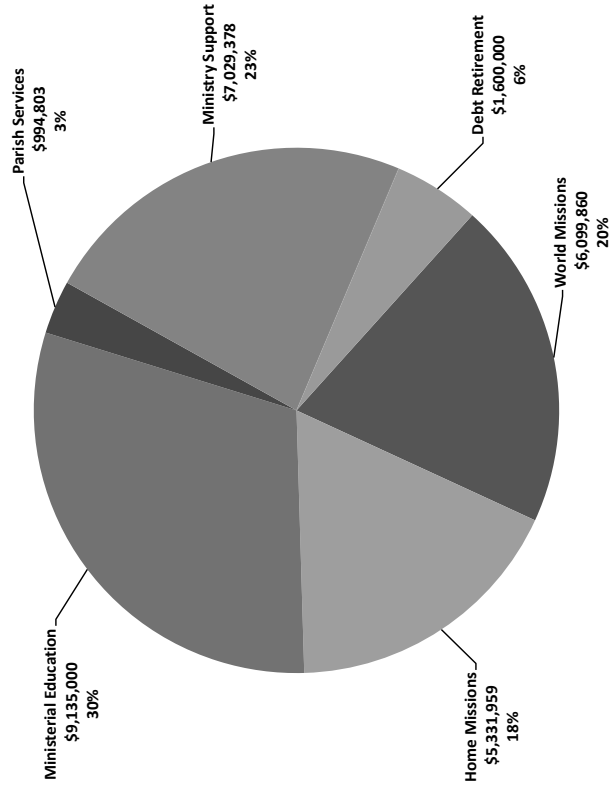


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$29,645,000

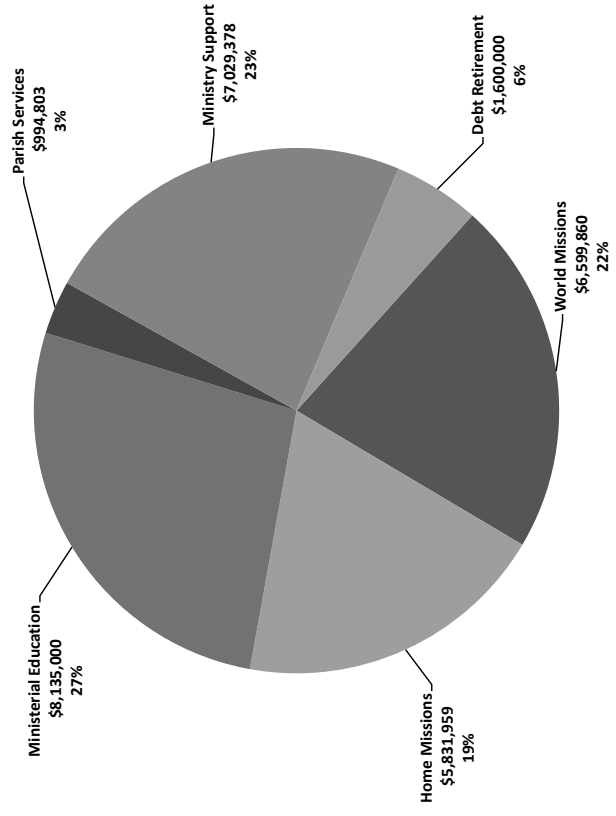


Synod subsidy allocation

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$30,191,000



FY 2010-11 Option B
\$30,191,000



WELS COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

2009-2010

0% increase on base; no experience increase

Range Spread	14,241	14,953	15,665	16,377	17,089	17,801	18,513	19,225
Service Increment	475	498	523	547	572	595	620	644
Ranges	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<i>Experience*</i>								
0	28,006	29,406	30,806	32,207	33,607	35,007	36,408	37,808
1	28,481	29,905	31,329	32,753	34,177	35,601	37,025	38,449
2	28,956	30,403	31,852	33,300	34,749	36,197	37,645	39,093
3	29,430	30,902	32,375	33,847	35,320	36,792	38,265	39,737
4	29,905	31,400	32,899	34,394	35,892	37,387	38,886	40,381
5	30,380	31,899	33,422	34,941	36,464	37,983	39,506	41,025
6	30,854	32,397	33,945	35,488	37,035	38,578	40,126	41,668
7	31,329	32,896	34,468	36,034	37,607	39,173	40,746	42,312
8	31,804	33,394	34,991	36,581	38,179	39,769	41,366	42,956
9	32,278	33,892	35,514	37,128	38,750	40,364	41,986	43,600
10	32,753	34,391	36,037	37,675	39,322	40,959	42,606	44,244
11	33,228	34,889	36,561	38,222	39,893	41,555	43,226	44,888
12	33,703	35,388	37,084	38,769	40,465	42,150	43,846	45,531
13	34,177	35,886	37,607	39,316	41,037	42,746	44,466	46,175
14	34,652	36,384	38,130	39,863	41,608	43,341	45,086	46,819
15	35,127	36,883	38,653	40,410	42,180	43,936	45,707	47,463
16	35,601	37,381	39,176	40,956	42,752	44,532	46,327	48,107
17	36,076	37,880	39,700	41,503	43,323	45,127	46,947	48,751
18	36,551	38,378	40,223	42,050	43,895	45,722	47,567	49,394
19	37,025	38,877	40,746	42,597	44,466	46,318	48,187	50,038
20	37,500	39,375	41,269	43,144	45,038	46,913	48,807	50,682
21	37,975	39,873	41,792	43,691	45,610	47,508	49,427	51,326
22	38,449	40,372	42,315	44,238	46,181	48,104	50,047	51,970
23	38,924	40,870	42,838	44,785	46,753	48,699	50,667	52,613
24	39,399	41,369	43,362	45,332	47,324	49,294	51,287	53,257
25	39,873	41,867	43,885	45,878	47,896	49,890	51,907	53,901
26	40,348	42,365	44,408	46,425	48,468	50,485	52,528	54,545
27	40,823	42,864	44,931	46,972	49,039	51,080	53,148	55,189
28	41,297	43,362	45,454	47,519	49,611	51,676	53,768	55,833
29	41,772	43,861	45,977	48,066	50,183	52,271	54,388	56,476
30	42,247	44,359	46,500	48,613	50,754	52,867	55,008	57,120
31	42,722	44,858	47,024	49,160	51,326	53,462	55,628	57,764

**Years of service have been adjusted by one year to reflect a freeze on synodical salaries*

Additional compensation components:

1. Cost of living adjustment (using ACCRA data or similar COL index factor)
2. Cash housing allowance (using current HUD Fair Market Rental Values) or home provided
3. Social security allowance (7.65% of salary, cost of living adjustment, and housing allowance)
4. Housing equity of 2% of entry level base for workers with housing provided
5. VEBA health insurance (\$1,000 deductible)
6. WELS Pension
7. Reimbursement for business-related expenses such as travel and conferences

Synodical Salary Range Assignment

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

Compensation for Synod President and Vice President of Mission and Ministry*: The synod president is compensated with a salary based on column "H" and the vice president of mission and ministry is compensated with a salary based on column "G." In addition to the base salary and the other components of compensation listed with the compensation guidelines, in 2009-10 the president and vice president will receive additional compensation in the amounts of \$39,813 and \$26,264, respectively. In 2010-11, those amounts increase by 1% to \$40,211 and \$26,526.

Available for download: Salary matrixes and compensation worksheets are available for download at www.wels.net/jump/compensation.

* If the Vice President of Mission and Ministry remains a full-time position.

WELS COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

2010-2011

1% increase on base

Range Spread	14,143	14,850	15,558	16,265	16,972	17,679	18,386	19,093
Service Increment	471	495	520	543	568	591	616	639
Ranges	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Experience*								
0	28,286	29,701	31,115	32,529	33,944	35,358	36,772	38,187
1	28,758	30,196	31,635	33,072	34,511	35,949	37,388	38,826
2	29,229	30,691	32,154	33,616	35,079	36,541	38,004	39,465
3	29,701	31,186	32,674	34,159	35,647	37,132	38,620	40,105
4	30,172	31,681	33,193	34,702	36,215	37,723	39,236	40,744
5	30,644	32,176	33,713	35,245	36,782	38,314	39,852	41,384
6	31,115	32,671	34,233	35,788	37,350	38,906	40,468	42,023
7	31,586	33,166	34,752	36,331	37,918	39,497	41,083	42,663
8	32,058	33,661	35,272	36,875	38,485	40,088	41,699	43,302
9	32,529	34,156	35,791	37,418	39,053	40,680	42,315	43,942
10	33,001	34,651	36,311	37,961	39,621	41,271	42,931	44,581
11	33,472	35,146	36,830	38,504	40,189	41,862	43,547	45,220
12	33,944	35,641	37,350	39,047	40,756	42,454	44,163	45,860
13	34,415	36,136	37,870	39,590	41,324	43,045	44,779	46,499
14	34,887	36,631	38,389	40,134	41,892	43,636	45,394	47,139
15	35,358	37,126	38,909	40,677	42,460	44,227	46,010	47,778
16	35,829	37,621	39,428	41,220	43,027	44,819	46,626	48,418
17	36,301	38,116	39,948	41,763	43,595	45,410	47,242	49,057
18	36,772	38,611	40,468	42,306	44,163	46,001	47,858	49,697
19	37,244	39,106	40,987	42,849	44,730	46,593	48,474	50,336
20	37,715	39,601	41,507	43,392	45,298	47,184	49,090	50,975
21	38,187	40,096	42,026	43,936	45,866	47,775	49,706	51,615
22	38,658	40,591	42,546	44,479	46,434	48,367	50,321	52,254
23	39,129	41,086	43,065	45,022	47,001	48,958	50,937	52,894
24	39,601	41,581	43,585	45,565	47,569	49,549	51,553	53,533
25	40,072	42,076	44,105	46,108	48,137	50,140	52,169	54,173
26	40,544	42,571	44,624	46,651	48,705	50,732	52,785	54,812
27	41,015	43,066	45,144	47,195	49,272	51,323	53,401	55,452
28	41,487	43,561	45,663	47,738	49,840	51,914	54,017	56,091
29	41,958	44,056	46,183	48,281	50,408	52,506	54,633	56,730
30	42,430	44,551	46,703	48,824	50,975	53,097	55,248	57,370
31	42,901	45,046	47,222	49,367	51,543	53,688	55,864	58,009

*Years of service have been adjusted by one year to reflect a freeze on synodical salaries

Additional compensation components:

1. Cost of living adjustment (using ACCRA data or similar COL index factor)
2. Cash housing allowance (using current HUD Fair Market Rental Values) or home provided
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* If the Vice President of Mission and Ministry remains a full-time position.

Memorial (2009-01)

Subject: *Withdrawal of funding from prep schools*

- WHEREAS 1) the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is again faced with a serious financial crisis; and
- WHEREAS 2) the mission of the church (Matthew 28:18-20) takes precedence over all forms of ministry in seeking kingdom balance; and
- WHEREAS 3) the mission of the church in gospel outreach is again in danger of taking major cuts in an attempt to reach a balanced budget; and
- WHEREAS 4) the synodical prep system (Michigan Lutheran Seminary and Luther Preparatory School) is operating at less than sixty percent of capacity and at nearly \$5 million a year cost to the synod; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that by the end of this biennium (2009-2011) the synod withdraw synodical support from one of the prep schools by moving the students to one campus; and be it finally
- Resolved, b) that the Synodical Council in consultation with the Conference of Presidents appoint an ad hoc committee to guide this effort to a positive conclusion.

Rev. James Radloff, Round Rock, Tex.

Support Services

Floor Committee #8

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

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.

Our current situation

The Financial Services team is thankful for the investment the synod has made in the financial systems, supporting technology, and its staffing. The investment has resulted in improved financial reporting and support forecasting. Although many visible and behind-the-scenes improvements have been realized, many opportunities remain. The team is always cognizant of weighing the benefits of the improvements against the impact it may have on ministry programs and services today and in the future.

During the past two years Financial Services

- implemented quarterly consolidated financial reporting and shortened completion of the annual audit to five months or less;
- in collaboration with the Board for Ministerial Education and the four WELS ministerial education schools, implemented quarterly financial reviews in order to identify and address financial challenges at the schools;
- implemented a program budgeting process that incorporates both operating and other resources into a comprehensive budget development model that increases transparency and considers all financial resources;
- combined all the internal capital debts of the synod into a single debt with one interest rate and a schedule to pay the debt over ten years;
- automated the interface between the Raisers Edge and the Financial Edge systems at the Synod Administration Building and at WELS ministerial education schools;
- implemented a multimedia insurance program that provides coverage against liabilities such as slander and copyright infringement associated with the production of printed materials, Web site content, and publishing;
- collaborated with Human Resources, Technology, and the ministerial education schools on the implementation of a new Web-based, fully integrated human resource and payroll system;
- implemented foreign liability and travel insurance and foreign travel procedures for anyone traveling on behalf of and approved by the synod, its subsidiaries, or areas of ministry;
- installed desktop depositing at the synod and facilitated its implementation at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Michigan Lutheran Seminary, improving cash flow and reducing the time, cost, and risk of physically transporting check deposits;
- implemented a new corporate credit card program at the synod with a single provider that provides more flexibility in reporting, receiving, reconciling, and analyzing the data; and
- implemented a financial Whistleblower Policy and procedure where individuals can anonymously report concerns.

A look ahead

The proposed operating subsidy for Financial Services in FY 2009-10 is a decrease of 20 percent from its current level, and for FY 2010-11 it is a modest inflationary increase of 3 percent. The lower subsidy will impede future improvement efforts and constrict services, especially in the area of technical assistance to WELS' ministerial education schools and internal audit projects.

Specifically, the decrease results in the following:

- A vacant hourly position that provided clerical support to all of Financial Services is eliminated. These responsibilities will be picked up by remaining staff.
- A vacant salaried position that had primary responsibility for special funds accounting and reporting is eliminated. These responsibilities will be picked up by remaining staff.
- Internal audit projects under the direction of the Accounting Oversight Committee are eliminated.
- Reducing a current hourly position, which provides accounting and treasury support to all of financial services, from 100 percent to 60 percent. This position has day-to-day responsibility for monitoring and balancing bank accounts. These responsibilities will be picked up by remaining staff.

While the scope and abilities of Financial Services are reduced, we will continue to seek out and implement changes that reduce costs, increase effectiveness, and/or strengthen internal controls. We will

- continue to refine the budgeting process and implement financial reporting changes to present a more comprehensive financial picture for WELS and its schools operations and special funds;
- implement and monitor the financial stabilization plan;
- create a consolidated financial database with remote access for both technical and managerial use;
- reduce the number of special funds while continuing to honor donor intent
- facilitate implementation of desktop depositing at Luther Preparatory School and Martin Luther College;
- facilitate implementation of the corporate credit card program at WELS ministerial education schools and subsidiaries; and
- refine the long-term support and expense model that considers the traditional operating sources of support plus gifts to specific ministries and schools as well as the related expenses.

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

Mr. Todd Poppe, reporter

Technology Floor Committee #8

WELS Technology exists to support the work of synodical organizations and areas of ministry by providing a strong technical infrastructure; facilitating digital communications; assisting congregations and called workers to better leverage technology; and coordinating technology initiatives that can't be done at smaller organizational levels.

To best accomplish these objectives WELS Technology is made up of ten related "service areas." Together the dedicated men and women that support those service areas seek to help the spread of the gospel with the technology tools the Lord continues to make available in the 21st century.

WELS Technology service areas include:

- information technology administration,
- workstation and peripherals,

- project management,
- disaster recovery,
- servers and storage,
- documentation and training,
- end-user support,
- network and telephony,
- application and Web development, and
- application and Web maintenance.

In order to provide these services, WELS Technology has organized itself into four departments that handle different service components. These departments exist solely to support the ministry efforts of Home and World Missions, Ministerial Education, Parish Services, Administration, and to a lesser degree individual churches and schools. Great care has been taken to organize according to ministry need. As a result, the services provided by these departments can be tied directly to the activities of those areas of ministry.

Information services

- Provides maintenance and support for all synod technical infrastructure.
- Provides end-user helpdesk support.
- Ensures integrity of network and data.
- Manages access to technical assets.

Application services

- Provides development/programming services that fill synod application requests.
- Integrates applications with other related synod systems as necessary.
- Manages the quality and efficient collection of synod data, especially as it relates to called worker and congregation information.
- Determines future application development platforms and best practices.

Project services

- Provides/coordinates project and program analysis services to all areas of ministry.
- Coordinates documentation and training.
- Coordinates management of all projects in technology portfolio.
- Acts as primary project office for “significant” projects that require complex coordination.

Web services

- Coordinates the creation/management of www.wels.net and associated Web applications and Web sites.
- Provides support for more than 50 WELS Web sites.
- Creates and maintains tools to enable synod communications.
- Promotes and facilitates Web usage and technologies to internal and external groups.

Activity over the last biennium

WELS Technology understands the need for a stable and secure infrastructure. As a result, a number of improvements were made over the past two years to ensure that synod workers had reliable and safe tools to use in the course of normal business operations. Significant improvements were made to the virus scanning services already in place. Synod networks and servers are under constant attack from viruses and worms that seek to penetrate our defenses for malicious purposes. In addition, spam filtering was also improved and taken offsite so that the millions of spam e-mails sent to synod employees never reach our internal mail server. This has resulted in improved bandwidth and less reliance on sophisticated and costly hardware at the Synod Administration Building (SAB).

With the advent of enterprise suitable open source software, WELS Technology examined several options to replace existing software in an effort to reduce costs. Two such examples are an open source asset management tool, and an open source help desk management tool. Together these tools allow more efficient and inexpensive management of valuable technical resources and issue resolution. The current helpdesk supports well over 200 users.

One area of ongoing concern for WELS Technology is in the area of business continuity. This has been addressed with a complete disaster recovery strategy that includes daily backups and fully redundant applications through

virtualization technology. Synod systems can now be brought back to fully operational within a day in the event of a disaster (natural or manmade) versus “weeks” as before.

The protection and quality of the synod’s financial and donor information is extremely important. Two projects completed over the past two years stabilize and further protect those systems (Blackbaud’s Financial Edge and Raiser’s Edge). New servers were deployed and customizations fully tested to ensure that reliable information is available whenever financial staff, executive management, or Christian Giving counselors need it. All four synod schools also make use of the donor database to coordinate development efforts.

With the rollout of the synod’s new Intranet solution called Connect, applications are beginning to be built that are showing significant cost savings. All Congregation Mission Offering (CMO) subscriptions and annual Congregational Statistics submissions were converted to online forms this past year. This allowed the Ministry of Christian Giving to reduce staff by 1.5 FTE. The resulting statistics report is now only available online, saving approximately \$13,000 in printing and mailing costs. See the Ministry of Christian Giving’s report for more details (p. 13). Connect will continue to add more services that should enable other areas of ministry to reduce costs. All called workers and other church workers (example: choir directors, Sunday school superintendents, youth group leaders, etc.) are invited to visit the site at <https://connect.wels.net>. To get an account, go to <http://connect.wels.net/signup>.

The synod’s redesigned Web site, www.wels.net, is being test marketed in “Beta” form this summer and is scheduled for full functionality this fall. Not only was the site redesigned (see Communication Services’ report on p. 15 for more information), but the entire content management system was replaced. This was required due to the former system no longer being supported by our hosting vendor. The new system is based on an open source content management system that will be cheaper to operate and more flexible in the long term. This system will support the more than two million visitors we receive each year to the site as well as the 50 other Web sites used by areas of ministry, subsidiaries, and WELS affiliates.

Another major project completed in the past year was an online donation management system that allows recurring giving as well as automated donations to different designated funds. Security has been tightened to assure donors their information is safe. The amount of online donations is increasing every year. To add an even greater layer of security a strict Information Security Policy was created and adopted. This sets policy regarding the retention and use of credit card information, social security numbers, and other personally identifiable information.

A growing need within the synod is for Web streaming and video recording services. As has been done in the past, Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduation and call events were broadcast. New this year was the streaming of two high school choral festivals. All of these events attracted many viewers. There have also been an increased number of requests for video recording for archived viewing of many different kinds of workshops, presentations, and conferences. Visit <http://streams.wels.net> to view all the available videos. All video and audio equipment has been purchased through the generous gift of one donor.

The ShopWELS program continues to see steady growth. Two major vendors were recently added to the program—Lenovo, for desktop and notebook computers, and Ricoh for office copiers, specifically for those located in the Wisconsin area. Ricoh has agreed to provide “state of Wisconsin” pricing to all of our churches and schools. In most cases, this pricing is far cheaper than any other vendor can provide. Since its inception in 2006, more than \$1,000,000 in sales has been generated through the program. Many schools and churches have saved countless dollars in the process. More savings would be possible if a greater number of WELS organizations took advantage of the program. There is no cost to the synod budget to run the program. It is self supporting. To learn about all of the services and products offered within this synodwide procurement program, go to www.shopwels.net.

The synod’s Web hosting program continues to be very popular. More than 400 WELS congregations are using this self-funded service that provides professionally designed Web pages and an easy-to-use content management system that allows multiple administrators to manage the site. New features are being added that allow more customizations and improved usability. Visit www.wels.net/jump/webhosting to learn more about the offering.

Planned activity over the next biennium

Connect, the new synodwide Intranet, will continue to play a central role in new projects for the next biennium. Two that should have significant impact will be a Parish Schools Statistics project and Called Worker Self-Service project. Similar to the Congregational Statistics Submission tool, the Parish Schools program will enable each school to submit its annual statistics online. The tool could also accommodate teacher evaluations as well. The Called Worker Self-

Service tool will allow any called worker to update his or her profile information online (i.e. address, phone number, e-mail address changes, etc.). Both projects could significantly reduce the need for dedicated staff who previously were needed to manually update this information.

The Connect platform will also serve as the new home for existing roster management and call system functions. Progress is an aging character-based database platform that has been the main repository for synod data for many years. It has long outlived its usefulness, does not provide needed functionality for those who manage called worker and congregation data, as well as limited customization for those who work with call lists across the synod. Finding support or experienced programmers for the Progress system has become increasingly difficult. WELS VEBA, the Conference of Presidents, Parish Schools, and many others rely on these systems for essential day-to-day operations.

With the continued development of the WELS Web site, www.wels.net, a main focus will be improved communication tools that areas of ministry can use to inform called workers and congregations of synod activity and news. Each subscriber to "Together" (the synod's bi-weekly newsletter) and other news services will be able to easily manage his or her own subscriptions. This will be an essential improvement as the Ministry of Christian Giving is moving to more "e-appeals" rather than the more costly postal mailings.

New online tools will enable future Web projects to be completed in a more timely and cost-efficient manner. The Streams site will use online video sites like www.vimeo.com and photo sharing sites like www.flickr.com to store content "in the cloud," reducing the need for dedicated servers and associated backups and bandwidth. This will also allow great content more visibility beyond our traditional WELS audience. Another significant change will be the switch to a free Web streaming technology. The same feature set will be available but without the high cost. Also annual savings will be realized as the popular church locator application will be rebuilt on the new www.wels.net platform using open source technology.

Finally, an area that will play a central role in World Missions and other distance learning initiatives will be Web and video conferencing. Through the use of low-cost tools, real time collaboration and video conferencing will be made available. Its rollout should reduce or eliminate expenditures paid to Genesys, the current commercial Web conferencing provider.

The current state of technology in the synod

As few as five years ago, a quick survey of technology within the Synod Administration Building, at our synod schools, and in most of our churches and schools would have revealed large technology gaps. Outdated software and hardware was the norm. Shaky infrastructures that put information at risk were prevalent. Although gaps still exist, much progress has been made. Smart use of technology, open source tools, and good planning should continue to improve the general use of technology within the synod.

Most churches currently have a Web presence. While many still only provide very static information, others make good use of this primary communications tool. More and more congregations are abandoning their yellow page and newspaper ads for a "Web-only" strategy. More than a third of all congregations are using the synod's Web hosting program, which allows professionally designed pages with the click of a button.

There are a growing number of churches and schools considering the use of low or no cost open source solutions for general office computing. Although this does lower costs, it can add to the administrative load of already overloaded workers. More study and recommendations will be provided over the coming year.

The use of video and audio technology is now extending the reach of many congregations. They have realized that many church/school shoppers demand a good Web experience, which includes multimedia before they will visit. Our WELS organizations should take better advantage of synod resources, specifically www.shopwels.net, when purchasing equipment.

Budget impact

The 2009-11 biennial budget proposes a reduction of WELS Technology budget from \$1,497,012 to \$1,310,000 in both years of the biennium. This returns the Technology budget to the level of three years ago. At that time, the synod determined that there was not enough funding to support a stable, reliable, and secure infrastructure. (See the 2004 Technology Study for more information at <http://connect.wels.net/2004techstudy>. A Connect login is required.) Improvements have been made since then. However, a few significant holes remain that will go unplugged with these budget cuts. Others will be created. Non-profit industry standard metrics suggest that technology budgets should be

approximately five percent of the overall budget. The proposed budget stands at four percent. The budget reductions will have the following repercussions:

- The elimination of the Database Administrator/Programmer position will increase operating risks, as WELS is more reliant on databases now more than ever. The entire called worker information set, VEBA, finance, donor data, and now Connect all require stable and secure databases. Without an expert attending to them WELS risks data loss, corruption, breach, or limited availability. Responsibilities for this will fall to remaining staff.
- The elimination of the current helpdesk position, which provides level one support to all submitting trouble tickets inside and outside the Synod Administration Building, will be necessary. This position also provides desktop support and setup for workstations. Without full-time staff in that role service levels will drop, response times will be impacted, and other existing staff will have to pick up level one items, potentially distracting them from other core responsibilities.
- The elimination of 50 percent of all consulting fees that are needed to continue improvements to infrastructure, security, communications, and business continuity will be necessary. Existing staff will have to fill any voids this leaves. Consulting plays an important role to an organization the size of WELS. All of the expertise necessary to maintain complex systems is not possessed by existing employees, nor would it be feasible to do so. Thus there is the need for strategic relationships with consulting partners. The net result of this reduction is another FTE.

These cuts and a collection of others not listed here leave our infrastructure in a vulnerable state. Any further cuts would require major programs/services to be significantly modified, reduced, or eliminated such as our Financial or Donor Management systems, the WELS Web site, or other applications designed to allow more efficient operations in other departments. If those decisions were made, transition costs equal to or exceeding the budget savings would be needed. Real savings, if any, wouldn't be realized until the following biennium.

Due to necessary budget cuts across the organization, technology becomes increasingly important to maximize remaining staff productivity; provide applications that can reduce the need for additional staff; improve communications; and maintain accurate financial, donor, called worker, and congregation data. WELS Technology stands ready to use the technological tools at its disposal to serve the synod and its membership.

Mr. Martin Spriggs, reporter

Human Resources

Floor Committee #8

Our calling

WELS Human Resources oversees the personnel functions for synod personnel, including communication and implementation of personnel policies, recruitment of non-called staff, compensation and benefit analysis for called and lay workers, performance assessment programs, and provision of advice to supervisors on matters such as federal and state legal requirements concerning the treatment of personnel.

This department assists WELS organizations in addressing called worker care issues such as compensation, “minister of the gospel” tax treatment, and risk management issues related to personnel matters.

Incident reporting

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, administrator of Parish Schools, or director of Human Resources.

“Minister of the Gospel” tax treatment

“Minister of the Gospel” under Section 107 of the IRS Code is a tax treatment often incorrectly applied or not applied to all, especially for male called teachers. Male called workers (pastors, staff ministers, and teachers) serving in WELS

teaching and pastoral ministries are “ministers of the gospel.” A common error made by churches with schools is treating a male teacher as an “employee” for Social Security purposes and withholding FICA. Another common error is treating these men as “self-employed” for both income taxes and Social Security purposes and issuing an IRS Form 1099. Under the “dual status” of this section of the IRS Code, “ministers” are employees for income tax purposes (state and federal), but self-employed for Social Security purposes. IRS Publication 517 covers this tax code and is located online at www.irs.gov/publications/p517/index.html.

WELS Tax Manual is updated annually to provide WELS organizations current information on this and other tax-related information relevant for called workers and organizations. WELS Tax Manual is available on www.wels.net/jump/taxinfo.

WELS Shepherd Plan Solution-403(b)

In July 2007, the IRS released final regulations under Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code (the “Code”). The regulations were effective Jan. 1, 2009. Congregations and schools must act on the new regulations, which require employers to monitor certain aspects of the 403(b) arrangements in which their employees participate or to which they contribute on behalf of their employees.

One of the regulations requires organizations to comply with “universal availability,” making the plan available to any employee that is paid 1,000 or more hours in 12 months. WELS Shepherd Plan Solution (SPS), implemented on Jan. 1, 2009, meets all requirements of the new regulations. As a 403(b)(9) pre-tax retirement plan, the WELS Shepherd Plan Solution allows participants to make tax-deferred payroll contributions on an ongoing basis. SPS also includes a Roth provision for individuals wanting to contribute at 403(b) levels on a “post-tax” basis. This plan complies with IRS and Department of Labor regulations for 501(c)(3) non-profit and church organizations. By design, this plan is at no cost to WELS organizations. Information on the new regulations and the plan are available at www.wels.net/jump/403b.

WELS Flexible Spending Plan

WELS Flexible Spending Plan (Section 125) was implemented for synod-paid employees and synodical school workers effective January 2005 and is available for adoption by WELS organizations under the Association Plan offered. WELS’ provider is ProcessWorks, Inc., located in Brookfield, Wis. Member organizations are able to adopt the plan for a nominal fee and pay per-employee rates at the synod level. All banking and administration is accomplished directly between the provider and the member organization. The WELS Flexible Spending Plan summary plan description is available at www.wels.net/jump/flex.

WELS VEBA for synodical workers

One feature of the proposed budget for the next biennium calls for reducing synod’s costs in providing continued medical coverage for eligible employees. Effective with the 2010 plan year, employees will have the option of enrolling in WELS VEBA at the \$1,000 deductible level at no cost or at the \$500 deductible plan level by paying the difference in the premium costs. This change will provide an estimated cost savings of \$418,000.

Compensation guidelines

The published salary schedules for the 2009-11 biennium are printed on pp. 58-61. In February 2009 the Synodical Council was presented alternative compensation proposals to address the downturn in the economy. The proposal to freeze compensation for synod-paid workers at 2008-09 levels was adopted for the first year of the biennium and a one percent increase on the base salary in the second year. Salary matrices and compensation worksheets for projections are available for download at www.wels.net/jump/compensation.

Vicar program

The amount of the vicar compensation and contribution by participating congregations is set annually by the Conference of Presidents. Medical benefits under the WELS VEBA group medical plan, payroll taxes, and reimbursement of housing/utilities exceeding \$400/month are included in the amount set by the Conference of Presidents. The contribution amount for 2009-10 is \$2,900/month. In addition, participating congregations provide business mileage reimbursement at the synodical rate and travel reimbursement to and from assignment.

Our current situation

In December 2008, the Human Resources generalist retired. This clerical position has not been filled nor will it be filled in the foreseeable future due to budgetary constraints. A position of Human Resources advisor was added on a temporary basis to allow the director to focus on implementation of the new Human Resources/payroll system

and address regulatory changes impacting 403(b) plans. The Human Resources advisor position is currently in the Human Resources budget for the next biennium.

In 2008 the Synodical Council provided additional support to Human Resources in forming the Compensation Committee. Human Resources is thankful for this support.

Key activities performed by WELS Human Resources over the last two years.

- Collaborated with Financial Services, Technology, and synodical schools to implement a new human resources and payroll system to replace dated, diverse systems. This Web-based system enables Human Resources to support all synodical operations with the exception of Northwestern Publishing House in matters of personnel data management, regulatory compliance, and budget analysis.
- Expanded 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.
- Collaborated with Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) Human Resources in evaluating and implementing synodwide offerings of a 403(b) plan that satisfies IRS/Department of Labor regulatory changes effective Jan. 1, 2009. As of May 1, 2009, the aggregate of WELS and ELS member contributions is in excess of \$5 million. Two hundred seventy WELS and 40 ELS organizations have developed their 403(b) plans under the WELS Shepherd Plan Solution, bringing their respective headcounts of 3,378 and 139 eligible employees into the plan.
- Conducted ongoing training for ministerial students at Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in child abuse and sexual misconduct prevention.
- Continued ongoing collaboration with Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Services (WLCFS) in supporting displaced workers needing spiritual support and outplacement services.

A look ahead

In industry, economic downturns require companies to work leaner, cut product lines, retool to make more of what the consumer wants, and lay off workers. As a church organization, the most likely cost reduction efforts are going to come in the form of reduced human capital. We can't make our product better. You don't "retool" God's Word; you spread it. Human Resource's mission is to focus on our human capital and provide support wherever possible in minimizing the stress that comes with losing members of our ministry family. To accomplish this, we will

- work with our areas of ministry and synodical schools in coordinating timely information and support for our workers;
- work with the Synodical Council's designated committee(s) in reviewing and evaluating job descriptions, Human Resources policies and procedures, and compensation programs at our synod-operated organizations; and
- listen to and continue providing support to WELS organizations in areas related to our human capital.

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

Mr. Roger Crawford, reporter

Board for World Missions

Floor Committee #9

Our calling

The theme for this synod's convention and the motto that is currently used to define our synod's work is "Christ's Love, Our Calling." God's love in Christ is extended to the entire world as clearly indicated in the well known John 3:16 Scripture verse, 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

During the past biennium another 1,941 souls were added to the groupings of believers in our fellowship, bringing the total of those baptized to 80,917 in the 23 fields where we are doing work. This is not including the approximate 30,000 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 128 pastors, 38 student pastors, 19 vicars, and 183 evangelists who serve the spiritual needs of 490 congregations and 146 preaching stations. Our expatriate missionary force numbers about 50 budgeted positions, although currently only 40 of those positions have persons functioning on field. The expatriate force sponsored by WELS also includes 12 teachers. Thirty-six lay workers, funded through WELS Kingdom Workers, are presently serving in various fields.

Statistics are now reported online and have been divided into two categories: 1) church planting efforts that involve resident missionaries and 2) alternate strategies where ministry is being done through assistance offered without a resident missionary. To access these statistics, contact carolyn.feltner@sab.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. 10).

The work of World Missions is overseen by seven recently reorganized administrative committees. They are the:

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

The administrative committees consist of pastors, teachers, and laymen who are willing to volunteer their time to manage and facilitate the work of the world fields assigned to them. They total 26 persons. 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 newly reorganized five-man Board for World Missions was authorized by the synod at the 2007 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, Brazil, and Sudan. Most of these explorations were prompted by the interest of people desiring the gospel in these areas. In every place visited some expanded

work is expected to take place. Whatever new expansion the Board for World Missions authorizes can only be enabled at this time by redeployment of manpower and resources from existing areas and/or the use of alternate forms of mission outreach.

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 the *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 an active program to promote and facilitate outreach to Muslims in the United States and around the world. Further details of these latter developments can be found in the report of the Joint Mission Council (p. 89).

Noteworthy activities

Nepal and Pakistan

Since 2002 a total of six Bible-storying workshops have been conducted in Nepal. The catechism is being taught through these Bible stories, and congregations are being formed. All told the number of people being reached in Nepal through our materials and those trained by us is now around 7,000 and includes 28 of the 75 districts of the country.

We are working closely with the seminary's Pastoral Studies Institute to find ways to advance training of a select few to the second and third stages. One hundred solar powered recorders were delivered to this field. The recorders contain the entire New Testament in Nepalese as well as an audio version of the *Promise*. This will enable the message to get to the remote villages of this hilly country. In addition, further iPod type units were delivered, on which both music and teaching lessons can be recorded and then transferred from computers to tiny MP3 players that can hold a gigabyte worth of materials. We are hoping that the experiences learned in Nepal can provide experimental opportunities for work in other less accessible countries.

In Pakistan 18,000 students are now enrolled in the Bible Correspondence and Teaching courses. Most of these numbers are children being trained in Christian schools of other denominations, although close to 2,000 of these courses are distributed to villages by workers via bicycles. This work begun in 2006 has now distributed 60,000 pieces of literature. The requests for our 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 Multi-Language Publications. Our contact and his staff continue to want to be trained in Lutheran teaching, but this training will have to be done via distance learning. We are continually uplifted by the 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 Mission program. Three major emphases in this work are:

1. Education—encouragement to Ministerial Education to enable Mandarin training to gifted students and outreach in Asia through English as a second language. Presently there are around 50 WELS English as a second language teachers doing outreach in the Chinese-speaking world.
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.
3. Theological training—the training of pastors and lay workers for outreach and ministry to the Chinese. The newly established Asia Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong trains workers for gospel outreach to Chinese-speaking peoples in the surrounding region.

Innovative theological education

Among the more dramatic developments are those taking place in theological education. The Latin America Traveling Theological Educators (LATTE) program is an innovative experiment to provide faculty mobility for teaching pastoral students in several 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 has offered dozens of Apaches the opportunity of instruction for service in various forms of ministry that might not otherwise be available to them. Regional seminaries such as Asia Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong can train workers for vast areas of the world. Extended learning courses can be delivered through technology to remote areas where WELS missionaries cannot go. The Pastoral Studies Institute is working with World Missions to certify the training provided in other theological education programs and world seminaries. The addition of a World Mission Seminary Professor

at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary who is financed by World Missions enables teaching visitations and curriculum development at the worldwide national church seminaries. This office will help to pioneer educational possibilities for distant locations.

Publications

A tremendous publishing push for Christian literature, evangelism and 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 Mission's Multi-Language Publications Committee. A full list of the publications can be found in the Multi-Language Publications catalog at www.mlpwels.com. The work of Multi-Language Publications 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.

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 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 was also established to provide a forum in which sister church bodies and emerging national churches might gather around Scripture for mutual support, fellowship, and encouragement in reaching the lost. The conference celebrated its 15th anniversary during its fifth triennial conference held in Kiev, Ukraine, on June 3-5, 2008. There were 85 in attendance representing 20 churches.

Office operations combined

Over the past biennium both mission boards approved the combining of support staff personnel into one joint mission office. This change has been in place for nine months and seems to be working very well as it lends to efficiencies in equipment and leverages the skills and strengths of the respective workers on behalf of both mission programs.

A look ahead

The foremost challenge facing World Missions is the responsible continuation of its worldwide outreach program in light of current fiscal constraints. The present financial shortfall that necessitated cutbacks in all areas of ministry required the reduction of a number of world missionary positions as well. Missionary positions eliminated from the 2009-11 biennium with Option A would be an overall 23.5 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) manpower positions. Of those 23 called positions, 15 would be recalls, four would be vacancies not filled, and four would be planned positions provided through previous cutbacks that cannot now be funded. Of the recalls 12 are missionary/pastor positions, three are teacher positions, and .5 FTE is a hired support staff position shared with Home Missions. Up to four positions might be salvaged with Option B.

Reductions have generally followed the strategic planning assumptions that have taken resources from fields where solid effort has not showed returns and redirected them to fields where the Lord appears to be blessing the work and the potential is great. Reductions have also occurred where the fields are stable enough to carry on with fewer workers. The areas facing significant reductions are Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America, and the Apache reservations.

There will be no resident manpower in Albania, Bulgaria or the Dominican Republic. It should be stated, however, that there are no fields where World Missions will abandon the Christians of our fellowship. Even though there may be no resident missionary, we will try as feasible to offer ongoing, albeit limited, support through literature programs, visitations, and distance learning. Plans to open a new mission in Mozambique will not be going forward. In Apacheland, in spite of huge reductions, the congregations have made big commitments to save their workers. The Board for World Missions has consistently tried to prioritize its reductions on the basis of the suggestions provided by the respective administrative committees.

Our board has been torn between acknowledging that we are in circumstances over which we have no control and the firm conviction that, in keeping with our Lord's commission, we as a synod must redouble our efforts and do everything possible to continue reaching out to the lost around the world. With the world's population at 6.8 billion and growth of around 80 million annually, we 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, we cannot help but come to the conclusion that by far the greatest number of them are in countries other than our own.

In view of this it deeply saddens us that the outreach in Mozambique, the first new country to be entered by World Missions in over a decade, a place that had the potential to be another Malawi in terms of growth, will not now occur. Two young men who have given a year and a half of their lives to learn the Portuguese language and register a Lutheran church in Mozambique are being recalled. Although some of the budgeted positions being defunded in Option A did not include existing manpower, they did include manpower positions for fields where the Lord had opened doors to great potential. Positions in India, China, Africa, and Latin America that were made possible from strategic reductions in other fields will not now be realized.

If we are looking at the Lord's leading in events around us, we cannot overlook the fact that, in spite of other depressing developments in the church and world, the Lord appears to have greatly blessed our church body's efforts to reach out to peoples of other nations and cultures. The 32,642 souls in our world mission fellowship in 1990 have more than doubled to 81,000 today, and if we added the people who are currently willing to be under our spiritual guidance we have more than 100,000 who need to be further nurtured, trained, and empowered to reach out to those around them.

We have weathered the reductions of 2003, but we are seriously concerned that the gains the Lord has allowed us to realize will be jeopardized by these sudden and premature withdrawals. Our church body and our World Missions program have taken seriously both parts of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)—to evangelize all nations and to also teach the whole counsel of God. We cannot do this properly if missionaries are being recalled before they have had a chance to train leadership and produce sufficient materials to sustain responsible training and outreach efforts within national churches. Regardless of the promise of technology mentioned in this report, most of our world work still relies heavily on strong relationships, the result of the gospel proclaimed and lived in an atmosphere of mutual loving concern and actions that build trust. Our synod has made some real commitments to souls around the world by sending them missionaries whom they have come to love and regard as their fathers in Christ. We cannot expect to suddenly set aside those relationships by withdrawing those missionaries and then be able to easily pick them up again at a later time.

The four additional reductions in Option A will in our opinion be a severe setback to our work. They include

- a Mandarin-speaking missionary sorely needed for our foremost priority to reach out to the Chinese-speaking people;
- a crucial missionary in Malawi, our largest field, which went from a high of 33 national pastors down (through disease, death, and attrition) to 17;
- another Zambian missionary in a field that has already had four manpower positions defunded—the Zambia loss would leave the field with basically a teaching staff at Lusaka and one missionary-at-large; and
- an Apache teacher who has been a leader in rallying fellow Christians to greater ownership of their church's work. The Apache work has lost half of its subsidy in one year.

Some of our plans to accomplish as much as we can with limited resources include:

Indigenization (the strategy toward national church self-dependency)

Progress in World Missions is often perceived in terms of opening new fields, but progress can also be seen in phasing missionaries out of existing fields after the foundation for a self-dependent church has been laid. When a solid foundation is laid by teaching the whole counsel of God and then permitting the national church to become increasingly self-disciplining, self-administering, self-propagating, and self-supporting within the context of its own culture, national ownership of its own gospel work enables resources to be used elsewhere. However, the solid foundation must first be laid. We cannot take shortcuts when it comes to striving for a theological depth and discernment that can stand firm in future doctrinal controversies. Experienced missionaries tell us this goal often takes time, usually two or even three generations.

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

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. Phil Koelpin, chairman

Dr. Robert Anderson, secretary

Rev. Howard Mohlke

Mr. Ray Solofra

Mr. Danny Wehmeyer

Advisory:

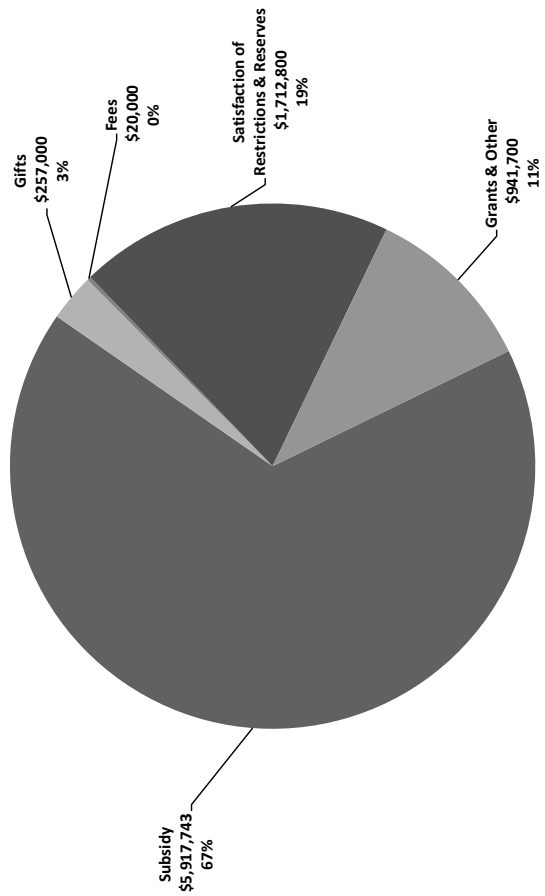
Rev. Dan Koelpin, administrator

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president

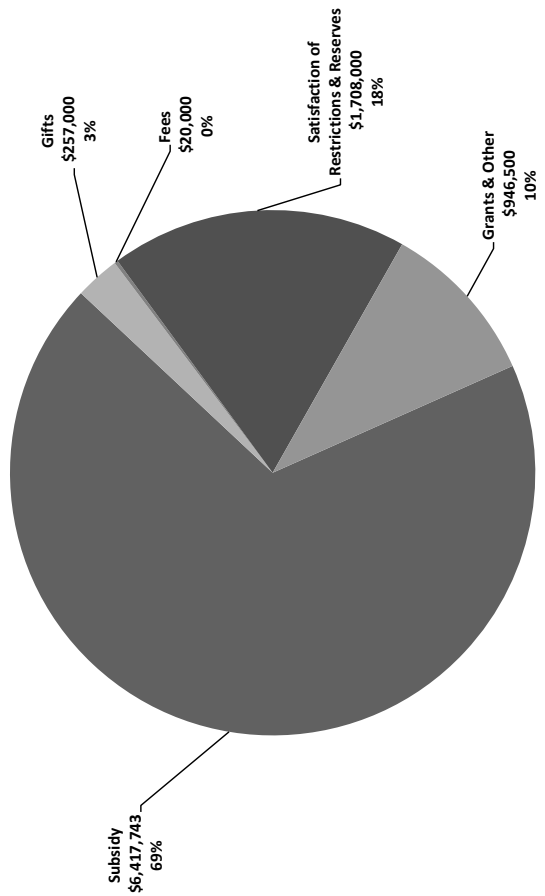
Mr. Melvin Schuler, director of WELS Missions Operations

Total support for World Missions

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$8,849,243

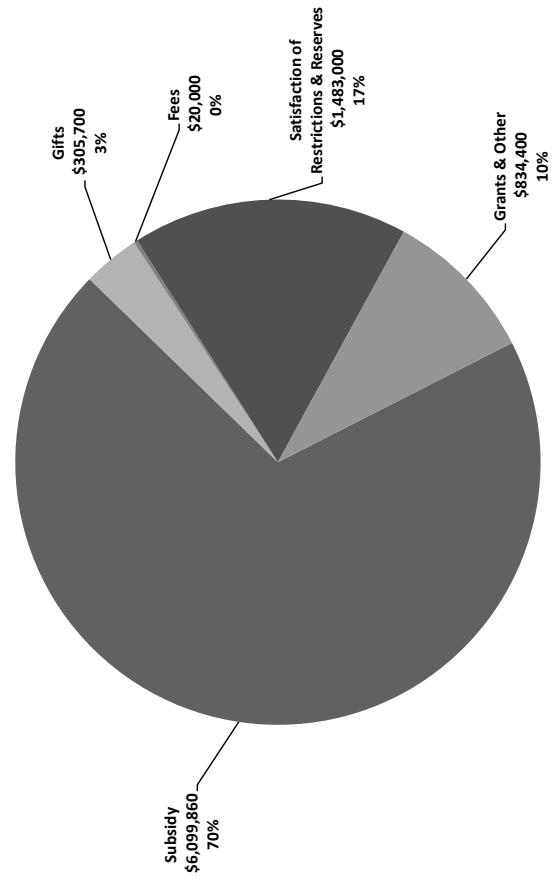


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$9,349,243

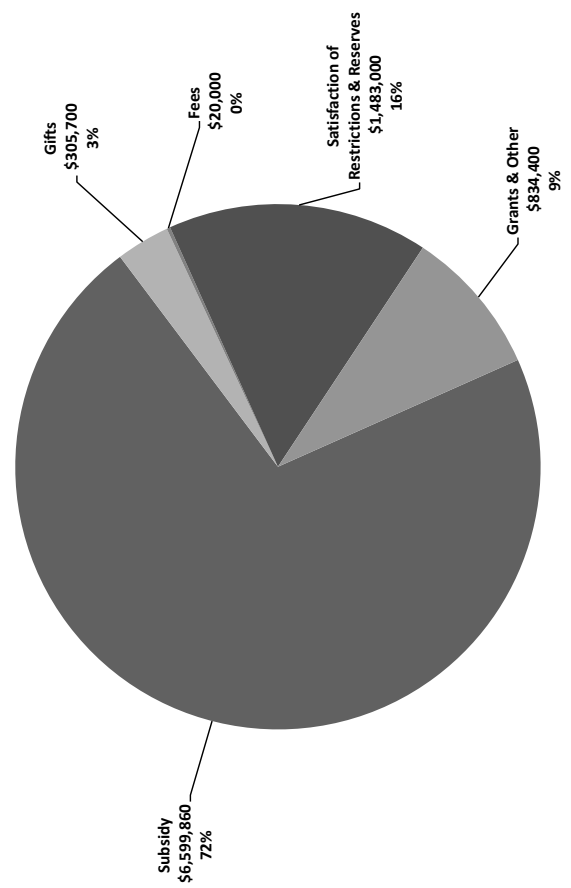


Total support for World Missions

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$8,742,960

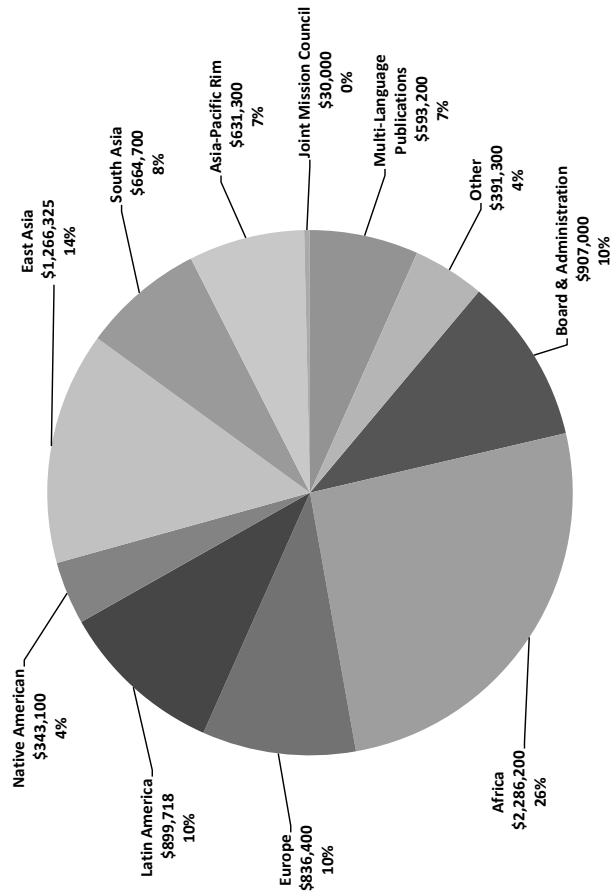


FY 2010-11 Option B
\$9,242,960

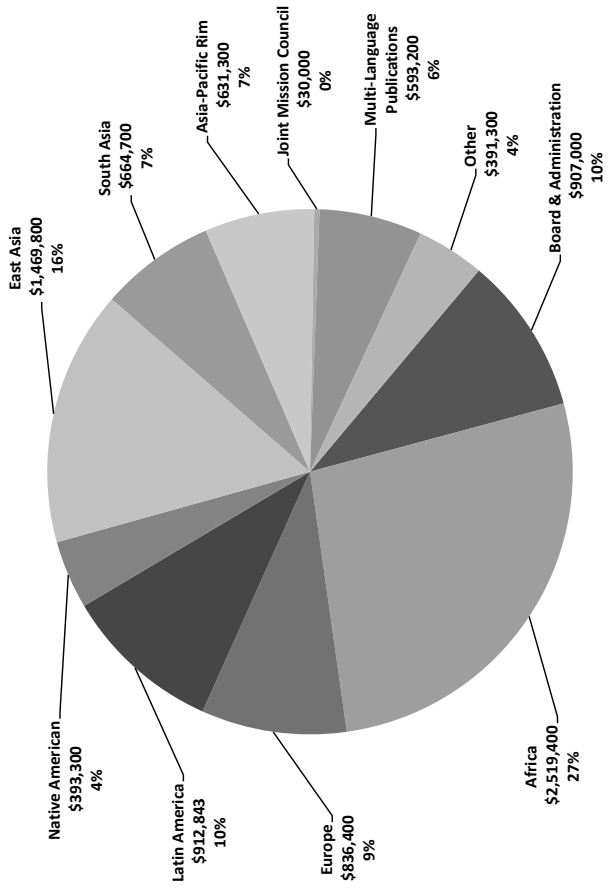


Total expenses for World Missions

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$8,849,243

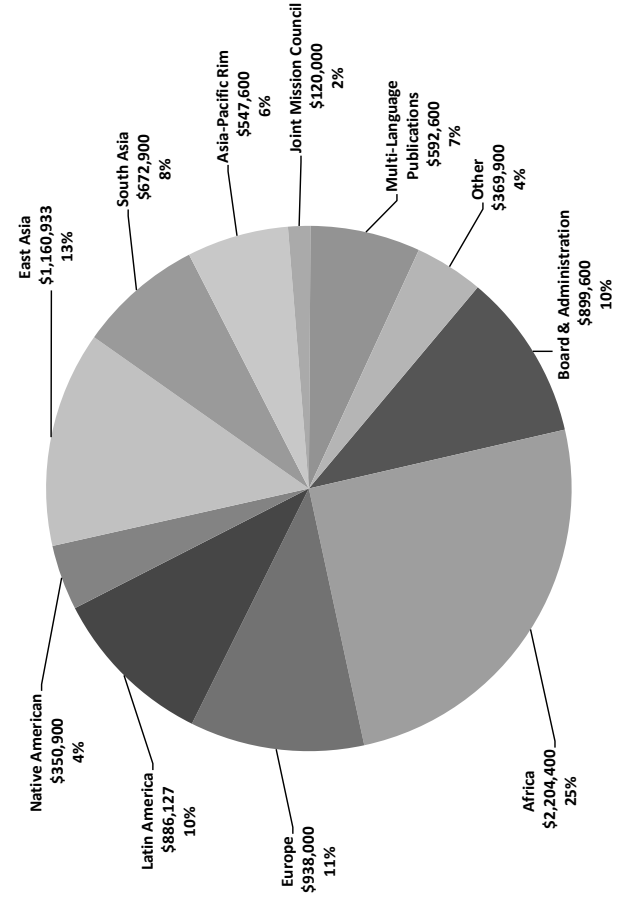


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$9,349,243

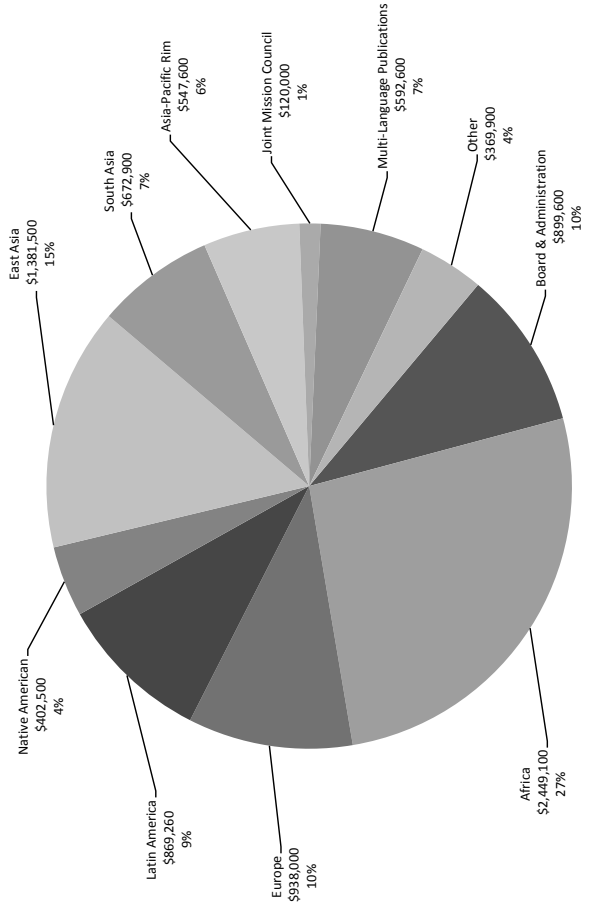


Total expenses for World Missions

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$8,742,960



FY 2010-11 Option B
\$9,242,960



Board for Home Missions

Floor Committee #10

The Board for Home Missions (BHM) consists of a pastor and layman from each of the district mission boards as elected by the districts, together with a chairman elected by the synod in convention. The Campus Ministry Committee also has representatives that participate with the Board for Home Missions. The board seeks to help proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost, straying, and gathered.

During 2007 your mission prayers and offerings helped Home Missions establish 11 new ministry positions. Eight of these were for pastor-trained workers and included helping to place five Hmong pastors, one Latino pastor, and one West Indian pastor into outreach ministries. Help was also provided in establishing eight new congregations.

During 2008 the Lord graciously enabled Home Missions to help place 19 workers into new and expanding gospel outreach ministries. These included 16 pastors of whom two are Hmong, one is West Indian, and one Latino. God also graciously enabled us to help establish six new congregations. Those congregations are in Battlement Mesa, Colo.; Crossville, Tenn.; New Lenox, Ill.; Sparks, Nev.; Northwest Las Vegas, Nev.; and Rochester, Minn.

In keeping with the many opportunities available and being developed, together with the resources potentially available at the time, Home Missions adopted the following strategic plan at its September 2008 meeting.

Summary of the Board for Home Mission's Strategic Plan—2009-2011

Our mission

The Board for Home Missions (BHM) accomplishes its mission through the district mission boards (DMB) by partnering with congregations, groups, and individuals to encourage, enhance, establish, develop, and enrich mission opportunities to reach the lost with the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout North America.

Our vision

Our vision is to invest in 20 new mission starts and 75 new enhancements of outreach ministries during the next biennium (2009-2011).

Our approaches (more specifics are available in longer document, "Home Missions Ministry Categories")

1. Mission encouragement—advisory assistance to congregations to refocus their outreach ministry, investigate new outreach efforts, or analyze new locations (does not include financial assistance)
2. Mission enhancement—financial assistance to congregations for the enhanced outreach plans they have developed to reach new people (limited financial assistance for up to five years)
3. Mission establishment—funding to establish a new mission congregation in a new location after exploratory work is completed and request form is approved (two to three years)
4. Mission development—financial commitment to help a mission that has completed the Establishment Phase and is ready to move toward a goal of financial self-support within five to seven years
5. Mission enrichment—distribution of special grants made available for special outreach ministries that are over and above the local operating budget

Our goals for 2009-2011 (more specifics are available in longer document, "BHM Strategic Plan—2009-11")

With God's help and direction we intend to

1. equip and enlist all district mission boards to take ownership of the vision, promote it frequently, and aggressively investigate and initiate opportunities;
2. enable the BHM to make appropriate decisions for funding priorities with a balance of immediate opportunities for outreach ministry and strategically targeted efforts for long-range impact of reaching more people in North America;
3. evaluate ways to enhance the support structure in the field and in the office to carry out the ministry vision more effectively;
4. enhance communication and support resources among those working within the Board for Home Missions;

5. encourage more people for mission outreach by communicating more stories of blessings and opportunities;
6. research cultural trends and approaches in order to provide proactive assistance and strategies to reach the lost with the gospel in today's world;
7. partner with other leaders and areas of ministry to communicate the urgency for outreach and to develop helpful tools and resources; and
8. mentor new personnel in mission settings.

The district mission boards and Campus Ministry Committee have primary responsibility for helping to implement this plan. To assist them in seeking to serve the many opportunities available, Home Missions has four mission counselors and two cross-cultural consultants that aid Asian ministry (especially Hmong) and Spanish language efforts.

The purpose of the mission counselor program is to provide, under God, proactive assistance to the district mission boards in encouraging mission groups and missionaries, as well as partnering with established congregations, to reach more of the lost with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. To accomplish this purpose, mission counselors make use of all available resources such as the cross-cultural consultants; the district commissions on Evangelism, Adult Discipleship, and Youth Discipleship; the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society; and WELS Kingdom Workers.

Mission counselors help the district mission boards counsel and train new missionaries and mission groups, helping them use human and financial resources for mission outreach and getting them off to the best possible start toward becoming a fully functioning and mission-minded congregation. Mission counselors also work with established congregations to develop a mission mindset, enhance outreach programs, and assist in new mission opportunities.

The mission counselors assist the district mission boards and the Board for Home Missions in developing "big picture" strategies that impact reaching more of the lost through the gospel of Jesus Christ by

- communicating to Home Missions current cultural trends and approaches to community outreach;
- presenting to Home Missions the "voices from the field" (what is happening on the streets in our missions);
- providing inspiration and motivation to Home Missions for what God is accomplishing through our missions, citing specific examples from the field;
- developing materials; and
- providing training and instruction, utilizing available local and synodical resources.

Impact of budget cutbacks

No expansion

Because existing ministries are places in which we are convinced we want to work and because the process of support has been evaluated and managed, the first reductions from our budget were the 20 efforts to establish new congregations plus 75 new ministry enhancements planned for in the 2009-11 biennium. The present financial realities mean that Home Missions has no funding available for new outreach opportunities in 2009. In addition, the expansion of the mission counselor program that was encouraged by the 2007 synod convention was placed on hold.

Defunding of current ministry

Under the budget proposal being presented to the convention as "Option A," 38 presently funded ministries will be defunded—about 42 percent of all ministries funded by Home Missions. This means 21 workers (18 pastors and 3 staff ministers) will not be able to be funded locally. Although many efforts are being made to maintain these ministries, including the consideration of tent or bi-vocational ministry, it is likely that these workers will not be able to remain at their present calls. While only God knows, potentially 13 of the impacted fields could be lost. It is noted by our observations, as well as by others that have studied such matters, that we will not be able to reenter these fields for an extended period of time, if ever.

Additional funding provided to Home Missions under the "Option B" budget proposal would reduce the number of ministries that would need to be defunded from 38 to 27. The 11 ministries preserved include seven pastor positions that otherwise will potentially be vacated because of not being able to be funded locally. Six of the eleven are potentially fields that could be lost.

The fields facing defunding at the above levels run the entire gamut of ministries ranging from efforts to establish new congregations, to congregations needing just a bit more assistance, to cross-cultural outreach reflecting the ethnic makeup of North America, to those needing longer term help in locations determined to be strategic, to those with a military chaplaincy connection, to those that were selected for enhanced gospel outreach efforts because of blessings received and an aggressive gospel outreach ministry plan.

The Lord God has graciously blessed the flexibility and adaptability of Home Missions to help place 30 ministers of the gospel in 2007 and 2008. This includes 24 pastor-trained positions. Nine of these are men of various ethnic backgrounds. During these same years Home Missions has been able to help with the efforts to establish 14 new congregations. Some of these efforts and personnel will be defunded at the proposed funding levels.

The nature of the ministries may be different, but what they all have in common is that they are touching souls for eternity. It's impossible to quantify just how many of those souls will no longer be served with the gospel once these ministries are defunded. But because the Lord did not condition his love or our calling dependent on funds available, Home Missions will continue to look for opportunities and ways to help gather many and establish new congregations and new ministries for gospel outreach.

Rev. Harold Hagedorn, reporter

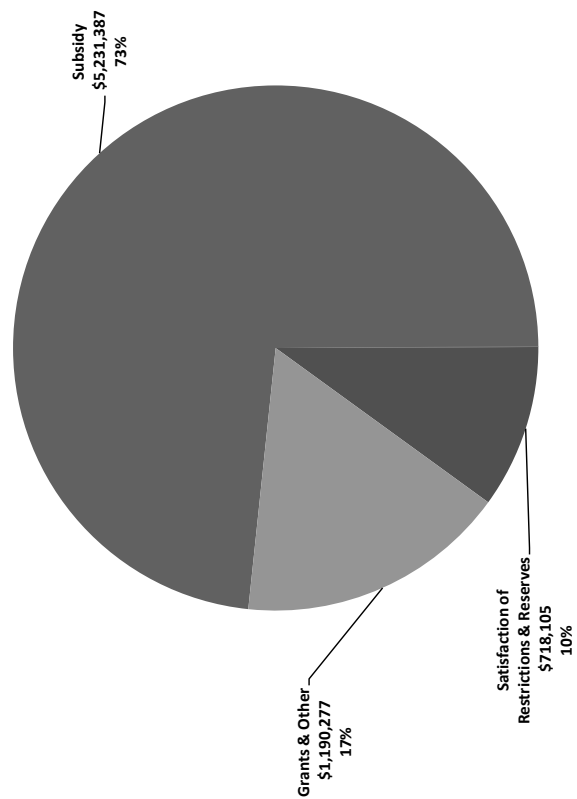
Rev. Charles Westra, chairman
Mr. Daniel Heins, recording secretary
Mr. John Beeskow, Michigan Mission District
Dr. Keith Eldred, Colorado Mission District
Rev. John Dorn, Northern Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. Robert Elhard, Pacific Northwest Mission District
Rev. Keith Free, Western Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Timothy Gauger, Michigan Mission District
Rev. Jeremy Glowicki, Minnesota Mission District
Mr. Thomas Hansen, Dakota-Montana Mission District
Rev. Jonathan Hein, South Atlantic Mission District
Mr. John Isleb, Southeastern Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. Steven Kalscheuer, Western Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. Paul Kuske, North Atlantic Mission District
Dr. Martin Mahoney, Minnesota Mission District
Mr. Paul Mattek, South Central Mission District
Mr. Jeff McKee, Nebraska Mission District
Mr. Philip Potratz, Northern Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Jonathan Rockhoff, Nebraska Mission District
Rev. Lloyd Schlomer, Dakota-Montana Mission District
Rev. Caleb Schoeneck, South Central Mission District
Mr. Donald Schuppe, South Atlantic Mission District
Mr. Paul Schwan, Arizona-California Mission District
Rev. Douglas Semenske, Southeastern Wisconsin Mission District
Mr. John Tappe, Western Wisconsin Mission District
Rev. Wayne Uhlhorn, Colorado Mission District
Rev. Craig Wasser, Pacific Northwest Mission District
Rev. Daniel Wagenknecht, Arizona-California Mission District
Rev. Timothy Wempner, North Atlantic Mission District

Advisory:

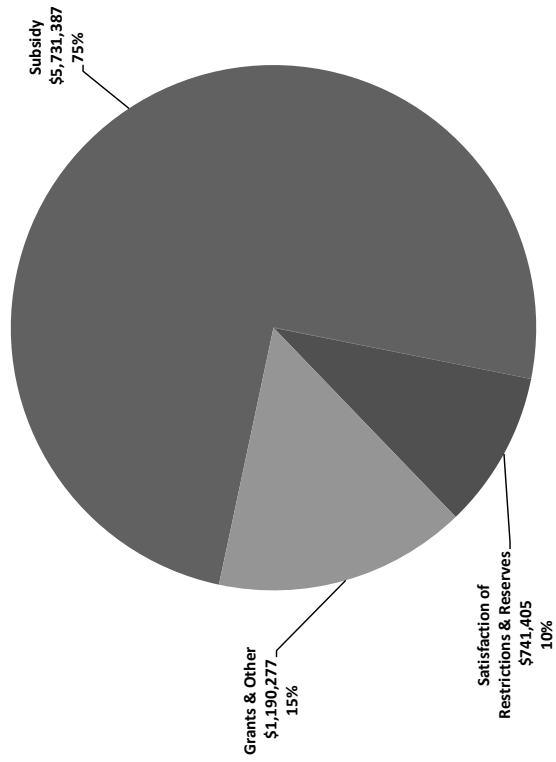
Rev. Harold Hagedorn, administrator
Rev. Mark Schroeder, president
Mr. Melvin Schuler, director of WELS Missions Operations

Total support for Home Missions

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$7,139,769

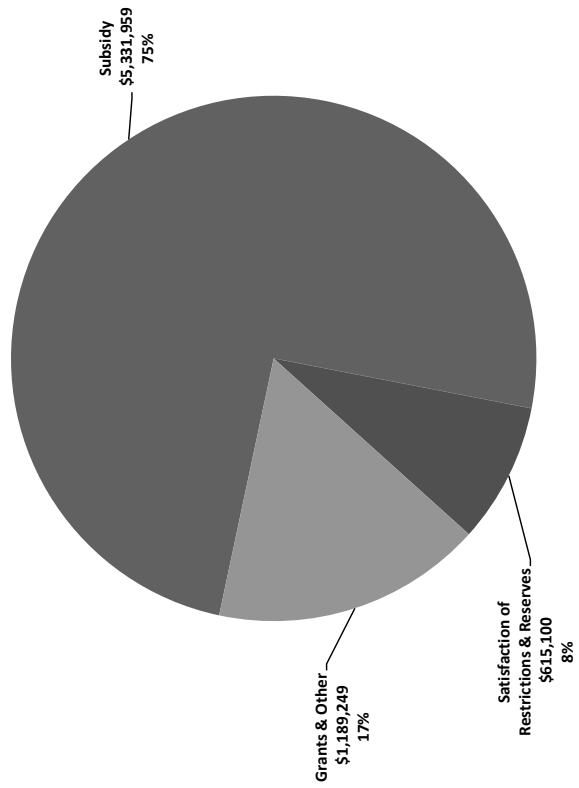


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$7,663,069

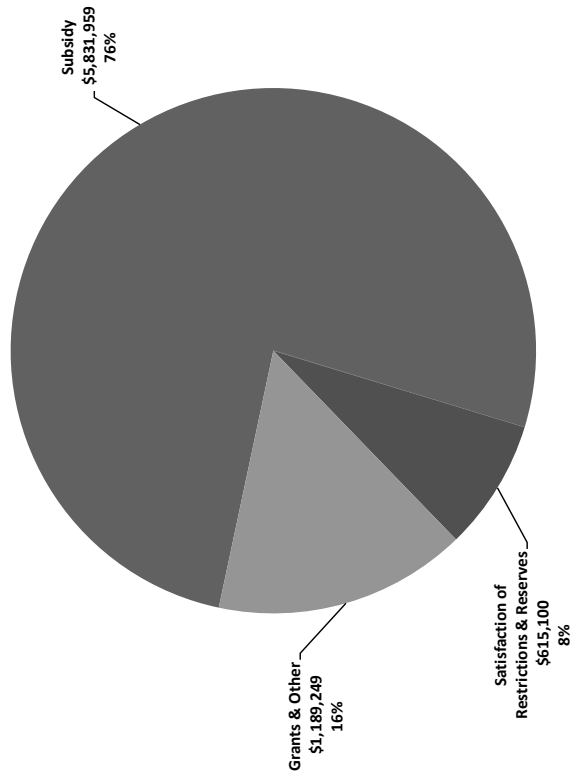


Total support for Home Missions

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$7,136,308

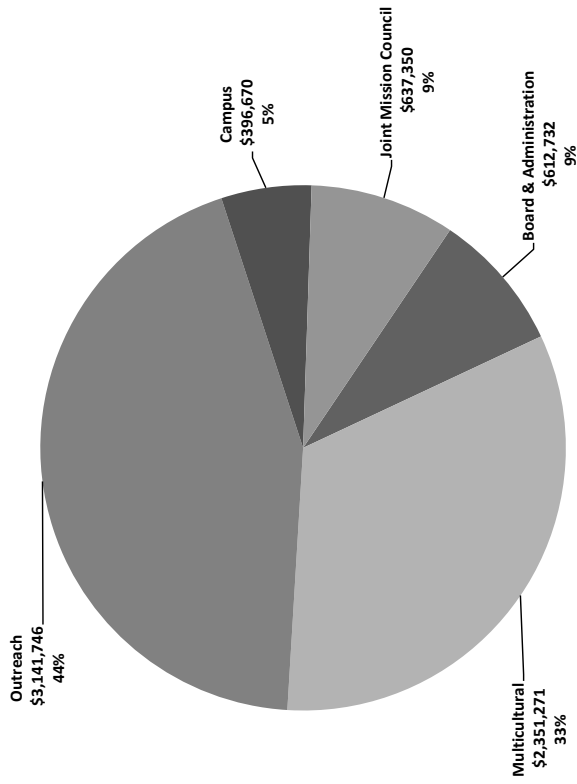


FY 2010-11 Option B
\$7,636,308

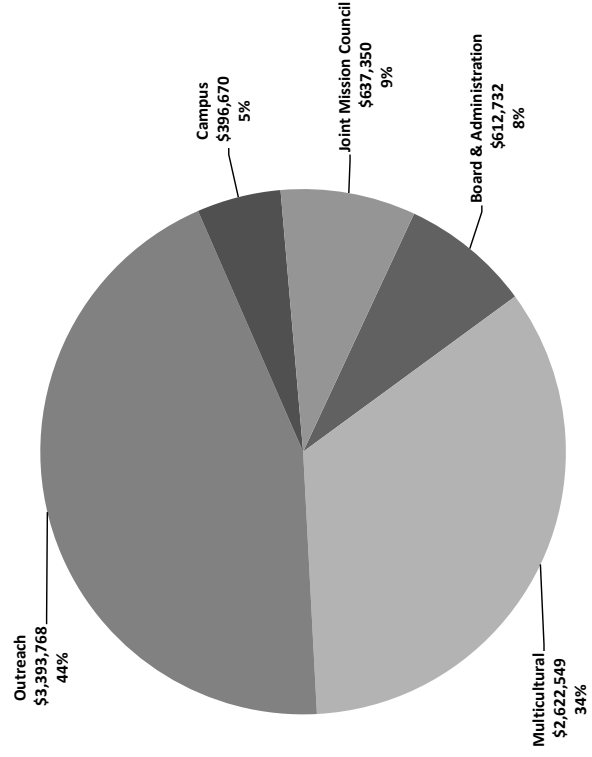


Total expenses for Home Missions

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$7,139,769

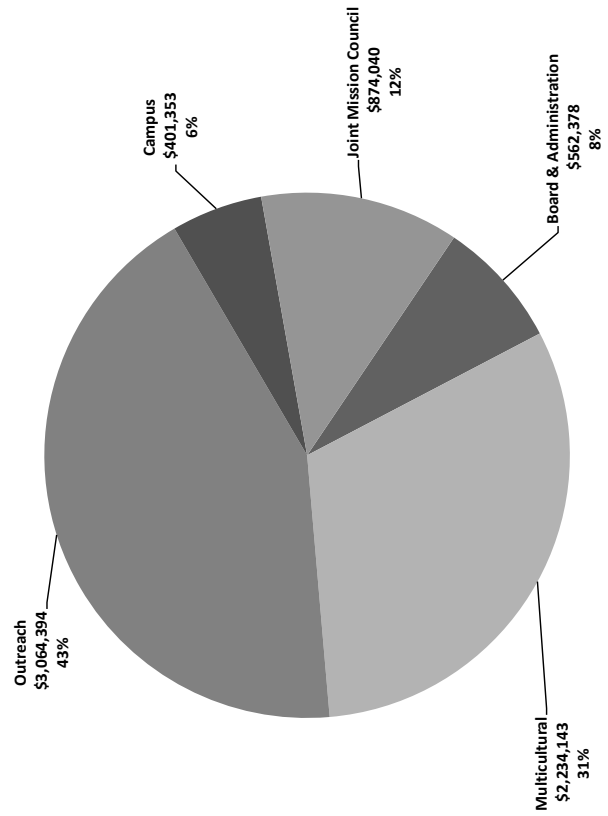


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$7,663,069

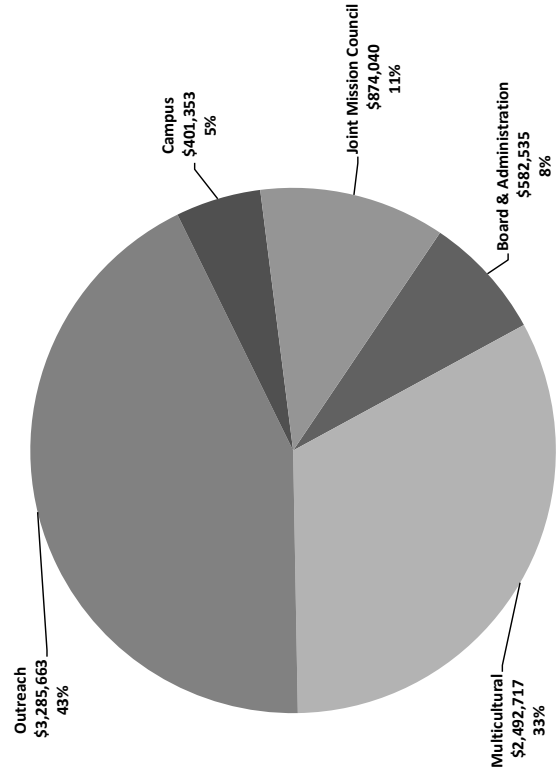


Total expenses for Home Missions

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$7,136,308



FY 2010-11 Option B
\$7,636,308



Joint Mission Council

Floor Committees #9 & #10

Our calling

The Joint Mission Council oversees the mission opportunities that are the operational responsibilities of both the Board for World Missions and Board for Home Missions. The members of the council are the elected chairmen of both boards, the administrators of both boards, the director of Missions Operations, and a board member from both boards. 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 multicultural ministries to enhance the reaching of more lost souls both in North America and the homeland of those being served and serving, and
- continue to work on developing a structure that will best facilitate the mission outreach of these areas of ministry.

Current activities

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

- **Hmong and Lao ministries**—Through the support of Home Missions, first generation ethnic Hmong and Lao men have been trained through the Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI) and have entered WELS ministry. Currently two graduates are serving in Thailand and five in various areas of the United States. Three men are scheduled to graduate in May 2009. Another 18 men are studying through the Pastoral Studies Institute program. The Joint Mission Council is looking at ways that these men can best serve our synod and bring the gospel to more Hmong and Lao families. These men are serving nine congregations in the United States and more than five congregations in Thailand. The soul count of Hmong and Lao families has reached more than 1,000. Visit www.hmongministry.net for more information.
- **Cristo Palabra de Vida**—In May 2007 the Hispanic/Latino Outreach & Training program through the Pastoral Studies Institute had its first graduate. This pastor is now serving the Hispanic community on the south side of Milwaukee. In May 2008 two additional men graduated. One is serving in Florida, and the other is serving with the Multi-Language Publications group in El Paso, Tex. This man is also serving as the lead person for our outreach to the Spanish-speaking people throughout the world with services and Bible studies via the Internet. Two other Spanish-speaking men are currently studying for ministry through the Pastoral Studies Institute with expectations that they will graduate in May 2010. The Cristo Palabra de Vida National Council provided a training seminar for representatives of each district mission board. This training allowed each district to have someone available to encourage and assist congregations in cross-cultural outreach. Visit www.cristopalabra.com for more information.
- **Muslim outreach**—The requests for presentations on Islam by a former Muslim continue to grow. Besides the presentations, information for outreach to Muslims is available at www.wels.net/jump/muslim. The Web site also enables congregations to schedule presentations on Islam, but those requesting are asked to plan for at least one year in advance. A DVD featuring a Bible study has been developed and will be available in June 2009. Currently one former Muslim is studying through the Pastoral Studies Institute.
- **Sudanese outreach**—The Lord has opened an opportunity in Des Moines, Iowa, to reach Sudanese refugees with the gospel. Members and the pastor of this group will be joined by a member of the Board for World Missions to travel to Africa to investigate mission opportunities in the homeland.

Future activities

The Joint Mission Council is currently working with the various committees or groups to enhance their respective ministries. The plans for the near future are:

- **Hmong and Lao ministries**—The Lord has placed many opportunities in front of us for expansion of Hmong and Lao ministries both in the United States and in Thailand. Plans are being developed to better utilize our trained workers to serve the souls that the Lord has gathered through us and to reach more of the lost. Several of the Hmong

ministries will be served by pastors in a “tent” ministry. Plans have also been developed to bring all ministries in Thailand under a single program.

- **Cristo Palabra de Vida**—The Lord has helped us to see many new opportunities. The national council wants to actively encourage more congregations to see these opportunities in their neighborhoods and open their church doors to these people. Home Missions’ Hispanic consultant will be assisting the national council.
- **Muslim outreach**—The goal is to train more men and women of Muslim background, culture, and religion so that they may be presenters to our congregations and help the members reach out to this culture with the gospel message. The Bible studies on the new DVD “Speaking the Truth in Love to Muslims” are available to congregations to assist them in their outreach to Muslim communities.
- **Sudanese outreach**—An exploratory trip to investigate the future potential for this ministry in Africa took place in May 2009. We will keep our eyes open to see where the Lord will lead us.

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 financial resources to meet these opportunities.

Mr. Melvin Schuler, reporter

Dr. Robert Anderson, member of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Harold Hagedorn, administrator of WELS Board for Home Missions
Rev. Daniel Koelpin, administrator of WELS Board for World Missions
Rev. Philip Koelpin, chairman of WELS Board for World Missions
Mr. Philip Potratz, member of WELS Board for Home Missions
Mr. Melvin Schuler, director of WELS Missions Operations
Rev. Charles Westra, chairman of WELS Board for Home Missions

Board for Ministerial Education

Floor Committee #11

Our calling

Jesus said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:37,38).

“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 Board for Ministerial Education (BME) establishes overall policy and supervises the educational programs of the ministerial education schools of our synod.

Four schools operate under our auspices:

- Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS), Saginaw, Mich., and Luther Preparatory School (LPS), Watertown, Wis., are boarding high schools that prepare young men and women for entry into our college of ministry or for continued training in their own country’s ministerial education system.
- Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn., is our WELS college of ministry. The college has tracks for those desiring to serve as parish pastors, staff ministers, elementary or high school teachers, or early childhood educators. It also offers a master’s degree program in education.
- Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS), Mequon, Wis., serves as the post-graduate professional school for the pastoral ministry.

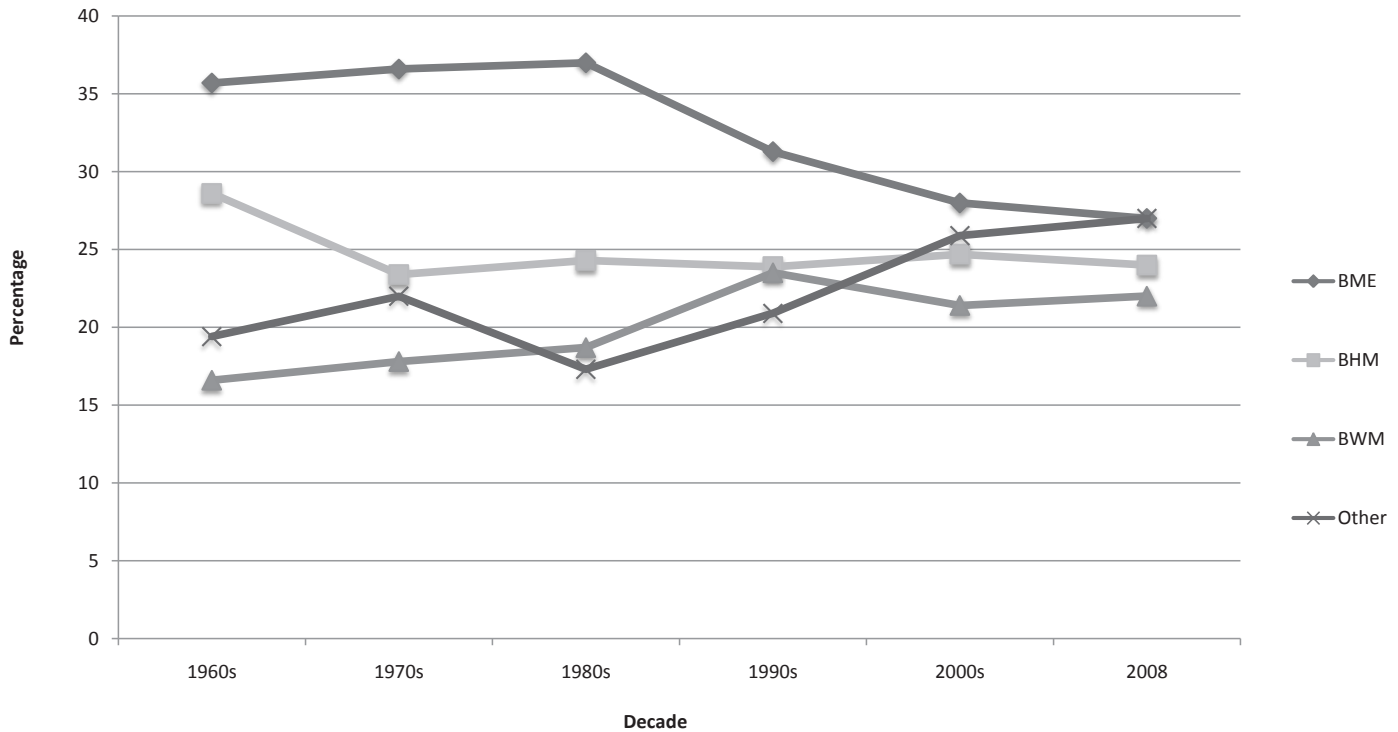
For more information about those four schools, see their individual reports on pp. 104-116.

In addition, Ministerial Education partners with 24 WELS area Lutheran high schools to encourage and recruit students for training for the public ministry at Martin Luther College.

Our current situation

The percentage of the synod budget allocated to ministerial education was usually 38 to 39 percent since we split from the Missouri Synod in 1961 all the way to 1986. From 1986 to 1990 it dropped to an average of 31 to 32 percent. In the last decade it has gone down to around 27 percent. The schools have reacted to the most recent funding cuts by raising tuition and fees and depleting their reserves. The reserves are all gone, except at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, which predicts that its reserves will be depleted by the end of the next biennium.

Synod budget allocations



Data compiled by the Board for Ministerial Education

The argument is made that because the synod is reducing its ministry as a result of budget cuts, there will be need for fewer called workers; as the overall budget is reduced by about 20 percent, so are the number of ministry positions. But that doesn't mean we can afford to produce fewer pastors—those numbers are already declining. In correlation with the large tuition increases in 2003, classes in the pastor track have decreased from the 40s to the 30s.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Seniors (projected)	39	43	40	27	31	15	27

The number of teacher track graduates in each graduating class at Martin Luther College who can be placed anywhere has gone from around 110 to around 80. We rely on the present right-sized system of four ministerial education schools, partnering with 24 area Lutheran high schools, to maintain even those reduced numbers.

A look ahead

In the budget discussion for the next biennium, the BME strongly and unanimously prefers Option A.

Option A

- Reduces faculty and staff at the schools (52.9 positions) but maintains the integrity of the ministerial education system of WELS
- Allows some capital maintenance
- Reduces financial assistance money from the budget

Option B

- Reduces faculty and staff at the schools (89.9 positions)
- Makes Michigan Lutheran Seminary unviable, and in our opinion, irreparably harms WELS' ministerial education system; completely depletes capital maintenance funds
- Depletes financial assistance money from the budget

Some detail:

Ministerial Education Office (-1 staff)

The single support staff person for the administrator will be retiring during the first year of the biennium and will not

be replaced. The loss has the potential of diverting the administrator from broader responsibilities in order to devote more time to day-to-day operational matters.

The board has budgeted for only one face-to-face meeting during the year.

In Option A, the only student financial assistance monies available from the budget are the equalization amounts for travel and for students from Wisconsin studying in the pastor track at Martin Luther College. Even those monies are at risk in Option B. The Board for Ministerial Education continues its concern with the debt load faced by graduates.

\$200,000 is set aside for programmed maintenance emergencies in Option A. Nothing else is available. Even those monies are at risk in Option B.

Although the ministerial education schools are separately incorporated as far as their operations are concerned, their properties belong to the synod. Who is responsible for the long-term capital plan for the buildings? If it is the local schools, their mission advancement departments should be working on capital campaigns and development of funds for capital improvement. If it is the Board for Ministerial Education, it should be working with the Ministry of Christian Giving to develop the Ministerial Education Endowment funds for that purpose. If it is the Synodical Council, a certain percentage of the budget should be set aside for that purpose. Under our new administrator, Rev. Paul Prange, the board will take up this discussion in the fall, and the synod in convention may want to give some direction.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (-2.90 staff)

The seminary is the only school maintaining its current faculty strength for the next biennium. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is serving the same number of students since 2000 with the same number of professors. But they have also absorbed the Pastoral Studies Institute and the World Mission Seminary Professor into their duties.

In Options A and B, the seminary has eliminated staff positions, leaving it with a skeleton crew. It has transferred some operating expenses to restricted funds, retaining student help, a library staffer, and .5 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) secretarial help.

In both budget options, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is concerned that its reserves will be depleted.

Martin Luther College (-25 faculty and staff)

Martin Luther College (MLC) has not filled 9.5 authorized positions during the past biennium. In Options A and B, MLC will reduce faculty and staff by an additional 10 to 15.5 total FTE. As of this writing, the allocation between faculty and staff has not been determined. Faculty reductions will come as a result of retirements, positions going half time, and probable elimination of positions in all areas. Faculty will have to teach more credit hours per year, when the opposite has been suggested by recent accreditation visitors.

Staff reductions will be accomplished in a few cases by retirements; they will mostly come by elimination of positions. MLC is already staffed at a level lower than its peer institutions.

Putting either prep school at risk potentially puts Martin Luther College at risk. Since the closure of prep schools in South Dakota and Minnesota, MLC and the Board for Ministerial Education have kept track of the impact on recruitment in the geographic area served by those schools. In both cases, the impact was significant, based on data comparing the percentages of students from each senior class who went on to MLC from a prep school versus an area Lutheran high school opened later in the same area. Based on those statistics, if Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS) were to close and an area Lutheran high school opened in its place, the number of area students attending MLC would drop from the current 100 to no more than 15 to 20. If there were no Lutheran high school in Saginaw at all, that number would be as low as four—and there is no plan to replace MLS with an area Lutheran high school.

In school year 2009-10, the amount of tuition, fees, room, and board paid by MLS grads at MLC is projected to be \$1,489,000. That support to MLC in future years would be put at risk if MLS were to close. The subsidy budgeted for MLS is \$1,454,100.

The Board for Ministerial Education will update numbers and charts from the last two Prep School Study Committee reports and supply them to synod convention delegates.

Luther Preparatory School (-6 or 7 faculty, -5 staff)

In Options A and B, Luther Preparatory School will reduce faculty and staff by 11 total FTE. Faculty reductions will come as a result of retirements, positions going half time, and elimination of positions. Faculty will no longer teach 20 to 30 hours per week; instead they will teach 25 to 35 hours per week.

Staff reductions will mostly be by elimination of positions. A new volunteer program may be able to take up a few of the duties, but the quality of general overall maintenance will certainly be lower.

Michigan Lutheran Seminary (-8 faculty, -6 staff)

In Option A, Michigan Lutheran Seminary will reduce faculty and staff by 14 total FTE. Faculty reductions will come by elimination of positions, since no faculty member is of retirement age. Faculty will no longer teach 20 to 30 hours per week; instead they will teach 25 to 35 hours per week. All mission advancement activity will be taken over by the MLS Foundation. In Option B, the school is not viable, and all positions will be eliminated.

An extensive volunteer program has already allowed a smaller staff at MLS. Further reductions will lower the quality of general overall maintenance and of dining hall services.

In conclusion

With all of the challenges we face, it is very important to acknowledge the blessing of our gracious God, who continues to provide us with people who are willing to prepare for the ministry of the gospel. Through the power of the gospel, these men and women

- have a zeal to proclaim the gospel and a passion for the lost,
- are well-versed in and committed to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions in their entirety,
- are intent on being lifelong developers of their God-given gifts,
- have a basic understanding of the changing world in which they live,
- are qualified to communicate the gospel in Word and sacrament to the world,
- are qualified and committed to equip God's people for works of service, and
- are able to manage day-to-day affairs of basic existence in the modern world.

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Ephesians 4:11,12).

To him be the glory now and forever!

Rev. Paul Prange, reporter

Rev. Donald Sutton, chairman

Rev. Richard Kogler, vice chairman

Mr. David Bastyr

Rev. Kenneth Brokmeier

Rev. George Ferch

Mr. William Finn

Teacher Richard Gibson

Mr. Hogey Holtz

Teacher Stephan Rodmyre

Rev. Ralph Scharf

Mr. William Schmidt

Rev. Thomas Westra

Teacher Jon Woldt

Advisory:

Teacher James Brandt, administrator of WELS Commission on Parish Schools

President Matthew Crass, Luther Preparatory School

President Dan Johnson, Wisconsin Lutheran College

Mr. Todd Poppe, chief financial officer

Rev. Paul Prange, administrator

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president

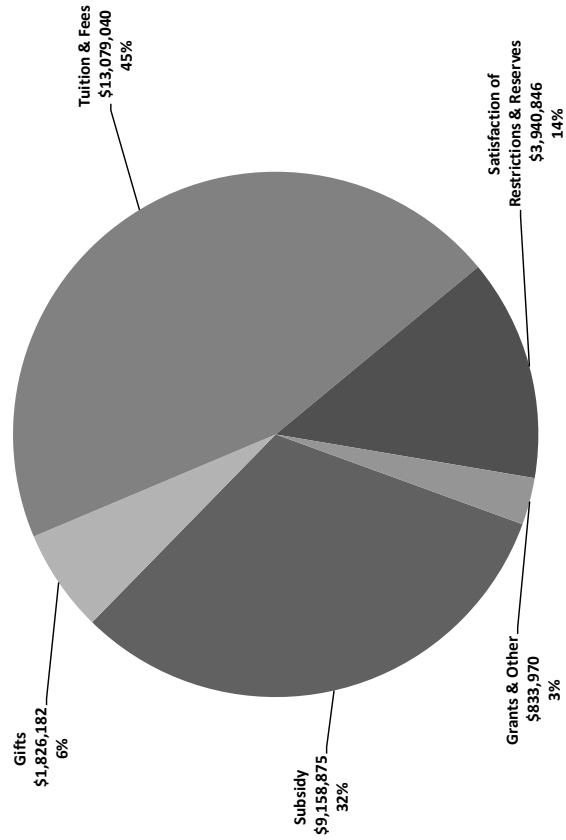
President Paul Wendland, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

President Mark Zarling, Martin Luther College

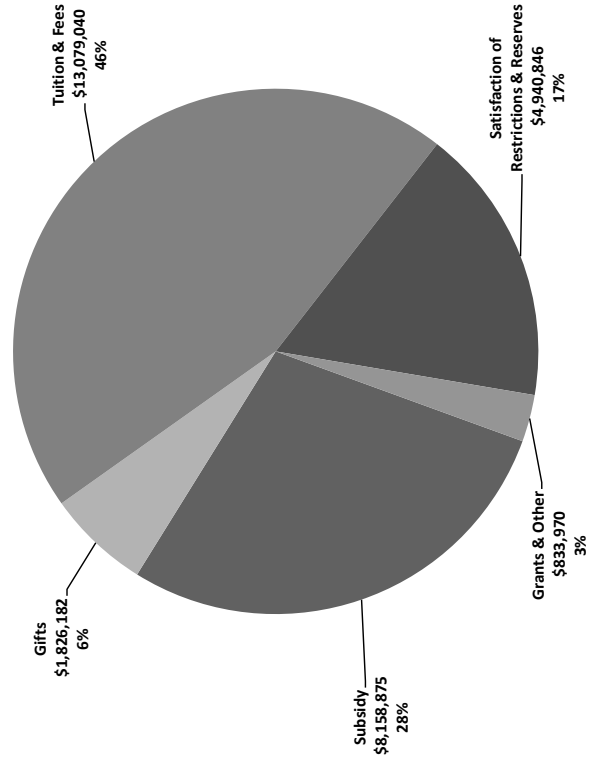
Prof. William Zeiger, interim president of Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Total support for Ministerial Education

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$28,838,913

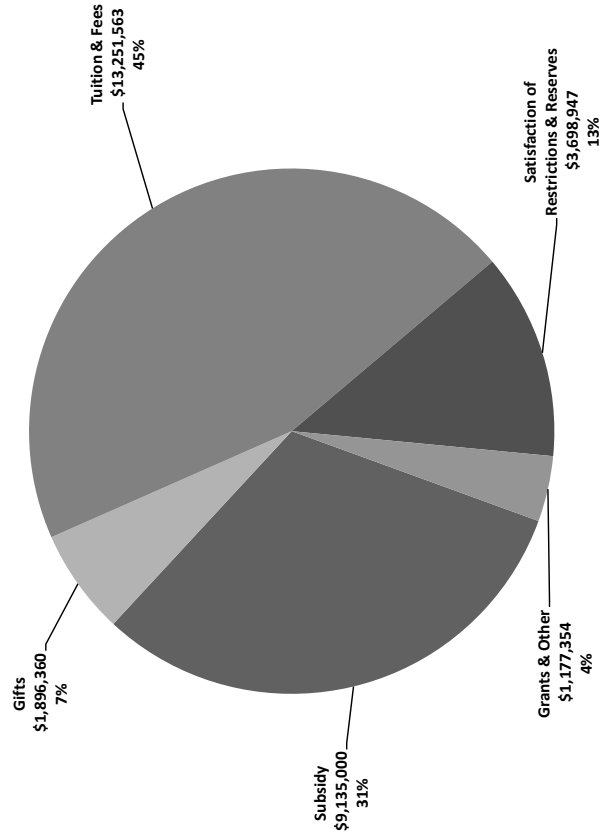


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$28,838,913

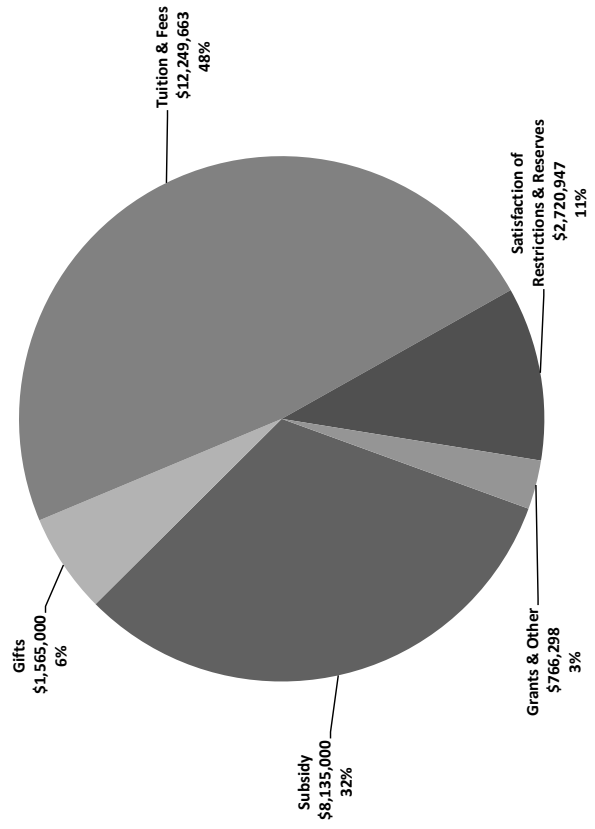


Total support for Ministerial Education

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$29,159,224

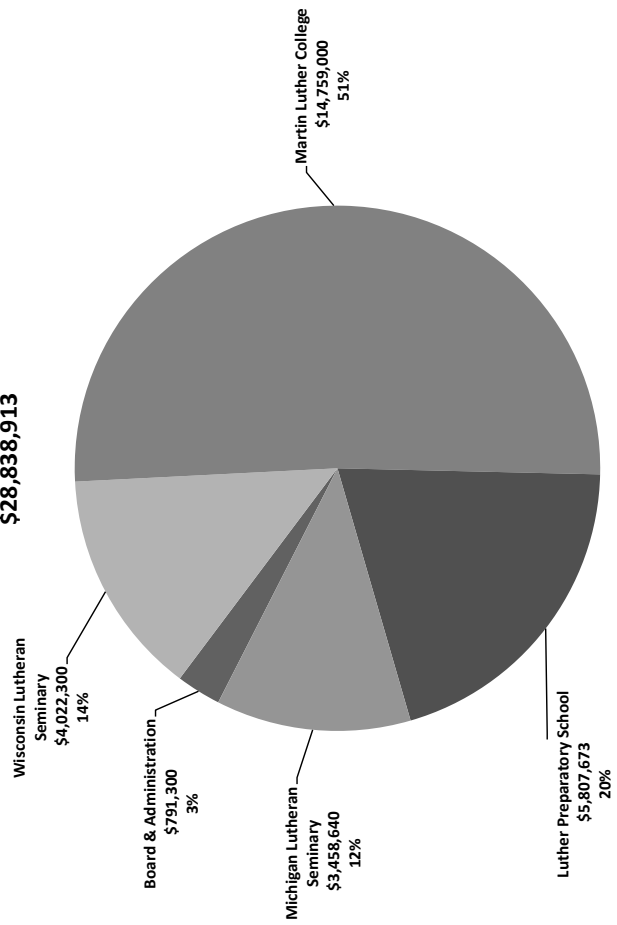


FY 2010-11 Option B
\$25,436,908

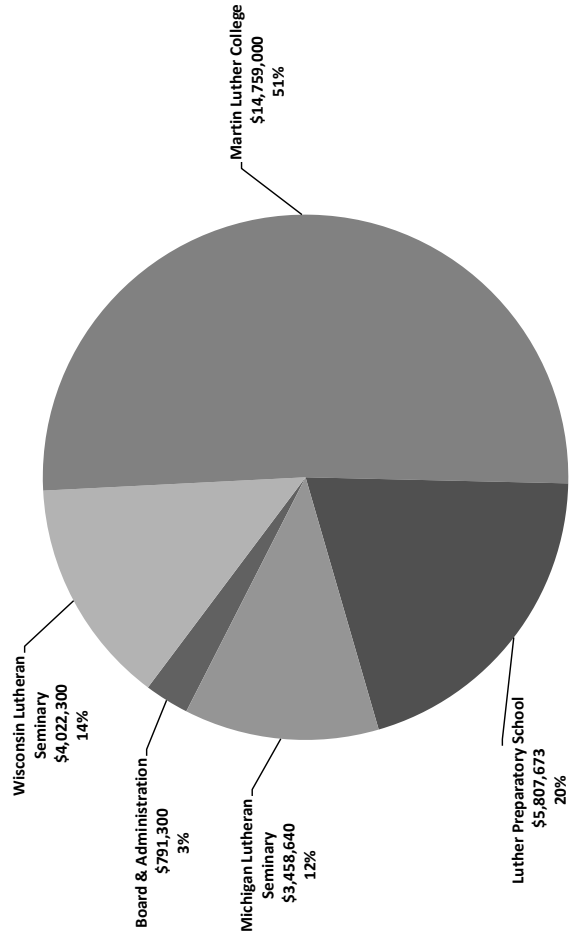


Total expenses for Ministerial Education

FY 2009-10 Option A
\$28,838,913

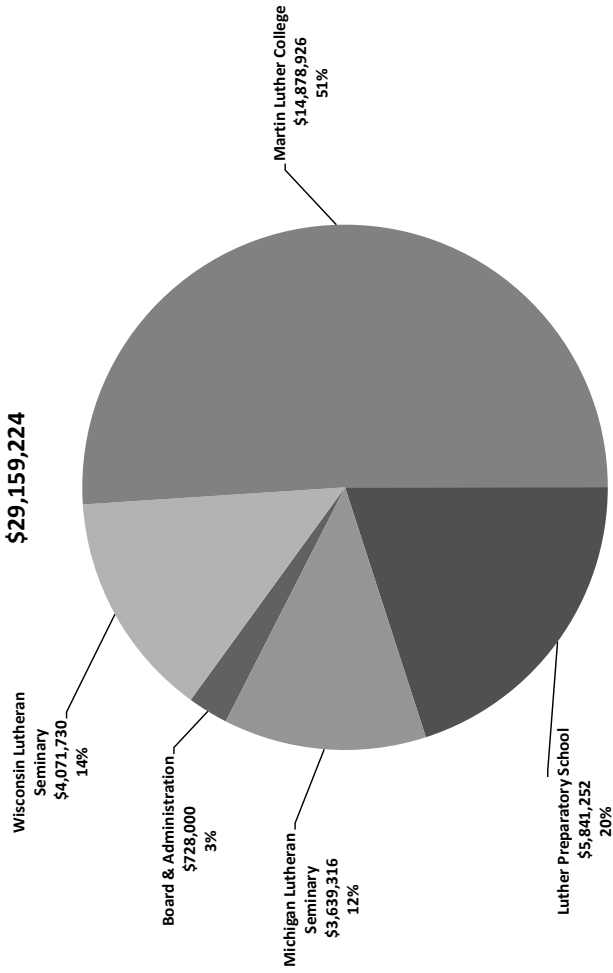


FY 2009-10 Option B
\$28,838,913

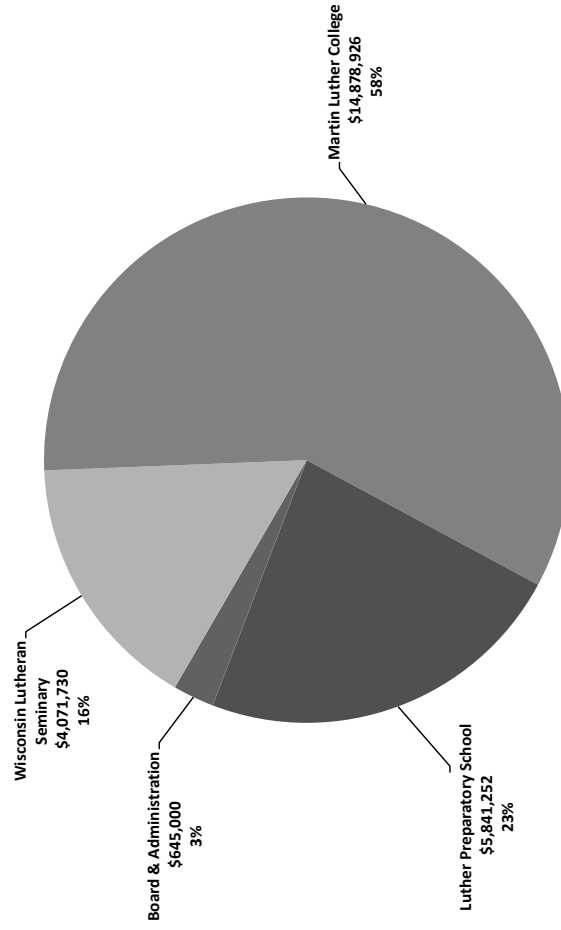


Total expenses for Ministerial Education

FY 2010-11 Option A
\$29,159,224



FY 2010-11 Option B
\$25,436,908



**Ministerial Education - Statement of Activities - Unrestricted
Budget FY 2009-10 Option A**

	Board & Administration	Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary	Martin Luther College	Luther Preparatory School	Michigan Lutheran Seminary	Total
Support						
Subsidy	\$ 360,100	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 3,800,000	\$ 2,544,675	\$ 1,454,100	\$ 9,158,875
Gifts	-	405,000	800,000	315,000	306,182	1,826,182
Tuition & Fees	-	1,028,400	8,832,000	2,330,040	888,600	13,079,040
Satisfaction of Restrictions & Reserves	411,200	1,323,900	1,261,137	544,609	400,000	3,940,846
Grants & Other	20,000	265,000	65,863	73,349	409,758	833,970
Total Support	<u>791,300</u>	<u>4,022,300</u>	<u>14,759,000</u>	<u>5,807,673</u>	<u>3,458,640</u>	<u>28,838,913</u>
Expenses						
Instruction	-	1,155,910	4,318,000	1,493,706	718,954	7,686,570
Instructional Support	-	182,925	1,871,000	43,487	69,636	2,167,048
Enrollment Management	-	19,125	438,000	111,985	139,096	708,206
Student Services	-	758,660	2,611,000	1,475,072	973,695	5,818,427
Facilities	-	1,101,510	3,933,000	2,046,296	1,075,682	8,156,488
Administration	791,300	804,170	1,588,000	637,127	481,577	4,302,174
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 791,300</u>	<u>\$ 4,022,300</u>	<u>\$ 14,759,000</u>	<u>\$ 5,807,673</u>	<u>\$ 3,458,640</u>	<u>\$ 28,838,913</u>

**Ministerial Education - Statement of Activities - Unrestricted
Budget FY 2010-11 Option A**

	Board & Administration	Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary	Martin Luther College	Luther Preparatory School	Michigan Lutheran Seminary	Total
Support						
Subsidy	\$ 215,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 3,750,000	\$ 2,540,000	\$ 1,430,000	\$ 9,135,000
Gifts	-	420,000	800,000	345,000	331,360	1,896,360
Tuition & Fees	-	903,800	8,949,961	2,395,902	1,001,900	13,251,563
Satisfaction of Restrictions & Reserves	513,000	885,130	1,349,143	486,674	465,000	3,698,947
Grants & Other	-	662,800	29,822	73,676	411,056	1,177,354
Total Support	<u>728,000</u>	<u>4,071,730</u>	<u>14,878,926</u>	<u>5,841,252</u>	<u>3,639,316</u>	<u>29,159,224</u>
Expenses						
Instruction	-	1,143,980	4,207,476	1,415,569	770,939	7,537,964
Instructional Support	-	180,055	1,907,697	44,619	42,608	2,174,979
Enrollment Management	-	17,715	451,484	115,113	142,360	726,672
Student Services	-	767,305	2,669,157	1,511,715	1,099,860	6,048,037
Facilities	-	1,124,310	4,109,201	2,105,282	1,073,442	8,412,235
Administration	728,000	838,365	1,533,911	648,954	510,107	4,259,337
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 728,000</u>	<u>\$ 4,071,730</u>	<u>\$ 14,878,926</u>	<u>\$ 5,841,252</u>	<u>\$ 3,639,316</u>	<u>\$ 29,159,224</u>

**Ministerial Education - Statement of Activities - Unrestricted
Budget FY 2009-10 Option B**

	Board & Administration	Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary	Martin Luther College	Luther Preparatory School	Michigan Lutheran Seminary	Total
Support						
Subsidy	\$ 360,100	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 3,800,000	\$ 2,544,675	\$ 454,100	\$ 8,158,875
Gifts	-	405,000	800,000	315,000	306,182	1,826,182
Tuition & Fees	-	1,028,400	8,832,000	2,330,040	888,600	13,079,040
Satisfaction of Restrictions & Reserves	411,200	1,323,900	1,261,137	544,609	400,000	3,940,846
Grants & Other	20,000	265,000	65,863	73,349	1,409,758	1,833,970
Total Support	<u>791,300</u>	<u>4,022,300</u>	<u>14,759,000</u>	<u>5,807,673</u>	<u>3,458,640</u>	<u>28,838,913</u>
Expenses						
Instruction	-	1,155,910	4,318,000	1,493,706	718,954	7,686,570
Instructional Support	-	182,925	1,871,000	43,487	69,636	2,167,048
Enrollment Management	-	19,125	438,000	111,985	139,096	708,206
Student Services	-	758,660	2,611,000	1,475,072	973,695	5,818,427
Facilities	-	1,101,510	3,933,000	2,046,296	1,075,682	8,156,488
Administration	791,300	804,170	1,588,000	637,127	481,577	4,302,174
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 791,300</u>	<u>\$ 4,022,300</u>	<u>\$ 14,759,000</u>	<u>\$ 5,807,673</u>	<u>\$ 3,458,640</u>	<u>\$ 28,838,913</u>

**Ministerial Education - Statement of Activities - Unrestricted
Budget FY 2010-11 Option B**

	Board & Administration	Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary	Martin Luther College	Luther Preparatory School	Michigan Lutheran Seminary	Total
Support						
Subsidy	\$ 645,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 3,750,000	\$ 2,540,000	\$ -	\$ 8,135,000
Gifts	-	420,000	800,000	345,000	-	1,565,000
Tuition & Fees	-	903,800	8,949,961	2,395,902	-	12,249,663
Satisfaction of Restrictions & Reserves	-	885,130	1,349,143	486,674	-	2,720,947
Grants & Other	-	662,800	29,822	73,676	-	766,298
Total Support	<u>645,000</u>	<u>4,071,730</u>	<u>14,878,926</u>	<u>5,841,252</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,436,908</u>
Expenses						
Instruction	-	1,143,980	4,207,476	1,415,569	-	6,767,025
Instructional Support	-	180,055	1,907,697	44,619	-	2,132,371
Enrollment Management	-	17,715	451,484	115,113	-	584,312
Student Services	-	767,305	2,669,157	1,511,715	-	4,948,177
Facilities	-	1,124,310	4,109,201	2,105,282	-	7,338,793
Administration	645,000	838,365	1,533,911	648,954	-	3,666,230
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 645,000</u>	<u>\$ 4,071,730</u>	<u>\$ 14,878,926</u>	<u>\$ 5,841,252</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 25,436,908</u>

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Floor Committee #11

Our calling

The calling of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., is twofold:

1. to offer theological training that prepares men to enter the pastoral ministry of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or of churches within its confessional fellowship; and
2. to offer opportunities for theological and professional growth to called workers who already are serving in the ministry.

Although our basic purpose has remained unchanged, we find ourselves blessed with many opportunities to serve in a variety of settings both at home and abroad. The following report will summarize how we have carried out that calling as well as discuss briefly how we, under God, hope to serve our Lord in the next two years.

Our current situation

Students

Since our central calling is to prepare students for the ministry, it is only right to begin our report with them.

Enrollment

In May the seminary presented 42 graduates for assignment to the public ministry of the church. That number includes the 39 traditional students listed below and three men from the Asian Ministerial Training program. Forty-one students were presented for assignment to a year of vicarship. In the next biennium our average total enrollment will be approximately 143. In the next four years the seminary's enrollment is trending downwards. While this may not cause great difficulty in the short term, it is certainly a matter of concern for the well-being of the church in the long-term. The harvest is still plentiful! We note that high school seniors and eighth-grade elementary students are even now making decisions that will affect how many pastors we will have 8 and 12 years from now.

	Current year	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Seniors	39	43	40	27	31
Middlers	40	31	35	18	30
Juniors	35	39	22	34	37
Special	3	1	1	1	1
Total on campus	117	114	98	80	99
Vicars	44	41	28	32	15
Emergency	1	0	0	0	0
Other (Temp Leave)	2	2	2	2	2
Total off campus	47	43	30	34	17
TOTAL STUDENT BODY	164	157	128	114	116

Student aid

Financial aid from the seminary scholarship funds to our students in the 2008-09 school year totaled around \$345,000. This averages out to around \$3,800 per student of those requesting aid. We note with joy and gratitude the way we have been able to increase the grants from the seminary scholarship fund over the past four years:

2005-06	\$ 221,000
2006-07	\$ 258,179
2007-08	\$ 321,295
2008-09	\$ 344,953

The only reason we can do this is through the generosity of God's people, whose hearts our Savior has opened in such an astounding way. Including matching gifts from Thrivent Financial and other organizations, we received \$260,571 in temporarily restricted gifts for the entire 2007-08 fiscal year and \$248,711 in temporarily restricted gifts for the first nine months of the 2008-09 fiscal year. In addition, many of our students receive generous grants from the Seibert Foundation, the Salem Foundation, the Kropp Scholarship Fund, the Brooks Foundation, and many individuals and congregations. Average total assistance from all sources was \$5,900 per student.

The average debt of those of our students carrying debt stands at around \$16,000. Most of this was acquired in the form of student loans taken out while they were undergraduates. The seminary makes every effort to ensure that students do not fall more deeply into debt while they are with us, and in many cases, students are able to reduce their debt load. More than simply offering monetary assistance to students, the seminary strives to counsel students and foster among them good stewardship of God's money.

Student insurance grants

Seniors at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary are the students who are most at risk of going without insurance coverage. There are a number of reasons for this, not the least of which is the fact that many are dropped from coverage under their parents' plan. In a program designed to encourage the uninsured among the seniors to obtain at least some catastrophic coverage for themselves, the seminary made special grants available to them from student assistance money to purchase a policy. It is hoped that we can continue this practice in the future.

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. Over the past two years,

- 28 students accompanied Prof. Sorum to North Carolina and Florida for outreach trips;
- Professor Schuetze led a total of 11 on two separate study tours to Mexico; and
- Profs. Daniel Leyrer and Forrest Bivens led a group of 31 seminary students, five WELS pastors, and four others on a study tour of the Holy Land.

The seminary also brings in guest presenters who add greater variety to our on-campus offerings.

The vicar program

The importance of the vicar year in training pastors can hardly be overestimated. It allows the student a year in which he can put what he has learned in the seminary classrooms 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.

It is undeniable, however, that vicar costs to congregations have been steadily on the rise. Because of the financial downturn, many congregations have been re-thinking their commitment to the vicar program in the light of all their priorities for ministry.

For the past two years, the seminary has been collaborating with the Board for Home Missions by contributing additional funding to the Board for Home Mission's Vicars in Mission Settings program. This program helps congregations that might not otherwise be able to afford the entire cost of a vicar. The seminary works with Home Missions in identifying and selecting places to receive this support. Certain criteria must be met. The chief requirement is that a congregation has a pastor with the gifts, the time, and the willingness to serve as a mentor for a student vicar during this vital year of his full-time, in-service training. Also important is the potential for the vicar to receive training in outreach and in working with congregational leaders.

As we look forward to the next two years, our fervent hope is that this collaboration can continue, given the pressure of our current financial situation. We also earnestly pray that congregations with greater financial means may continue to see the importance of the vicar program. The seminary vicar program will need to remain a high priority if we wish to ensure the best possible training for our future pastors.

Seminary chorus

The seminary's best ambassadors are the students themselves. This is certainly true of the seminary chorus. More than 1,600 people attended the 2008 Christmas concerts. In spring 2008, the 50-man chorus went on a tour to Utah, California, and Nevada. In 2009 the chorus went on a short tour to congregations in Illinois, Ohio, and Tennessee.

Participating in the chorus is one important way in which the seminary develops our students' musical skills and practical aptitudes for leading their congregations in worship.

Pastoral Studies Institute

The Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI) of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary has a wide range of responsibilities. The following list gives some idea of its scope:

- The PSI continues to allow the seminary the flexibility to respond to the pastoral training needs of individuals with special circumstances. Four second-career non-traditional students are at various stages of their preseminary training under the PSI.
- The PSI continues to provide many opportunities for our traditional students to experience cross-cultural outreach in various settings (urban, rural, Hispanic).
- The PSI continues to partner with satellite seminary training operations in North America, including Cristo Palabra de Vida and the Asian satellite seminary program. Many students from those programs come to Mequon during summer quarter. This year students and instructors from Cristo Palabra de Vida—the Spanish language arm of the PSI—came to the seminary for a national theological training seminar for congregational assistants. In addition, 16 people attended as part of the Asian Ministerial Training Program, and five Hmong pastors returned for continuing education.
- In the past two years, the PSI through its satellite programs has prepared two candidates for Hispanic ministries and three candidates for Asian ministries.
- Through the World Mission Seminary Professor Kenneth Cherney Jr., the PSI coordinates the sending of seminary professors to teach overseas. Teaching trips the past two years were conducted to Germany, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malawi, Nigeria, Sweden, Taiwan, Ukraine, and Zambia.
- The PSI was also instrumental in the formation of the Specialized Training Programs Coordinating Group. The purpose of this group is to better coordinate all specialized training efforts occurring in our synod from recruitment to placement. Prior to its formation, coordination was somewhat lacking. There was no set forum for communication since the responsibility for various aspects of our ministry across cultures is divided among the Board for Ministerial Education, Board for Home Missions, Board for World Missions, and Conference of Presidents. Now, however, representatives from each will serve on the Specialized Training Programs Coordinating Group. The PSI director and the world mission seminary professor will serve as co-chairs.
- In June 2008 Prof. Cherney, along with Prof. Bivens, attended the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) in Kyiv, Ukraine. At the conference Cherney was named chairman of the newly-formed THETA Commission, which is charged with assisting member churches in the task of global theological education. A key goal for the commission will be to equip the next generation of theological educators in our worldwide fellowship. We can anticipate that the Pastoral Studies Institute will be playing an important role in meeting this goal.

Through the Pastoral Studies Institute, the Lord is giving to the seminary many opportunities for service not only here in North America, but throughout the world.

Board

We note the changes that have taken place on our governing board. The terms of office expired for board secretary Rev. Curtis Lyon, who served for 12 years, and for board member Mr. Tom Hansen, who served for seven years and chaired the fiscal and property subcommittee. We thank the Lord for the many blessings he gave us through the faithful service of these men. Through the North Atlantic and South Central districts, the synod elected Mr. Philip Becker and Rev. Eric Hartzell to fill these vacancies.

Faculty

God has blessed us with a gifted and dedicated faculty.

- In fall 2007, Prof. Michael Quandt was installed as professor of Christian education. Quandt teaches nearly a full load at the seminary while pursuing a master of science degree in education at Concordia University in Mequon, Wis.
- Also in fall 2007, Prof. James Westendorf celebrated his 40th anniversary in the ministry, 25 of which he served on this campus. In fall 2008, the campus celebrated three more anniversaries with Professors Hartwig, Sorum, and Zell each celebrating their 25th year in the ministry. This coming fall Prof. Alan Siggelkow will mark his 40th anniversary in the ministry.
- Prof. Stephen Geiger received a master's degree in classics from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

- Professors John Brenner and Richard Gurgel continue to pursue their doctoral studies in church history and preaching, respectively.
- Prof. Ken Cherney is hoping to pursue doctoral studies and is working on a proposal. Prof. John Schuetze is planning to enroll in a master's program in family counseling next fall. He also intends to complete a new textbook on pastoral theology. Prof. Paul Zell is also taking various classes off-campus.
- It should be noted that our professors are making these efforts despite our having lost our "sabbatical in ministry" position. In the next biennium we are serving the same number of students as we served in 2000 with the same number of professors, while also having taken on more than one FTE (full-time equivalent) more of administrative duties. This is due primarily because of the administrative responsibilities involved in the Pastoral Studies Institute director's position and in the office of world mission seminary professor.

Curriculum review

Begun during summer 2006, the seminary's curriculum review continues. "Course mapping" during the 2006-07 academic year and early in 2007-08 prompted each instructor to examine carefully how he was organizing the instruction and assessing the learning taking place in his classroom. Each of these maps was reviewed first by the faculty as a body and then by the various departments.

After this thorough examination of what and how we currently teach our students, the faculty heard presentations on four key issues:

1. Developing Lifelong Learners (Dr. John Lawrenz, Asia Lutheran Seminary),
2. Experiential Learning (Prof. Richard Gurgel, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary),
3. Strategies of Instruction and Assessment (Dr. John Kolander, Wisconsin Lutheran College), and
4. Tensions between Core and Choice in Curriculum (Prof. Dan Balge, Martin Luther College).

At our faculty's retreat in August 2008, we explored implications of those issues for ourselves as a confessional Lutheran seminary seeking to train men for gospel ministry in the 21st century. An ad hoc curriculum committee was empanelled to take the process beyond discussions and information gathering to the point where we would have specific proposals to lay before the faculty. This committee has been working throughout the 2008-09 school year.

From the faculty retreat and the following ad hoc committee discussions, it has become apparent that there is an emerging consensus in four areas.

- First, we believe that we can encourage lifelong learning and critical thinking skills by instituting a senior thesis or project. Up to this point, the senior church history paper has served as a sort of quasi senior thesis. In its stead, we would allow a senior to propose a thesis or a practical project in any area of theology he would choose, working under a faculty advisor to complete it.
- Second, we are committed to re-examining the current senior workload with a view to reducing the number of class hours and/or the number of long-term assignments. This would allow seniors more time to work on their thesis or project.
- Third, our professors are interested in learning about more ways to engage students in active learning tasks in the classroom setting. To this end they welcome more in-service training opportunities as well as more peer encouragement and review.
- Finally, we believe that some work needs to be done in improving the Early Field Training (EFT) experience for our juniors and middlers.

It should be noted that significant workload implications exist in asking the faculty to take on the added responsibility involved in advising seniors working on projects.

Continuing education

Providing opportunities for the theological and professional growth of called workers is a natural extension of the seminary's basic purpose of training men for the pastoral ministry. The seminary provides continuing education in various ways:

- Through the publication of *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*.
- Through summer quarter. In 2007 the seminary hosted 93 students for summer quarter courses. In 2008 a total of 106 came, of whom four were women. The seminary continues to offer three basic summer quarter programs: one leading to a Master of Sacred Theology degree (a program geared especially for pastors), another leading to a Master

of Arts in Religion degree (open to staff ministers and teachers), and a third that culminates in a Master of Practical Theology degree.

- Through Winterim. Although designed primarily for our on-campus students, there has been increasing interest shown by local pastors in our Winterim courses, and we have tried to accommodate them whenever possible.
- Through its “satellite” summer quarter and Pastors Institute programs conducted in various locations around the United States. In 2008, around 300 people participated in 14 off-campus events.
- Through its annual symposium. In fall 2008 a two-day symposium on the subject of the Church was attended by 363 professors, pastors, and students. The topic for this year’s symposium is Congregational Health. It will be held Sept. 21-22, 2009.

The seminary’s continuing education committee has expanded the flexibility in our summer quarter course offerings with the addition of some two-week courses held in the morning. This is in addition to a variety of one-week intensive courses offered during the afternoons of each of the three weeks.

Distance education

The seminary is committed to increasing the number of distance education courses and materials we offer online. A great deal has already been accomplished.

- *Pastoral Studies Institute courses:* The seminary has put the PSI Hebrew course online and is working on the Greek course. Once that is finished we will continue by putting a hermeneutics course online as well as courses on the Smalcald Articles and the ecumenical creeds.
- *SQ/Continuing Ed course:* Prof. Gurgel is developing his course in Alternative Preaching Styles targeting the fall semester of 2009 for online delivery.
- *Seminary level courses:* Prof. Cherney and Prof. Hartwig will develop a 14-week dogmatics course (Christology) for fall semester 2009 with Asia Lutheran Seminary as the target audience. Prof. Sorum has moved significant portions of the middler missiology course and the senior missiology elective to online delivery. World missionaries have participated in the senior elective.
- *Continuing education materials:* The library continues to expand its available audio and video offerings that pastors can use for their continuing education. We are expanding our online essay file to include audio essays. Video lectures are being added to our Web offerings.

More and more of the faculty are acquiring the skills needed to create and teach courses online. Three faculty members have already completed the two-course distance education series offered by Martin Luther College. By May, five other faculty members will have completed the first course in the series. It should be noted that creating and teaching courses online increases the workload of our faculty members and has manpower implications.

We sense some real doors of opportunity opening up for the seminary in both continuing education and distance education. Probably the one thing that impedes even greater improvements in this area is manpower. Ideally we would like to devote a considerable portion of at least one professor’s time to planning, organizing, and maintaining an even better program of continuing and distance education.

Fiscal and property

Synod Archives

Thanks to generous grants from the Northwestern College Alumni Society and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, we were able to hire a full-time assistant in the archives for nine months. Mark Tiefel chose to take a year out of his seminary studies to process the unprocessed materials that have gathered in the archives and write archival descriptions of the collections.

Blessings of financial support

In the past two years in addition to synod subsidy, the seminary has received the following gifts, memorials, and bequests:

	Fiscal Year	YTD
	2007-08	3/31/2009
Unrestricted	\$ 444,356	\$263,021
Temporarily restricted	431,524	466,068
Permanently restricted	840,079	59,985
Total	1,715,959	789,074

We are grateful to the Lord for the continuing love represented by the gifts of so many of his people, in addition to the grants that have come from such organizations as Thrivent, Siebert, and Salem Foundations.

Gifts in addition to synod subsidy allow us to

- offer generous financial aid to our students,
- support the Vicars in Mission Settings program,
- subsidize off-campus experiences for students,
- support professors' continuing education,
- develop continuing education courses,
- creatively respond to ministry opportunities as they emerge, and
- respond to emergencies without adding extra burdens to the synod's budget.

We expect we will need to support our budget in the next biennium by a more aggressive use of our unrestricted funds. According to our present and best estimates, these reserve funds will be largely depleted by the end of the biennium. After this our subsidy will either have to be substantially increased, or we will have to make the kind of cuts that will adversely impact what we are currently doing to carry out our mission as well as curtail what we hope to do in the future (see below under "A look ahead").

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary alumni

Holding its first meeting in September 2007, the WLS Alumni approved a constitution and elected an executive board. At its second meeting in September 2008 the members voiced their support for various proposed projects, including building up a fund for student scholarships, supporting continuing education, and producing a 150th anniversary booklet on the history of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Friends of the Seminary Day

This annual gathering is sponsored by the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Auxiliary. It features a worship service and mission presentations by students and professors. The WLS Auxiliary continues to offer support for special projects at the seminary.

Staffing

Staffing at the seminary was already at very low levels because of previous rounds of budget cuts. Due to the current financial stringencies, we will be cutting even further. We remain grateful for having staff members who view their work at the seminary as a vocation, and not merely as a job.

Tower repair

The tower has long stood as the seminary's most recognizable architectural feature. After cracks appeared in it, an inspection revealed that major repairs needed to be done due to damage caused by water leaking behind the brick fascia. The work began in April 2008 and was completed in May of that year at a cost of \$75,000. The costs were absorbed by the Seminary Fund.

Lagoon/dam project

Our lagoon, another well-known landmark on campus, was in need of some expensive maintenance. The dam, originally built in 1929, was in disrepair while the lagoon itself needed dredging. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources obtained a grant that covered the costs for removing the dam and restoring the creek into a natural stream. They also provided funds for new plantings and landscaping. Demolition of the dam took place in late October 2008. We are hoping the project will be completed by this fall. The natural stream with its landscaping will undoubtedly over time become a new landmark on campus.

A look ahead

God willing, in the next two years we plan to

- allow one of our faculty members to dedicate a good portion of his time to increasing our continuing education efforts;
- have three continuing education courses for pastors launched and taught in an online format;
- institute a capstone thesis or project for seniors;
- offer internships over Winterim that are specifically designed to develop students' leadership abilities;
- continue to discover new ways to reduce the costs of the vicar year for congregations willing to participate;

- revamp the Early Field Training experience for juniors and middlers; and
- develop offsite programs in partnership with mission seminaries that would allow national pastors to study for Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary degrees.

Pres. Paul O. Wendland, reporter

Rev. Thomas Westra, chairman
 Rev. Michael Woldt, vice chairman
 Mr. Philip Becker, secretary
 Rev. John Covach
 Dr. Arthur Eggert
 Rev. Eric Hartzell
 Mr. John Postelli
 Teacher Kurt Schmidt

Advisory:

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

Martin Luther College

Floor Committee #11

The apostle John reminds each disciple about the only purpose for our life this side of heaven: “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us” (1 John 4). Whether an individual believer, a congregation, or a synod school, John’s words are the focus of our existence. Christ’s love is indeed our calling.

Our calling

Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn., is owned and operated by WELS. The church body has entrusted this school with a vital task for the fulfillment of the Great Commission—to train pastors, teachers, and staff ministers to proclaim the love of Christ to people everywhere. But even before we consider the vocational training of future gospel servants as the mission of the school, MLC first remains a place where the Holy Spirit of God uses the gospel to nourish faith and strengthen souls. It is the calling of every faculty and student to be a disciple of Christ who sees daily opportunity to encourage one another in the Word of the living Savior. The governing board of Martin Luther College is grateful to a gracious God that we serve at a college where the unconditional gospel of free grace is the center and cornerstone of its very existence. The board is also grateful to a church body that so generously supports this college of ministry with fervent prayers and abundant gifts. More than 90 percent of all WELS called workers receive training at this school. We ask you to continue to pray that Jesus will keep us faithful to the Word, dedicated to studying it, and passionate to share it with others.

Our current situation

Student body

Christ’s love is evident to this school as we consider the student body entrusted to our care. Year after year Jesus keeps his promise to give gifts to his church. On May 16, 141 students graduated. Of that amount, 44 are preseminary students, 95 are education majors, and four are staff ministry graduates. A more specific breakdown of the education graduates reveals 59 graduates in the elementary education program, 19 graduates in the secondary education program, and 13 graduates in the early childhood education program. These graduates join the 11 midyear graduates from Dec. 18, 2008. In that class there was one graduate in the preseminary program, one in the staff ministry program, and there were nine in the education programs.

In addition, there are four teachers graduating with their degrees in the Master of Science in Education program. This is the second year in which there are graduates of the master's program at Martin Luther College, a graduate degree program authorized by the synod in 2003 and accredited in 2005. The graduates this year are Heath Dobberpuhl, Kimberly Gartner, Sheila Krause, and Kristal Meyer. Currently, the master's program has 62 graduate students enrolled in this online program. Besides the master's program, MLC also encourages continuing education by offering two summer sessions each year on our New Ulm campus and numerous satellite events in various locations synodwide.

As we look to the future, it appears that Jesus will bring a student body of similar size next fall. Although it is too early to be definitive with enrollment numbers, projections indicate an opening enrollment of undergraduate students at about the same level as last fall. Please join us in praying boldly that Jesus bring more and more workers, for it remains true that the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

Faculty

Christ's love is also evident to us in the committed faculty and staff that serve the college. Recently MLC hosted an anniversary observance to thank Jesus for the faithful ministries of Joyce Schubkegel (50 years); David Gosdeck, Lyle Lange, and Mark Lenz (40 years); Dan Balge, Brian Dose, and Kenneth "Chip" Rupnow (25 years). MLC also welcomes Rebecca Cox, who has accepted our call to serve as a professor in physical education. The campus family also bids farewell to Prof. David Pelzl who retired at the end of this school year.

During the last biennium several faculty members successfully completed some program of graduate studies: Robert Klindworth received a doctorate in education; David Schroeder received a doctorate in U.S. history; Mark Paustian received a master's degree in speech communication; Jeffrey Schone received a master's degree in counseling; David Sellnow received a master's degree in multi-disciplinary studies. Five additional professors are in doctorate programs at this time. Currently, MLC has 19 percent of faculty holding a doctorate; 19 percent of the faculty holding two master's degrees; 52 percent of the faculty with a master's degree. Of the remaining teaching faculty with only a bachelor's degree, all are in some program of graduate study.

Accreditation visit

MLC has received a draft report from the accreditation team that visited the campus on March 30 through April 1. We rejoice that the team recommends to the Higher Learning Commission continued accreditation for MLC for ten years. This is the maximum length that can be granted. The report notes many positive aspects of the college and highlights the dedication of the students, faculty, and staff to the college's mission. The report also notes areas of concern for which the college needs to report in three years. The concerns enumerated are the stability of revenue income, especially from synod subsidy; the need to reduce the faculty workload to appropriate collegiate levels; and the need for specific personnel to coordinate assessment efforts at the college. In three years MLC needs to demonstrate how the college is addressing these concerns.

Amazing opportunities

Even while MLC prepares students for future gospel service in the church, Jesus provides opportunities for our students to learn ministry by doing ministry. Last year more than 40 students taught at international schools in ten different countries. This number is similar to the previous year. In addition, our students experience ministry in home mission settings in a program called DayLight USA. This year approximately 100 students are involved at various mission congregations during spring break, and a similar number of students also serve various congregations during summer vacation. Our students serve through travel/canvass/witness events, member ministry assistance programs, vacation Bible school programs, youth athletic camps, and so forth. The board is grateful for the partnership with WELS Kingdom Workers, which provides financial resources to allow these opportunities for our students.

Our faculty also is blessed with numerous opportunities to serve the Savior beyond the classroom and campus. Naturally, we have professors preaching and presenting at congregations and conferences in many areas of synod. Whether a worship setting, a workshop or seminar, a district or conference presentation, each opportunity allows our faculty the opportunity to serve and encourage fellow members of WELS. It is also important for our professors to use each opportunity to listen carefully to the issues and concerns that face our congregations and schools. Only then can the school continually evaluate its efforts to train candidates for ministry in the 21st century. Finally, it is also a gift of God that our Lord has allowed so many of our professors opportunities to teach in various foreign lands. Since the last synod convention, six professors have taught overseas in several foreign lands (Antigua, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Ukraine). Our students are richly blessed when our professors return with a heightened awareness of the global field before us. Whether we serve souls in the heartland or on the coast, whether urban or rural setting, whether domestic

or international, MLC strives to prepare candidates who are compelled by Christ's love to communicate that saving love to souls everywhere.

A look ahead

Enrollment

MLC continues to pray that the Lord Jesus increase our enrollment significantly, even up to the 900 student level. One might ask whether such enrollment is too optimistic in a time when financial constraints might mean closures and reductions rather than increased openings and vacancies. Yet the governing board of MLC is asking the synod to consider whether MLC is simply a supplier of the church or a builder of the church, or both. Your college of ministry is committed to providing qualified and evangelical candidates to fill the needs of our pulpits and classrooms. Yet your college of ministry is also committed to exploring ways to answer the increasing requests for our students and graduates to serve internationally or in alternative ways of ministry. May Jesus guide us and lead us as we prayerfully consider all the opportunities to answer the calls before us to share the Savior's love.

Other enrollment challenges move us to fervent prayer to a gracious God. The Conference of Presidents has asked MLC to examine ways to increase the number of candidates in the early childhood education program. Enrollment in the pastor track program has lessened in the last years with serious implications for future matriculation at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. In addition, the needs of the church for principals and for musicians continue to demand our prayerful attention.

Last fall our governing board voted to raise tuition and board/room a total of 3 percent, lower than the originally planned 5 percent increase. The concern of our board was twofold—recruitment and student indebtedness. We pray that trying to slow the rate of cost increases might encourage more students to consider full-time gospel ministry as a vocation and also help current students as they try to finance a college education.

Financial status

Like all areas of ministry, MLC seeks to demonstrate careful and prayerful stewardship of the resources entrusted to us. In the present economic climate your college has already initiated cost reduction efforts. Three vacant faculty positions have not been filled this past year and are delayed for the immediate future. Seven staff positions, either vacant or authorized, were not filled in the past year. Along with other synodical workers in other areas of ministry, salaries are frozen at MLC. Classroom renovations and upgrades at the early childhood center have been placed on hold. Only regular and emergency maintenance items will be considered for funding. All departments and divisions of the college have recently completed a 10 percent cost reduction exercise, and a volunteer outside consultant is helping MLC conduct a programmatic review to identify further measures to either reduce costs or enhance revenue. Further personnel reductions in both faculty and staff will be implemented in the near future, using either attrition or an announced reduction in force policy.

The governing board of MLC also recognizes the serious situation that confronts our dear synod. The members of the governing board certainly understand the difficulties facing all areas of ministry. Yet for the sake of the stability of the college, both in terms of student enrollment and in terms of tuition revenue, the MLC board supports the BME resolution that asks the synod in convention to adopt budget option A.

Please pray for God's guidance for every aspect of our synod's work. Please also join us in seeking God's blessing upon MLC so that we can continue to provide world-class training for ministry in WELS at the highest level of fiscal responsibility. May we glorify our Savior God through our careful planning and stewardship.

Pres. Mark Zarling, reporter

Rev. Ralph Scharf, chairman

Rev. Michael Schultz, vice chairman

Rev. Roy Beyer, secretary

Teacher Keith Bowe

Mr. Steven Danekas

Teacher Jonathan Hahm

Mr. Robert Hinnenthal

Teacher Scott Huebner

Mr. Stephen Loehr

Mr. Barry Price
Teacher Steven Rosenbaum
Rev. Marcus Schulz
Mr. William Steinbrenner

Advisory:

Rev. Charles Degner, president of the Minnesota District
Rev. Paul Prange, administrator of WELS Board for Ministerial Education
Rev. Mark Schroeder, president
Pres. Mark Zarling, Martin Luther College

Luther Preparatory School

Floor Committee #11

Our calling

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

Historically 55 percent of LPS graduates have enrolled at Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn., since LPS was formed in 1995. The LPS 2009 graduating class exceeded the historical average.

In 2008-09, LPS graduates made up 25 percent of the MLC student body and almost 40 percent of MLC's pastor track students. LPS graduates comprise more than a third of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary student body.

Our current situation

Enrollment

LPS opened school year 2008-09 with an enrollment of 333. Our students hail from 24 states, nine foreign countries, 150 congregations, and all 12 WELS districts. More than two-thirds of our students come from lay families. Recruitment to LPS, with an eye on future full-time gospel ministry, remains a top priority. With applications for the coming school year outpacing the average of the last five years by almost 20, it appears as though for the first time in a decade opening enrollment this fall will be higher than the previous year.

The decrease in offerings to the synod has resulted in less financial aid being available for our students. It is our prayer that some of this aid will be restored soon so as not to negatively affect our positive enrollment trend.

After conversations with the administrator of the Board for World Missions and the chairmen of the East Asia and South Asia Administrative Committees, LPS began a pilot program that has resulted in enrolling five Chinese international students. Gospel outreach to China is a high priority in WELS World Missions. We believe that having these students at LPS enables our students to be more aware of the worldwide reach of the gospel. We know that the Holy Spirit will work where and when he pleases through the gospel. No synod subsidy is being used for this program, and we will monitor and evaluate the value of it throughout the coming school year.

Preparing for the mission

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. Seventy-five percent of our students learn to play piano, with many of them advancing to take organ lessons.

LPS is seeking accreditation from WELSSA (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation) and AdvancED-NCA. Both WELSSA and AdvancED-NCA brought their visiting teams to LPS in April 2009. We are awaiting their final reports.

Because we are a mission-driven school for gospel proclamation, LPS offers age-appropriate experiences in speaking the gospel. All of our seniors take part in our Taste of Ministry program, in which our 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 Lutheran elementary school teacher. Project Timothy is a program designed to provide mission, ministry, and cross-cultural experiences to LPS students. More than 40 students will assist with outreach and education programs of mission congregations in the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Florida, Georgia, and Texas. Also, senior boys are given the opportunity to prepare and speak an evening devotion to the students.

Each year the entire junior class visits Martin Luther College. By the time our students graduate each will have met four times with an MLC recruiter. An array of missionaries, professors, teachers, pastors, MLC students, and WLS students present topical ministry workshops on our annual Ministry Day. Sophomores take an annual field trip to the seminary. Seniors in the LPS pastor track visit the seminary each fall for worship, classes, and a tour.

The Word is central in all we do. 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.

A look ahead

Together with the rest of the areas of the synod's ministry, LPS looks to the future and sees some uncertain and unsettling times. This is nothing new for Christ's church. The financial constraints are real. Yet, the future also holds the continuing promises of a gracious God. "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ" (2 Corinthians 1:20). Those promises in the crucified and living Lord Jesus fill us not with fear, but with hope; not with dread, but with confidence; not with an attitude of despair, but with a renewed commitment to carry out the mission before us.

Pres. Matthew Crass, reporter

Rev. Kenneth Brokmeier, chairman

Rev. Stephen Sauer, vice chairman

Teacher John Meyer, secretary

Rev. Stephen Hein

Mr. Doug Rall

Mr. Ralph Schmidt

Teacher Larry Sellnow

Rev. Tim Spaude

Advisory:

Pres. Matthew Crass, Luther Preparatory School

Rev. Herb Prah, president of the Western Wisconsin District

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

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president

Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Floor Committee #11

Our calling

The special purpose of Michigan Lutheran Seminary (MLS), Saginaw, Mich., is to train students for the public ministry of the gospel and to enroll them upon graduation at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

During the last biennium, the MLS Governing Board 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."

Our current situation

Enrollment

MLS opened school year 2008-09 with an enrollment of 197. The enrollment has been trending downward in recent years, probably due to cost increases, economic conditions, and questions at the time of the last synod convention

about the future of the school. The governing board has reacted to the situation by lowering tuition by 10 percent for the coming school year.

Even with decreasing enrollment, more than 100 Michigan Lutheran Seminary graduates began school year 2008-09 enrolled at Martin Luther College.

There is reason to be optimistic about future enrollments. The Lutheran elementary school data from the traditional recruitment area of MLS indicates that class sizes are on the rise for the next few years.

Another bright spot is an upward trend in the number of international students enrolled at MLS.

	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
International Students	3	9	14	22	15

Applications indicate that the number of international students at MLS in school year 2009-10 should be more than 25, from churches in our fellowship in Apacheland, Canada, Colombia, Korea, Germany, and Ukraine.

MLS is uniquely situated to teach international students. With one-third of the students commuting every day, there are enough local families to serve as hosts for the international students on weekend and holidays. The host family tradition is strong. But with two-thirds of the students in the dorm, there is enough activity every night and on weekends that international students have every opportunity to assimilate. MLS knows how to test applicants for their ability in English and for their ability to handle our rigorous academic program, and we know how to help them with English as a second language and other tutoring when they arrive.

MLS understands that for students from some countries, the next step for training for the ministry is returning to their own country to study rather than attending MLC. We are pleased to help those students train for the ministry in whatever way is best for the mission field from which they come. For example, German students come typically for only the junior year. Then they return to secular high school and university education before enrolling in 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.

MLS is pleased to have a faculty representative working with the Specialized Training Programs Coordinating Group (STPCG). See the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary report on p. 104 for more information.

Preparing for the mission

MLS is a mission-driven school for gospel proclamation. Although its students are preparing for the exact curriculum they will encounter at Martin Luther College, they are also having age-appropriate experiences in speaking the gospel.

In Scripture, Titus was a student of the apostle Paul and accompanied him on several of his missionary journeys. Today Titus lends his name to a program that allows current students to have similar mission experiences. In the spring and summer, Project Titus students give up their vacations to participate in domestic and foreign trips, helping missions in our fellowship reach out with the gospel.

Nearly all seniors participate in the Taste of Ministry program, which places prospective pastor students with a pastor for a weekend and prospective teacher students in an area Lutheran elementary school classroom for a couple of intensive days of work.

All seniors graduate able to present the Great Exchange from memory. Some also learn it in Spanish.

Every student learns to play piano. Each year more than 10 percent of the graduating class can already play the organ for worship.

Juniors are invited with their parents to Junior Night, at which representatives from Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary explain what preparation for the ministry at their level entails. By the time our students graduate, each one will have met at least four times with an MLC recruiter.

All junior students also spend time canvassing door-to-door for local congregations in the spring of the year.

Sophomores spend a week in the fall touring Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Martin Luther College. Much of the funding for this trip comes from special donations, for which the school is grateful.

Freshmen welcome missionaries to their classrooms in order to hear how service in the ministry of the gospel might be for them.

The daily encouragement of faculty and staff, classmates and friends, keeps the ministry of the gospel at all times before students of MLS.

President

With the acceptance of a divine call to serve as administrator of the Board for Ministerial Education, Rev. Paul Prange concludes 15 years of service as the president of MLS. Michigan Lutheran Seminary's Governing Board has a list of candidates from which it is calling for a new president.

A look ahead

In school year 2009-10, MLS celebrates its 100th anniversary as a WELS preparatory school. During that time 2,187 of the 4,362 graduates have gone on to ministerial education schools, with almost 700 of them becoming pastors. That number does not include the men who became pastors from 1885-1907, when MLS was a graduate seminary of the old Michigan Synod. Under the theme "From Age to Age," the MLS family will mark this milestone with gratitude to the Lord for the continued opportunity to serve.

Rev. Paul Prange, reporter

Rev. George Ferch, chairman, Southeastern Wisconsin District

Rev. James Naumann, vice chairman, Michigan District

Prof. David Bauer, secretary, Minnesota District

Mr. Loren Mathison, Western Wisconsin District

Mr. Peter Naumann, Pacific Northwest District

Rev. Philip Paustian, Northern Wisconsin District

Rev. Benjamin Tomczak, South Central District

Mr. Daniel Witte, Southeastern Wisconsin District

Advisory:

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

Rev. Mark Schroeder, president

Rev. John Seifert, president of the Michigan District

Board for Parish Services

Floor Committee #12

Our calling

All Christians share a calling to grow in knowing God's love revealed in Christ, to glorify him with their lives, and to proclaim his glory to the world. This calling is understood and sustained through the powerful Word of God and the sacraments administered in local congregations. These congregations are the grassroots from which our synodical ministries flow—the local proclamation of the gospel, the faith development of God's people, the cutting edge to reaching local communities, the source of future called workers, and the funding for global outreach. A strong synod will be built from strong congregations that actively reach the people of our world today with the message of the gospel.

The role of WELS Parish Services is to provide direct assistance to congregations so that they might carry out gospel ministry in the most faithful way on the local level. The stated purpose of the synod is to “extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.” Parish Services helps fulfill three key WELS objectives as referenced in WELS' constitution (Article IV):

(a) “assisting and counseling in every appropriate way the pastors, teachers, and congregations affiliated with the synod.”

(c) “establishing . . . such charitable institutions as it may deem appropriate to its calling;”

(e) “furnishing appropriate literature for parish schools, Sunday schools, missions, institutions, and churches.”

Parish Services provides this assistance through its individual units that give focused attention to specific areas of congregational life. Resources that are offered include printed material, “schools” for specialized leadership training, conferences, consultation, ministry networking, and Web connections. These resources can be more easily developed on a large scale by providing targeted research, focused development, a network of grassroots connections, and management of a widespread pool of volunteers. Each unit of Parish Services works with district coordinators to assess the particular needs of the district parishes and schools, identify locally developed resources or talent, and provide district-wide promotion for these resources.

Many of Parish Services' programs and products are aimed at inspiring new interest and resources for worship, building strong families through healthy marriages, nurturing children through Christian homes and parish schools, fostering increased adult spiritual growth and leadership, developing fellowship and unity through congregational ministries, serving those with special needs, and reaching out to those who do not know Christ.

In a time when God's people seek to be faithful with the Word in their local context, Parish Services strives to provide tools and processes that help congregations evaluate and plan their ministries. Many of the resulting resources provide a unifying effect among congregations in the synod—from common hymnals to annual stewardship themes to training seminars, youth rallies, and other gatherings that bring people together for study, discussion, training, and planning around our common commitment to the Word of God.

Our current situation

The present struggles of our synod are only reflections of those experienced on the local level. Cultural and demographic changes as well as congregational issues present challenges as we carry out our gospel ministry to a spiritually dying world. Although the world exhibits an exploding population and more global connections than ever, our base of synodical membership has declined by more than 30,000 since 1990. We recognize that numbers do not tell the whole story, yet there are other factors that indicate a need for renewed attention to our congregations: low adult Bible class attendance, decreasing worship attendance, and the fewest adult confirmations in 15 years. Added to that is the fact that several more Lutheran elementary schools closed this year.

Nevertheless, God is faithful to his promises, and the Word does not return to him empty. During the last two years Parish Services has helped identify, share, and celebrate the faithful gospel ministry found in the life of congregations. It also has worked to develop new resources and training that address the needs and opportunities identified by congregations and that reflect biblical faithfulness and our Lutheran concern for scriptural clarity. The specific resources are detailed in the following pages under each Parish Services unit report. Those units include

- Evangelism,
- Worship,
- Adult Discipleship,
- Youth Discipleship,
- Parish Schools,
- Special Ministries, and
- Parish Assistance.

A look ahead

Over the past few years Parish Services has seen the requests from congregations for individualized help and assistance increase significantly. Some of these requests can be answered with short-term resources, consultation, and training, while others call for a long-term team effort. Parish Services’ focus in the future will be the same as the past: building a gospel ministry partnership that provides spiritual growth opportunities supported by an environment of faith-nurturing relationships.

Synodical budget challenges will also be heavily felt in Parish Services. After budgetary cuts that brought Parishes Services from \$2.4 million in 2002 down to \$1.65 million in 2008, the proposed cuts will bring the Parish Services allocation below the minimum needed to sustain the level of present services offered. The \$995,000 proposed budget allocation will reduce the present Parish Services positions from 22 to 14. This may include

- eliminating the administrator of Parish Services,
- eliminating two Parish Services unit administrators,
- losing four support staff members, and
- defunding the Prison Ministries coordinator.

These reductions will result in a decrease or elimination of development, resources, and specialized assistance for specific areas of congregational ministry.

Parish Services will be designing a new structure and approach in the months before and after the convention. This will reflect the proposed synodical budget allocations and yet continue to provide important functions and resources for our congregations at this time.

One potential scenario: Parish Schools and Special Ministries would continue with a slightly reduced staff. The other five national offices (Evangelism, Worship, Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, and Parish Assistance) would be combined into one unit (Congregational Ministries Resource Team) with fewer full-time administrators. Three of those in this new arrangement would continue different levels of consulting to congregations and the other two would provide more administrative oversight of the remaining resources, training opportunities, and action teams. This approach would allow the Congregational Ministries Resource Team to rebuild and expand with more specialized personnel as finances and need dictate.

Although discussion is in its initial stages, that option might look something like this:

Parish Schools	Special Ministries	Congregational Ministries Resource Team (Evangelism, Worship, Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, Parish Assistance)
2 administrators	1 administrator (+1 military chaplain)	2 “administrators” and 3 consultants
1 support staff	1 support staff	3 support staff

Regardless of the configuration, Parish Services is committed to carrying out its role in a new way that will best support the current needs of our congregations. Because these specific plans are in the process of assessment and reworking, the “Look ahead” sections of some of the Parish Services unit reports will reflect some uncertainty. However, a new restructuring of Parish Services will focus on the resources that are deemed most crucial for congregations at this time and the capacity we will have to deliver them well.

We expect the new approach to forge an even closer collaboration among the Parish Services units, which will result in a simpler “suite of services.” We will also discuss tighter partnerships with Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Martin Luther College, and the Home Missions mission counselors. Closer interaction and collaboration with district presidents will be incorporated to provide a stronger comprehensive support system for congregations. The hope is to provide a greater unified atmosphere and approach for assisting congregations in developing beneficial settings for the Spirit to strengthen faith and mobilize God’s people for the urgent ministry he has placed before us.

In March 2009 Pastor Bruce Becker accepted a new position after 14 years of service to Parish Services, the last seven years serving as administrator of Parish Services. We thank him for his insight, dedication, and leadership. We wish him God’s richest blessings in his new endeavor. Pastor David Kehl, administrator for Adult Discipleship, accepted the request to serve as Administrator, *pro tem*.

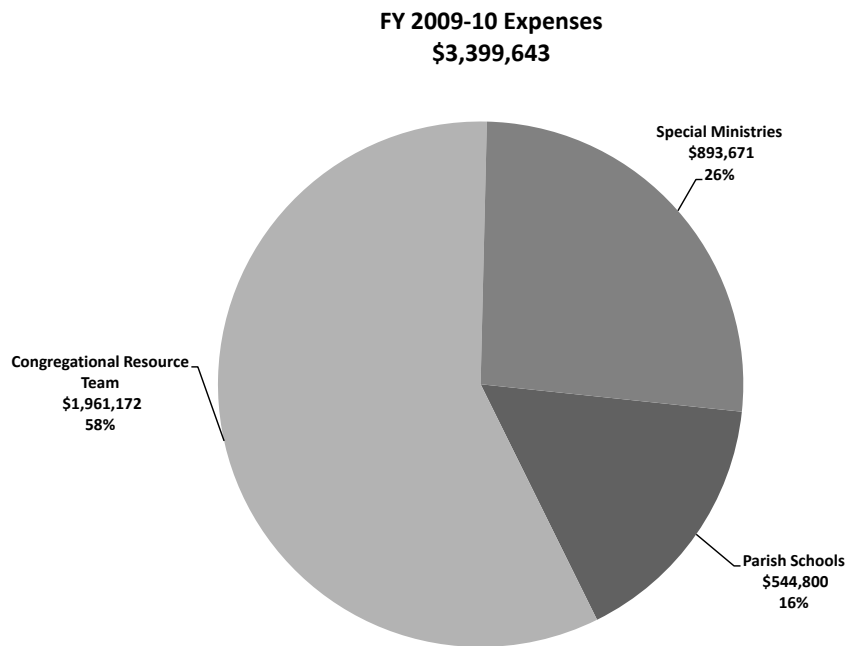
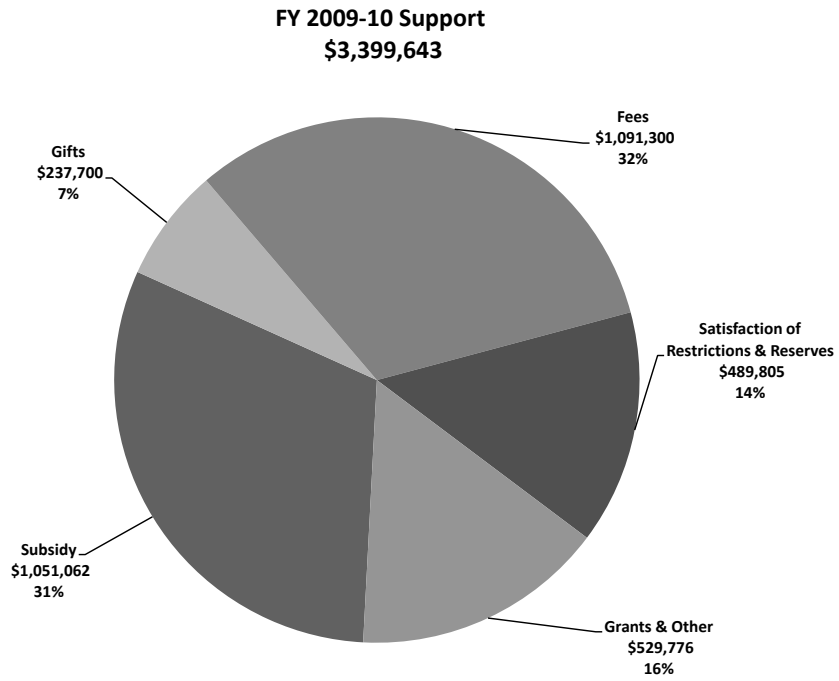
Rev. David Kehl, reporter

Rev. Joel Leyrer, chairman
Rev. Mark Bitter
Teacher Charles Buege
Rev. Donn Dobberstein
Staff Minister Frederick Horn
Rev. Randy Hunter
Mr. Mark Naumann
Rev. Thomas Schneider
Teacher James Sievert
Mr. Robert Stasney

Advisory:

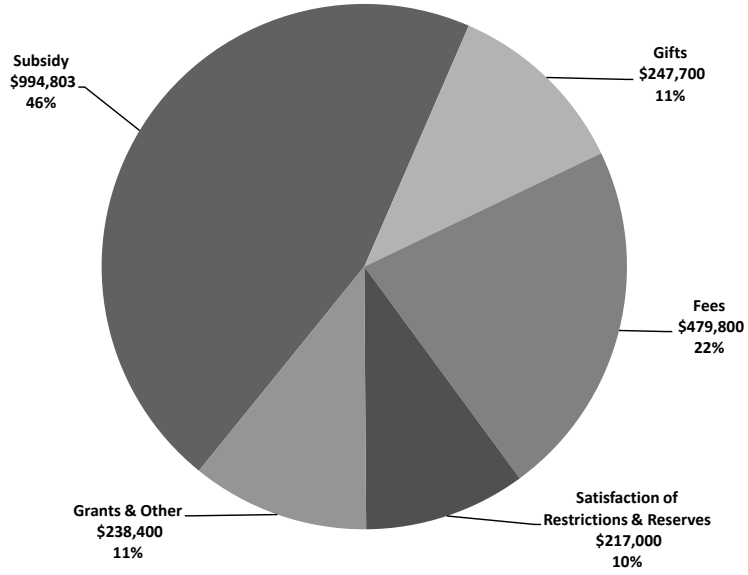
Teacher James Brandt, administrator of WELS Commission on Parish Schools
Rev. John Braun, Northwestern Publishing House
Rev. Bryan Gerlach, administrator of WELS Commission on Worship
Rev. Michael Hintz, administrator of WELS Commission on Evangelism
Rev. David Kehl, acting administrator of WELS Board for Parish Services and administrator of WELS Commission on Adult Discipleship
Dr. Joel Nelson, administrator of WELS Commission on Youth Discipleship
Prof. John Schmidt, Martin Luther College
Rev. Mark Schroeder, president
Prof. Alan Sigglekow, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary
Rev. Carl Ziemer, administrator of WELS Commission on Special Ministries

Parish Services budget

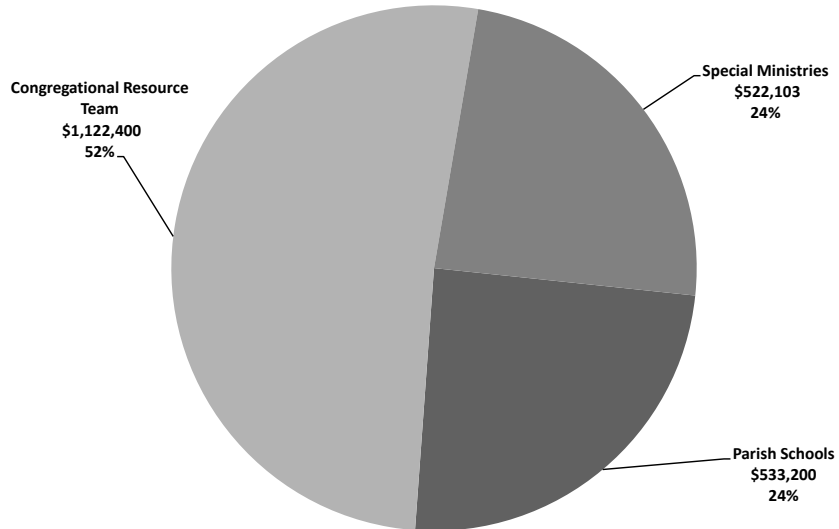


Parish Services budget

FY 2010-11 Support
\$2,177,703



FY 2010-11 Expenses
\$2,177,703



Commission on Evangelism

Floor Committee #12

Our calling

The Commission on Evangelism exists to assist congregations 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 pastors, and its people.
3. To promote the “equipping of the saints” for both organized congregational evangelism and individual Christian witness.

Our current situation

In the past biennium the Commission on Evangelism has been providing congregations the following resources.

School of Outreach

The School of Outreach is a workshop for church leaders to prepare and organize their congregations for evangelism and to analyze their communities with the goal of making specific plans for outreach. The School of Outreach is conducted on a weekend (Friday evening, all day Saturday, and Sunday afternoon) and hosted by a local WELS church for WELS and Evangelical Lutheran Synod congregations in the area. We strive to have at least one School of Outreach in every district each year. Since 1993 the School of Outreach has been conducted 148 times, and about 800 congregations have attended, many more than once. Congregations find it helpful to return to the School of Outreach after several years to refocus on their outreach plans.

District evangelism seminars

The Commission on Evangelism develops and administers special evangelism seminars for congregations. These seminars are conducted by the District Evangelism Commissions. In 2007 we offered *Welcoming Worship—A Seminar on Worship and Outreach*, written by Pastor Jonathan Schroeder. This seminar, attended by leaders from 283 congregations, was designed to help them

- study the strengths of liturgical worship for outreach,
- understand the relationship between worship and outreach,
- create a favorable first impression for visitors,
- improve the visitors’ worship experience, and
- develop a plan for faithful follow-up on visitors.

In 2008 the Commission on Evangelism produced a seminar on *Connecting to Communities*, written by Pastor James Turriff. The material emphasized for congregations the importance of building bridges into the communities around them to gain a wider audience for the gospel and to draw people’s attention to the church’s ministry. This seminar was attended by leaders from 279 congregations. Its goal was to help those congregations

- define and analyze their community to identify new opportunities for connecting with those who need Jesus,
- build a positive identity of their church among the people of their area,
- develop closer connections with more people to link them to the ministry of their congregation, and
- set goals for acts of Christian service by their congregation.

WhatAboutJesus.com

The Web site www.WhatAboutJesus.com serves to enhance the evangelism efforts of WELS and its congregations. The Web site is designed to reach out to the unchurched with biblically based articles that address people’s life concerns and questions they may have about the Christian faith. The site averages more than 1,000 visits every day. Daily Devotions (www.wels.net/jump/dailydevotion) are available for visitors to WhatAboutJesus.com and the WELS Web site. These devotions are free and sent to a subscriber’s e-mail inbox every weekday. There are now more than 11,000 e-mail subscribers to Daily Devotions. The Daily Devotion is also available as a podcast at <http://streams.wels.net>.

Evangelism Day at Martin Luther College

The Commission on Evangelism is partnering with the faculty of Martin Luther College and the Commission on Parish Schools to enhance evangelism training for students at the college. Four annual evangelism days have been conducted at Martin Luther College since 2005. The day for focusing on personal and congregational evangelism starts with a worship service, features a keynote speaker, includes two workshops for each class, and offers various “elective” presentations. All in all, more than 40 individuals including pastors, teachers, staff ministers, and lay members make presentations.

Evangelism Sunday

Every year materials are prepared for congregations to use on a Sunday of their choice to focus on evangelism. Materials include worship helps, sermon, children’s message, and a Bible class. These materials are available as a free download from the Commission on Evangelism’s Web site, www.wels.net/jump/evsunday.

Outreach Newsletters

Outreach Newsletters been produced by the Commission on Evangelism since 1988. Annually, it is used by nearly 300 congregations. The 12 one-page articles help congregations regularly reach out with God’s Word, especially to unchurched prospects. Available in English and Spanish, the newsletters include drawings and pictures to illustrate the articles’ message. The 2009 edition of Outreach Newsletters presents *The Message of Jesus’ Miracles for Today*, with the main theme *Jesus is Miraculous!* Visit www.wels.net/jump/outreachnews.

Evangelism Tool Box

This is a new product with three DVDs, each containing three 15- to 20-minute segments of practical instruction and useful resources to assist congregational leaders with evangelism programming for 1) Reaching out to people in the parish area, 2) Church image in the community, and 3) Early childhood ministry. For more information, go to www.wels.net/jump/toolbox.

New tract series: Answers from God’s Word

The Commission on Evangelism and Northwestern Publishing House jointly produced a series of eight tracts addressing questions that unchurched people often ask about Christianity. While mainly pointing people to Jesus as the true and only answer for their eternal salvation, the tracts provide biblical answers to common questions. This new series complements the previous “I Am” and “What About” series of tracts. All are available from Northwestern Publishing House.

Note: The sale of Commission on Evangelism products sold through Northwestern Publishing House total about \$20,000 a year. Additionally, there are many resources available online for free at www.wels.net/evangelism.

A look ahead

Presently all of Parish Services is discussing restructuring to provide essential services with a greatly reduced budget allocation (see Parish Services’ report, p. 117). Commission on Evangelism’s national office may merge into a new Congregational Ministries Resource Team without an administrator specifically focused on evangelism. Much of the work may need to be carried out by the commission. Because of that some of the plans below may need to be readjusted, reduced, or eliminated as Parish Services determines the programs that can be best supported with reduced manpower as we develop a new way to partner with congregations.

School of Outreach

Because this long-standing program has proven to be beneficial for congregations, the Commission on Evangelism hopes to continue conducting 10 to 12 Schools of Outreach annually throughout the synod with the goal of helping 50 to 60 congregations each year.

District evangelism seminars

Another evangelism seminar will be available in 2009. Titled *Reaching Out in a Digital World*, it was authored by Martin Spriggs, WELS chief technology officer. Specifically, the seminar will help congregations

- recognize and understand the many technological tools available for use in outreach,
- develop a plan to use the most appropriate digital tools to spread the gospel,
- mobilize congregational members to use digital tools for personal evangelism, and
- determine clear goals for outreach using the tools of today.

Evangelism Day at Martin Luther College

This day of emphasizing evangelism for our future pastors, teachers, and staff ministers has proved to be valuable. Martin Luther College's faculty has resolved to continue holding this event annually, and the Commission on Evangelism will continue working together with the faculty steering committee to improve and implement this event each year.

Evangelism resources and products

The Commission on Evangelism will continue to offer popular and new evangelism products for sale at reasonable costs through Northwestern Publishing House and provide free downloadable resources on our Web site. A major project that is being planned pertains to friendship evangelism. To help Christians grow in their confidence and ability to share their faith, especially with people that they know, the Commission on Evangelism is working to professionally produce a DVD to encourage, instruct, and demonstrate sharing our faith with friends and family.

Rev. Michael Hintz, reporter

Rev. Donn Dobberstein, chairman

Rev. John Huebner

Rev. Timothy Otto

Rev. Douglas Tomhave

Advisory:

Rev. Michael Hintz, administrator

Prof. Daniel Leyrer, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

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. "The WELS Commission on Worship shall have 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" (WELS Bylaws).

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. As noted in the Ad Hoc Commission report, the Commission on Worship "provides important guidance and education in a time when worship topics are at the forefront of discussion in our synod." Some points shared in the *2004 Report to the Twelve Districts* remain central to the commission's work:

1. Since worship reaches the most people the most frequently, quality worship will have a continuing positive impact on all aspects of a parish's life.
2. Good worship affects outreach in many ways. People are more willing to invite friends. The impact on visitors is more powerful. Assimilation is an important part of outreach; good worship improves assimilation. Good worship can be expected to have a positive impact on offerings, thus enabling more support for missions. Good worship isn't a magic bullet all by itself; it simply is central to much that parishes want to do.
3. The Commission on Worship will continue to publish by both traditional and nontraditional means (e.g., Web) resources for worship enrichment.
4. The Commission on Worship leadership will continue to work toward avoidance of worship wars in WELS—a distraction that in other denominations has consumed far too much energy and good will at various levels from national to parish. We will pursue this goal both proactively through resources like *Worship the Lord* and through resources [such as the new hymnal supplement] that help people to find WELS worship to be positive and satisfying. We will work for a balance of innovation and discernment.

5. The Commission on Worship leadership will continue to cultivate in WELS a “gospel optimism” that God promises to work through his means of grace. This gospel optimism is not only a hallmark of being Lutheran but also core to Lutheran worship. It encourages and empowers members in their lives of Christian witness.
6. Programs like Schools of Worship Enrichment and the National Worship Conference will help to set high standards as well as facilitating goals customized by the unique needs of various parishes.

Our current situation

The last biennium has 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 July 2008 event was enjoyed by more than 1,200 attendees in St. Peter, Minn., and set records in several categories.

The 2007 synod convention put heightened emphasis on missions and ministerial education. Several of the 60 presentations at the 2008 conference related to the intersection of worship and outreach, including some cross-cultural themes. Many presentations advanced the education and expertise of those who serve us in worship, both called workers and lay leaders. Some of these topics focused on themes meant to strengthen our unity as expressed in worship. All enable us better to proclaim in worship “Christ’s Love, Our Calling” to both the found and the lost.

One presentation—“Compelling Worship, Vital Parishes, Strong Synod”—explored how strong parish worship can have an impact on synodical strength, unity, and mission. This presentation and many others are available in print, audio, or video at www.wels.net/jump/worship-conf.

Christian Worship: Supplement

The hymnal supplement was developed by a committee of the Commission on Worship. The 255-page pew edition was debuted at the July 2008 worship conference and served as the centerpiece of the conference. Other editions (Accompaniment, Electronic Pew, Guitar) were available in November 2008. Electronic editions enable creation of customized worship folders and provide a wide variety of musical accompaniment options.

Christian Worship: Supplement *introduction*

To help parishes make the best use of the supplement, a number of helps for introducing this resource were provided, including

- a Bible class series on selected supplement hymns,
- a midweek Advent worship series,
- an updated edition of *Planning Christian Worship*,
- a professionally recorded two-CD set of highlights using a wide variety of instruments, and
- a series of *Worship the Lord* newsletter articles.

Four concertatos based on hymns from the supplement were commissioned by the Commission on Worship Supplement Committee and were published by Northwestern Publishing House in May 2009.

Seventy-five workshops were scheduled from September 2008-March 2009 to introduce the supplement in the districts. Those unable to attend a workshop were able to view a recorded session online.

At the end of 2008 Northwestern Publishing House estimated that 30 to 40 percent of WELS parishes were already using *Christian Worship: Supplement* to some degree. Nine hundred seventeen accompaniment editions had been sold. One district’s January 2009 missionary conference (attended by more than just home missionaries) revealed that 90 percent of those attending had already made some use of *Christian Worship: Supplement* in their parishes.

Reports from across WELS indicate high appreciation for the supplement. The most common negative feedback seems to concern copyright matters.

Schools of Worship Enrichment

The Commission on Worship has offered Schools of Worship Enrichment since 2002. By the end of 2008 we had held 25 events and served more than 210 congregations. School of Worship Enrichment events have been some of the most valuable and appreciated efforts of the Commission on Worship. Participant surveys at every site representing a wide variety of parishes throughout the country have given high marks to these events.

Publishing

In addition to preparing the content of *Christian Worship: Supplement* for Northwestern Publishing House to publish, the commission publishes two bi-monthly newsletters: *Worship the Lord* and *Preach the Word*. These newsletters are used also in Hong Kong, Ukraine, Sweden, and parts of Latin America. An independent 2008 survey showed that 67 percent of WELS pastors read *Preach the Word* 75 percent of the time or more, and 82 percent of those who read it find it useful for their preaching.

Future musicians

More than \$16,000 was given in response to a March 2008 special appeal from the Ministry of Christian Giving to address the need for future musicians. Surveys in three of the largest WELS districts reveal that 64 to 74 percent of our church musicians are more than 40 years old. The commission is striving to not only aid the work of current church musicians by providing them with the resources they need, but also to inspire a new generation of church musicians.

One resource related to the need for future musicians is a new DVD, *Children Making Music*. The half-hour DVD includes segments for children, parents, and church/school leaders. The commission distributed this DVD to each WELS church and school in August 2008.

A look ahead

When Parish Services is restructured due to a reduction in budget allocation, the commission's national office may merge into a new Congregational Ministries Resource Team without an administrator specifically focused on worship. As that happens, some of the plans below may need to be readjusted, reduced, or eliminated.

Ongoing activity

Many of the activities described above will continue in the new biennium: encouragement toward good worship variety and vitality, Schools of Worship Enrichment, introduction of *Christian Worship: Supplement*, cultivation of future church musicians, and planning for a 2011 national worship conference.

Development continues on several projects not mentioned above, including:

- revised/expanded worship curriculum,
- revised/expanded HymnSoft,
- Hispanic worship resources, and
- *Worship Music: A Resource for Lutheran Keyboard Musicians*, a biannual publication of the Commission on Worship and Northwestern Publishing House.

Future activity

Intranet resources

The current Worship Web site, for many years one of the most active areas of the WELS Web site, suffers from at least two drawbacks.

1. Content is not organized in ways most beneficial to worship planners.
2. All content is provided via the WELS Worship office.

With other projects competing for time, it is not possible to update the site in a way that best serves worship planners. Solution: Several pastors and musicians will serve as moderators. These people will coordinate others who are all able to post resources, thus eliminating the bottleneck of relying solely on the Worship office for all posting. The first stages of an improved Intranet delivery along with expanded content categories began field testing in February 2009.

2017 Reformation anniversary

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. 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.

Worship and outreach collaboration

Discussion began in Spring 2009 to discover new ways to help parishes and pastors make improvements in both worship and outreach, areas which are sometimes pitted against each other, areas in which some seem to specialize at the expense of the other, areas which benefit from high priority, training, and resources. In addition to goals of

improvement in both areas, other goals are to realize benefits to WELS in terms of healthy, vibrant parishes better supporting the worldwide mission of WELS, and strengthening unity and trust within WELS through consensus and creativity in worship and outreach—“Compelling Worship, Vital Parishes, Strong Synod.”

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

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Commission on Adult Discipleship

Floor Committee #12

Our calling

The synod’s Adult Discipleship office exists to help adults grow in Christ’s love and live out their calling. The resources provided by the Commission on Adult Discipleship assist congregations and their leaders to lead members to see Jesus as central to their life and to equip them to use their unique gifts to bring the gospel influence into all their daily relationships. These resources promote spiritual growth through personal devotional life, Bible classes, family ministry, stewardship growth, congregational group encouragement, member involvement, elder training, and leadership development.

The work of Adult Discipleship spans most of the stated WELS objectives:

- 1) To uphold and testify to the truth of God as fully revealed in the inspired, inerrant, infallible Holy Scriptures and articulated in the Lutheran confessions, and to use Scripture as the sole authority.
- 2) To foster a sense of urgency for the lost and to seize every opportunity the Lord provides to evangelize lost souls.
- 3) To establish churches where Christians help each other grow and mature in the faith through public worship and a lifelong study of the Word of God.
- 4) To encourage and equip each other for the application of our faith, reflecting Christ’s love in lives of Christian service to the Lord, his Church, and his world.
- 5) To mobilize our people, as members of the universal priesthood, in ministry using the Word.
- 6) To recruit and train candidates qualified for public ministry and provide for their continuing education so that the Word of God is proclaimed faithfully and effectively in accord with the Lutheran Confessions.

Spiritual growth is “job number one” and the soul of our work. As was stated in the Ad Hoc Commission report, “We will not be satisfied with anything but the best efforts at sharing God’s truth. Our desire for excellence in the ministry of the Word leads us to encourage one another to continue to grow spiritually by regular study of the Word in an individual and personal way and also in a formal, organized way.”

This also is reflected in the resolution of Floor Committee #2 of the 2007 synod convention that resolved that the “president forge a future that leads us to live up to God’s expectations to be in his Word, urging every pastor, teacher, and staff minister and every WELS member to recommit to Bible study, and do more to encourage those who are not in the Word to be in the Word.”

Our current situation

Presently the national office is covered by an administrator and administrative assistant to respond to requests for insight or assistance with ministries for adult spiritual growth in congregations across the synod. Adult Discipleship continues to develop resources plus a variety of training and leadership workshops that put us on the road serving congregations in the districts. The following have been our main focus since the last synod in convention.

Stewardship encouragement resources

Each year in May (except during the 2008-09 Year of Jubilee) Adult Discipleship supplies congregations with a four-week stewardship emphasis. These include sermons, Bible studies, worship helps, promotion, and commitment cards. The material developed for 2007 followed the theme *Every Life for Christ*. CDs with all these materials were sent to each congregation. All the stewardship emphasis materials from the past several years are available on the Adult Discipleship Web site, www.wels.net/jump/bps-cad.

2009-12 WELS stewardship encouragement: Christ's Love, Our Calling.

A four-year synodical emphasis will build on the new synod motto "Christ's Love, Our Calling." This will be more than the typical stewardship program and will address different aspects of being a steward of the gifts of our relationship with God, family, the body of Christ, and our "neighbors." The first year will focus on our use of time and encourage members to seek to build these relationships. This emphasis will provide the typical resources as well as options to keep the theme active throughout the year. The first year of resources will be rolled out with the new synod logo at the 2009 synod convention. An overview of the material will be available at the end of May and can be ordered after the synod meets in convention at the end of July.

Road to Emmaus "movie" project

This 30-plus-minute "movie" is being developed in partnership with Multi-Language Publications and Northwestern Publishing House. The movie, filmed in quality HD format, premiered at the Synod Administration Building on Feb. 12. The professional acting follows an imagined conversation of two disciples with Jesus on the road to Emmaus. It carries the listeners through key stories of the Old Testament to understand from Scripture why Jesus had to suffer and die before he entered his glory. The Spanish language version will be the first of many languages other than English in which this movie will be offered. The pilot version has already been reviewed in places like Nepal, Hong Kong, and Indonesia where they are planning its use. It will be available for purchase at the end of July 2009. Additional pamphlets and studies are being planned to provide broad use of the movie. Initial funding for this project came from the Publication Coordinating Commission, WELS Kingdom Workers, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, and individual contributors. We are eager for people to see and use this resource for congregational nurture and outreach as well as global mission work.

Schools of Stewardship

These one-and-a-half-day workshops help congregational leaders come together to learn ways to enhance the stewardship culture in their congregations. They address the foundational elements that impact stewardship and provide planning in setting up regular communication and training in the stewardship message. Hands-on planning is done for a concentrated annual stewardship emphasis. Ministry of Christian Giving also partners with these workshops to provide congregations with tools to set up a variety of options for local planned giving teams. These are led by a team of trainers who provide these seminars on request. Each congregation leaves with a plan of action to implement to develop healthy stewardship development for members.

Heart in Focus—a new financial course from a clear Lutheran perspective

As a response to the growing request for a Christian financial course with a Lutheran approach, *Heart in Focus* has been developed. *Heart in Focus* is a six- to eight-session course available for congregations to train individual members in the basics of wise, faith-focused finances in their daily lives. It covers topics such as spending, debt, earning, giving, saving, and investing. Each session is built around an aspect of our identity and relationship with God in Christ. Each participant will leave with a plan of action and resources to carry it out.

The Participant's Workbook and the Facilitator's Kit can be ordered from Northwestern Publishing House. The complete Facilitator's Kit includes the PowerPoint (with video clips), a 300-page leader's manual for class preparation, a spiral bound leader's notebook for teaching, and a two-pocket folder for paperwork.

Heart in Focus "Train the Trainer Events" are also available for regions on request. These one- to two-day workshops train potential presenters to lead the *Heart in Focus* course in their congregation. The participants experience *Heart in Focus* session by session, are given pointers for presentation, and discuss ways to best roll this out in their area.

Called worker personal financial seminars

Called workers are not immune to the challenges that finances cause families or the impact on their leadership. These one-and-a-half-day seminars gather called workers and their spouses to discuss the unique challenges they face. They provide basic building blocks for a healthy approach to money so that participants can leave with a newly reworked plan for their finances. These seminars began in summer 2007 and are working their way around the districts in response to specific requests. So far more than 300 called workers and their spouses have attended the seminars. Some of the expenses for these are subsidized by Thrivent grants to provide an affordable getaway for called workers to address this important topic, especially during these challenging economic times.

WELS National Marriage Enrichment and Get-Away Weekends

Leaders and individuals continue to recognize the importance of strong marriages to the health of families and congregations. In the last two years Adult Discipleship continued to offer these marriage enrichment weekends around the country. Two hundred couples have attended these retreats in the past two years to renew their commitment to a healthy marriage. Visit www.welsmarriageretreat.org for more information.

Women's Ministry Committee

The Bible study *Heirs Together of God's Gracious Gift of Life* has become a popular choice for congregational study and is on its third printing. The in-depth study provides opportunity for men and women to discuss what Scripture says concerning our interdependence as well as the unique applications of unchanging scriptural principles for men and women within different ministry settings. The Women's Ministry Committee added 15 women to its team in October 2008. These women, who have been very active in their own congregations, are working to produce resources for congregations in the areas of Web development, publications (primarily Bible studies), congregational ministries, and conferences. Visit www.wels.net/women for more information.

Congregational Leadership Institutes

Adult Discipleship assists the Congregational Assistant Program to offer courses for development of congregational leaders. These graduated studies of Holy Scripture provide growth opportunities for congregational leadership and certification for service to their Lord at their home congregation. Full Congregational Assistant Program certification also qualifies some students to enroll in the Pastoral Studies Institute (PSI) at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The Milwaukee Institute of Christian Studies and the Congregational Studies Institute in Appleton, Wis., are two samples of providing these courses through a local network of pastors and teachers.

A look ahead

In view of possible restructuring of Parish Services, Commission on Adult Discipleship's national office may merge into a new Congregational Ministries Resource Team. Without an administrator specifically focused on adult discipleship some of the present assistance to congregations may need to be readjusted, reduced, or eliminated. In the months before and after synod convention Parish Services will determine the programs that can be best supported with reduced manpower as we develop a new way to partner with congregations.

In the meantime plans continue with the resources and programs above, including

- six more Schools of Stewardship this fall;
- the National WELS Women's Leadership Conference—Leading with a Christ-like attitude, planned for June 16-18, 2010, at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.;
- more resources for the *Road to Emmaus* movie;
- continual unfolding of the synodical theme "Christ's Love, Our Calling" with four years of resources;
- guidelines, resources, and network connections from the Small Group Task Force;
- a Bible information class focusing on the person of Jesus and incorporating scenes from *Road to Emmaus*; and
- workshops, titled *Leading Adult Bible Studies Today*, that train Bible study leaders in new approaches to get adults more involved in Bible study.

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Rev. Randy Hunter, chairman

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Commission on Youth Discipleship

Floor Committee #12

Our calling

The vision of WELS Commission on Youth Discipleship best expresses the calling we have as a synodical office and Parish Services unit: “Every congregation actively partnered with parents to nurture youth: their perspective, potential, and place in the body of Christ.”

The word “perspective” recognizes that youth have points of view, opinions, ideas, and dreams from which the church can learn. The word “potential” recognizes that youth have abilities, talents, attitudes, and energy through which the church can benefit. The word “place” recognizes that youth must be valued, included, empowered, and engaged in ministry, making themselves and the church whole.

Youth Discipleship has the privilege of being the synod’s advocate for youth, especially for those not participating in the full-time, formal Christian education agencies of our church body. This demographic is numerically significant. *WELS Statistical Report* and the Commission on Parish Schools *School Statistics*, though not providing complete data, assist Youth Discipleship to determine the scope of its privilege. From these reports it can be estimated that WELS has about 20,000 high school-aged youth, of which roughly 14,000 (70 percent) do not attend a WELS preparatory or area Lutheran high school. WELS has about 49,000 children ages 5-13, of which about 28,000 (57 percent) do not attend a Lutheran elementary school. As a conservative estimate, WELS has about 30,000 children birth-4 years, of which about 20,000 (66 percent) do not attend a WELS early childhood ministry. Added to all this is the reality that several of Youth Discipleship’s ministries impact WELS youth who are also part of the full-time, formal Christian education agencies overseen by WELS Parish Schools, and Youth Discipleship is also the Parish Services unit tasked with developing resources and support for WELS parents.

Youth Discipleship’s God-given responsibility is vast and its calling vital, especially during this period of WELS membership decline. It is also a calling filled with tremendous opportunities and fueled by the promises of a gracious God.

Our current situation

Since the 2007 synod convention, which affirmed the valuable role WELS Parish Services and Youth Discipleship performs, our commission has worked diligently and creatively to “raise the bar” with the ministries it manages. Our mission/vision document was clarified and simplified. Through special grants and by repurposing budgetary funds, Youth Discipleship was able to do the following:

- *Continue for at least the next three years its highly acclaimed monthly Kids Connection video ministry.* This annual, nine-episode resource shares the stories of WELS youth in action as they live their faith in Jesus. *Kids Connection* is used by roughly 330 WELS congregations, primarily those with a Lutheran elementary school (LES). Half of *Kids Connection*’s funding over the next three years is coming from an Antioch Foundation grant of \$105,000.
- *Develop 52 spiritually uplifting devotional videos for the Web about real-life issues that teens face.* The three- to five-minute videos are titled *Everyday* and explore the sins, faith, relationships, hope, and victories that youth encounter daily. Youth Discipleship has partnered with Wisconsin Lutheran College’s Theater Arts Department and Highlights Media (Jefferson, Wis.) to produce the videos. The actors are high school and college students from WELS congregations. The videos were developed for LivingBold, www.livingbold.net, but also appear on WELS’ Streams Web site, <http://streams.wels.net>. A \$29,000 grant from WELS’ Publication Coordinating Commission is making this project possible.

- *Complete the Confirmation Ministry Self-Study.* This resource, available through Northwestern Publishing House, will assist congregations to reflect on, evaluate, and improve what they are doing relative to catechism and confirmation instruction. The resource includes a CD containing all the self-study materials and many “homegrown” curriculum samples from around WELS. Also included is a DVD with testimonies of “best practice” from 10 WELS congregations. The *Confirmation Ministry Self-Study* is partially funded through a \$19,000 Publication Coordinating Commission grant.
- *Complete development of the Y-ME Academy (Youth Ministry Enhancement) materials and process to help congregations improve their ministry to and with youth.* Y-ME Academies are similar to the Commission on Worship’s School of Worship Enrichment, Adult Discipleship’s Schools of Stewardship, and the Commission on Evangelism’s Schools of Outreach in that they work with smaller groups of congregations in an education/evaluation/planning process. Development of the Y-ME materials and initial field testing was made possible through a \$24,000 Thrivent grant.
- *Reposition Youth Discipleship’s three quarterly newsletters to an online delivery format.* Moving our three quarterly newsletters (*Sowers & Seeds* for early childhood ministry staffs, *Partners* for Sunday school staffs, and *REACH!* for teen ministry staffs) to e-mail notification/online delivery has freed roughly \$30,000 that has been used to bolster other ministry.
- *Improve the LivingBold Web site for teens.* A new look, addition of audio and video content, more responsive discussion/Q&A, a LivingBold presence on MySpace, moving the WELS International Youth Rally site to the LivingBold site, and making available special merchandise with the LivingBold brand have increased traffic to the site. A Thrivent grant of \$7,000 assisted with these improvements.
- *Develop Web sites for each of Youth Discipleship’s 12 district coordinators.* All district coordinators are able to create and manage their own individual district “sub-sites.” This enables the district coordinators to share district-specific information as well as promote WELS Youth Discipleship.
- *Begin development of one-day vacation Bible school resources for Christmas and Easter.* All 12 districts report increased need/demand for quality, one-day vacation Bible school resources to use during Christmas and Easter. Through partnership with Northwestern Publishing House, Youth Discipleship hopes to produce a three-year cycle of two levels of materials (pre-reader/reader). An Antioch Foundation grant of \$50,000 is making this project possible.
- *Post Bible studies/discussion guides under the theme “Creating Youth-full Churches” that bring forward the findings of the Why Young People Leave WELS national study.* Posted at www.wels.net/jump/youthstudy for free download are five Bible studies/discussion guides, a “Conceptual framework” for creating youth-full churches, Bible passages used in each lesson printed out in a separate document, and a leader’s guide.
- *Expand to 20 the number of WELS.net University mini-courses for Sunday staffs.* These free mini-courses provide Sunday school teachers much needed and desired training on a variety of teaching topics. All courses can be found at www.wels.net/jump/wnusstraining. A grant of \$10,000 from Thrivent helped to make these mini-courses possible.
- *Expand to four the number of WELS.net University mini-courses for parents.* These free mini-courses provide parents needed and desired training. All courses can be accessed at www.wels.net/jump/wnusstraining.
- *Add audio devotions to the LivingBold and ParentsCrosslink Web sites.* Recognizing that many of today’s busy youth and parents prefer to listen to content rather than read it and as a way to provide devotional materials for the whole family to easily enjoy, weekly devotions have been audio-recorded for download from www.livingbold.net and www.parentscrosslink.net.
- *Add podcasts to the Parents Crosslink Web site.* Podcasts are audio-recorded interviews in a radio style. Currently, the *Parents Crosslink* podcasts provide authors of this newsletter’s print articles the opportunity to go farther and deeper into their topic. The podcasts enable *Parents Crosslink* users to take advantage of the information whenever they care to. All of the improvements to www.parentscrosslink.net, as well as the Web site’s development in 2005, were made possible through a \$60,000 Publications Coordinating Commission grant.
- *Appoint three teens to the 2009 WELS International Youth Rally Planning Committee.* As had been done for the rallies in 2005 and 2007, three WELS teen were appointed to serve on the Rally Planning Committee through a national nomination process. Having teens on the Rally Planning Committee adds a valuable and needed perspective and enables Youth Discipleship to “practice what it preaches” when it comes to engaging youth in real ministry.
- *Plan and administer the 2009 WELS International Youth Rally.* Under the theme “Follow the Path, Lead the Way,” this year’s rally will take place on the campus of Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. One thousand four hundred thirty youth are registered to attend. The four-day event (July 8-11) includes worship, education, fellowship, recreation, and service opportunities.

- *Assist with bringing teens from other countries to the 2009 WELS International Youth Rally.* With financial travel assistance from WELS World Missions and discounted rally registration fees, teens of WELS missionaries from Brazil, Malawi, Taiwan, and Zambia will attend the rally. Teens from Canada and Grenada, as well as Pakistan, will also attend. No previous rally has had this many countries represented.
- *Continue networking with Northwestern Publishing House on the development of Christ-Light 2.* Since 2002, Youth Discipleship has partnered with the publishing house to develop the revision/remake of the *Christ-Light*© religion curriculum. This massive project, totally overseen and coordinated by Northwestern Publishing House, will bring exciting new Bible teaching resources to WELS Lutheran elementary and Sunday schools. The curriculum is scheduled for release in 2013. Progress updates can be found at www.nph.net/CL2.

A look ahead

Because of proposed reductions in the budget allocation of Parish Services, discussions have begun that merges the Commission on Youth Discipleship's national office into a new Congregational Ministries Resource Team without an administrator specifically focused on youth. Much of the specific development work may have to be carried out by the commission itself. Because of this, some of Youth Discipleship's plans may need to be readjusted, reduced, or eliminated as Parish Services determines the programs that can be best supported with reduced manpower as we develop a new way to partner with congregations in their gospel ministry.

Youth Discipleship will do all it can to continue improving the consultation and resources it provides to WELS congregations, parents, and youth. In the firm trust that what God ordains is always good, the Commission on Youth Discipleship and its national office staff will continue to serve with faith, energy, and intelligence. God-willing, Youth Discipleship will be able to continue its privileged and exciting calling to help congregations and parents nurture youth—their perspective, potential, and place in the body of Christ.

The commission thanks Mr. Harvey Dunn for his many years of service as a commission member and secretary.

Dr. Joel Nelson, reporter

Rev. Thomas Schneider, chairman

Rev. Richard Warnecke, vice chairman

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Dr. Joel Nelson, administrator

Rev. Ray Schumacher, Northwestern Publishing House

Prof. David Sellnow, Martin Luther College

Commission on Parish Schools

Floor Committee #12

Our calling

Our Lord and Savior welcomed little children into his arms and blessed them: "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 Commission on Parish Schools encourages and supports the mission of welcoming children and young adults into the Savior's arms through the outreaching and nurturing ministries of Lutheran early childhood centers, elementary schools, and high schools. The commission has historically carried out this important support role in a variety of ways.

- Developing approximately 500 call lists per year on behalf of the 12 district presidents.
- Managing personnel and statistical data for more than 3,000 teachers and 500 schools.
- Facilitating formative and summative assessments of directors, teachers, and principals.
- Facilitating the induction and mentoring of new teachers and principals.

- Publishing a weekly electronic news bulletin and quarterly newsletter.
- Serving as a visible link between 3,000 called workers and their church body through participation in various teachers conferences throughout the synod.
- Developing new school leaders from the ranks of experienced teachers.
- Accrediting 10 to 15 schools each year through a nationally validated, intensive self-study and site-visit process.
- Developing and hosting district, regional, and national conferences for teachers and school leaders.
- Publishing 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.
- Consulting with principals, directors, teachers, schools, and congregations to assist them with legal questions, planning efforts, and problem solving.
- 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.

Our current situation

Since 2002 the Commission on Parish Schools has pursued a vision of "Stronger WELS Schools, Serving More Students" by emphasizing faith, outreach, learning, family, leadership, service, and partnership in the resources, training, and personal assistance it offers to schools and school leaders. The desired measurable outcome of this effort has been the stabilization and eventual growth of elementary school enrollments by 2010.

Information reported by WELS parish schools in fall 2008 indicates early childhood enrollment is growing, while elementary and high school enrollments decline. Over the past five years, elementary enrollment declined by 1,343 students or five percent. The number of elementary schools has dropped from 354 to 337 over the same time period.

WELS parish schools enrollment by level

Level	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Early childhood	8,449	9,131	9,354	9,567	9,823
Elementary	26,632	26,525	26,035	25,712	25,289
Area Lutheran high school	5,805	5,938	5,912	5,847	5,816

In order to restore former support services that have been previously defunded, the commission has asked schools to contribute \$4 per high school student and \$7.50 per elementary and early childhood student. Approximately 10 percent of stand-alone early childhood ministries, 63 percent of elementary schools, and 70 percent of high schools contributed \$110,000 in 2007 and \$165,000 in 2008. During the past two years, 55 percent of this revenue was directed toward office operations (salaries, travel, and basic costs); the balance has been directed toward new and redeveloped ministry programs. The commission's current annual operating subsidy is \$250,000, which covers 77 percent of annual office operation costs. The remaining costs of the national office have been funded by school contributions. All commission meeting expenses, district ministry, and ministry program expenses have been covered through school contributions or fraternal grants.

The WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) program continues to expand its reach. During the past two years 23 schools hosted onsite visits. Twelve schools were accredited in September 2008. We expect ten more schools to be accredited in September 2009. This will bring the total number of WELSSA accredited schools to 62 during the first five years of the program's existence. Another 31 schools are in the early stages of the process.

The commission held its fifth triennial National School Leadership Conference in June 2008 in Waukesha, Wis. More than 400 WELS educators, pastors, and board members were encouraged in their school leadership under the theme "Abide in the Vine." The nine members of the second graduating cohort of the commission's Administrative Candidate Training program completed their studies by attending the conference.

A look ahead

The proposed budget cuts to Parish Services will reduce the commission's operating subsidy to \$204,000 in the first year of the biennium and \$160,000 in the second year of the biennium. At this new level, the synod's budgetary support for parish schools will have been reduced by 66 percent since 2002.

Continued contributions from schools will be required to maintain the present level of staffing in the national office (two administrators and two support staff) for the first year of the biennium. The commission's ministry programs

will be funded by special funds that first year. One support staff position will be eliminated during the biennium's second year, but both administrative positions should remain. One position will be funded by school contributions. At present participation levels, 70 percent of contributions will go toward office operations; 30 percent will be directed to district ministry, commission meeting expenses, and ministry programs.

Technological advances in data collection should ensure the commission's ability to carry out its responsibility of managing the synod's teacher calling process. A Web-based system for collecting annual school statistical reports is being implemented in summer 2009. To maintain accurate call list data, the commission will seek to implement a similar Web-based process to enable teachers to maintain and update their personal information.

The commission will continue to work toward enhancing and delivering programming that is vital for strengthening schools and reversing enrollment trends. Progress toward these goals may be slowed by the current financial climate. Fraternal and corporate grants will be explored to continue these efforts.

A six-member panel has been redesigning the commission's current formative teacher assessment, summative teacher evaluation, and new teacher induction programs. The panel has spent the past 18 months researching best practice to develop a framework for the new programs and is patterning much of its work after the New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and its affiliate, the Wisconsin New Teacher Center. The redesigned programs will feature a set of professional standards for Christian educators developed by the team in consultation with the education faculty of Martin Luther College. The commission expects program documentation to be authored during the first year of the biennium and field testing to be completed during the second. The goal is to introduce the new programs at the 2011 National School Leadership Conference.

Training for mentors of new teachers and school principals is a key feature of the redesigned programs. To better equip new and experienced principals for effective leadership, a group of experienced school leaders has been trained to deliver the New Teacher Center's highly acclaimed Leadership Institute consisting of ten modules:

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

Supporting ministerial training school graduates during their formative initial years of ministry is critical for protecting the synod's investment in these workers and is essential for the future health of our system of parish schools. The redeveloped teacher mentoring program will be designed to bring mentors into first- and second-year teacher's classrooms for observation and coaching. The program will feature training programs for mentors and periodic forums to support networking between mentors and between beginning teachers.

Much progress has been made in recent years in delivering enhanced technology solutions to support parish schools. These programs will continue in some form, but expanding and enhancing these services will be slowed.

Those working on behalf of Parish 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 teens.

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

The Commission on Parish Schools expresses gratitude to the Lord for the faithful service of outgoing commission members Teacher Paul Hartwig and Mr. Doug Arndt who have each served the commission for 12 years. May God continue to bless these servants even as he has blessed our schools through their many years of faithful service.

Teacher James Brandt, reporter

Teacher James Sievert, chairman
Teacher Paul Hartwig, secretary
Mr. Doug Arndt
Rev. Matt Brown
Teacher Steve Granberg
Rev. Phil Heyer
Mr. Jim Sexton

Advisory:

Teacher James Brandt, administrator
Teacher Jeff Inniger, associate administrator
Prof. Robert Klindworth, Martin Luther College
Prof. Michael Quandt, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Commission on Special Ministries

Floor Committee #12

Our calling

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

In keeping with our Savior's command to love one another as he has loved us and to proclaim the gospel to all people—including those with special needs—WELS Special Ministries frequently works with people hidden behind the walls of institutions or overlooked because they are part of a minority. On the other hand, people with special needs are sometimes ignored or dismissed because the services they need are complex and/or expensive. For these and many other reasons, WELS Special Ministries reaches out to individuals, congregations, and families to offer specialized services and resources appropriate to address the special need(s) with which they are confronted.

We serve people who are physically, mentally, or emotionally in need of special consideration in regard to their ability to learn, worship, and participate in parish ministries and everyday living situations. We also serve thousands of people who are away from their church home, such as military personnel or people living overseas, in prison, or in some other institution.

To carry out our mission effectively and efficiently, we have appointed committees to focus on eight areas of special need. Those committees include

- Health and Wellness (formerly the Committee for the Aging),
- Military Services,
- Prison Ministry,
- Care Committee for Called Workers,
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing,
- Mental Health Needs,
- Special Education, and
- Visually Impaired.

The dedicated volunteers who make up the above committees frequently consult with clergy and laypeople in an effort to provide information, training, and materials to meet the special needs of God's people. As we faithfully serve members of our own synod, our Lord provides numerous opportunities to reach out with the gospel to an ever-increasing number of unchurched people.

Our current situation

The Commission on Special Ministries employs three full-time called workers—the Special Ministries administrator, a civilian chaplain to the military serving in Europe, and a prison ministry administrator. Our national civilian chaplain

to the military also serves as a home missionary and receives a stipend for his services. 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.

Health and Wellness

The Health and Wellness Committee promotes and trains believers for ministry to the aging, institutional ministry (hospital, nursing homes, and assisted living residences), and parish nursing.

Ministry to the Aging hosts a Serving Seniors Symposium, which is aimed at congregational leaders, men and women who want to learn, share ideas, and serve others. Ministry to the Aging also coordinates ministry to Alzheimer's patients and their families.

Parish nursing provides a practical way for congregations to demonstrate Christian care and a clear gospel witness to members and the community. For guidelines on how to begin a program, visit www.wels.net/csm.

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.

Chaplain Joshua Martin serves hundreds of military personnel and civilians in Europe. He and his family live in Spiesheim, Germany, and minister to military personnel and civilians scattered throughout Europe. For more information, visit www.wels.net/jump/military.

Pastor Paul Ziemer is the WELS National Civilian Chaplain and Liaison to the Military. Collaborating with the North Atlantic Mission Board and Beautiful Savior, Fayetteville, N.C. (near Fort Bragg), Ziemer coordinates training conferences for WELS military contact pastors, trains and mentors new military contact pastors, and supervises periodic chaplain trips to the Middle East or other areas of hostility. Ziemer has personally traveled to the Middle East to minister to American troops on numerous occasions. He also recently conducted a send-off worship service for members of the 32nd Brigade of the Wisconsin National Guard prior to their deployment to Iraq. With God's help and the cooperation of the U.S. military, we hope to send a team of WELS civilian chaplains to the Middle East in late summer or early fall.

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

We continue to send free copies of *Meditations*, a printed monthly worship service, and taped audio and/or video worship services to military personnel and civilians on our mailing list.

WELS Military Services is funded through designated gifts and grants. We pray that this vital ministry might soon receive synodical funding again. Offerings from individuals and groups such as the Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors continue to flow into the Civilian Chaplaincy Special Fund.

Send the name and address of those serving in the military or living in Europe to the Commission on Special Ministries at 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222. Our online referral service is available at www.wels.net/jump/refer. For more information, call Special Ministries or e-mail Pastor Joel Jaeger, chairman of the Military Services Committee, at joel.jaeger51@gmail.com.

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 nearly 50,000 inmates. Volunteers prepare regular mailings, correct Bible correspondence tests, and serve as pen pals to inmates.

Partnering with Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries, Prison Ministry supports a three-person Jail Ministry Training Team that equips individuals and congregations for local jail and prison ministry. After initial training, the team offers supplemental training via online courses, occasional visits, and teleconferences.

The Jail Ministry Training Team has trained more than 150 volunteers from 20 congregations located in 10 different states. This effort has been largely funded by a grant from WELS Kingdom Workers.

The Milwaukee County Correctional Facility–South processes some 24,000 inmates each year. WELS chaplains had already been serving the institution on a limited basis, but recent events made it possible for WELS to greatly enhance its ministry at the penal institution. In fall 2008 WELS Prison Ministry and Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries were approached by representatives of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and offered 20 hours of religious programming at the County Correctional Facility–South.

We seized the opportunity. WELS chaplains Mark Wenzel and Phil Merten, together with lay evangelist Martin Rosewicz, now offer 20-plus hours of Bible classes, worship services, and one-on-one counseling each week. Lead Chaplain Mark Wenzel schedules all religious programs at the institution.

God is richly blessing the ministry. We touch the lives of hundreds of inmates each week with the gospel. In less than a year, our chaplains have baptized and confirmed many inmates. We are expanding the scope of our ministry by involving local WELS congregations in mentoring released inmates through our “Backpack Program.”

During the last year WELS Prison Ministry and Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries have conducted more than a dozen “Raising Up Volunteers for Jail Ministry” meetings throughout Wisconsin and Minnesota. The goal of these meetings is to identify and train laypeople to serve as jail/prison ministry contacts in their congregations. Their role is to promote the ministry and encourage others to get involved. Often sufficient interest has been generated to bring in our Jail Ministry Training Team to train volunteers for local jail ministry. This effort has been largely funded by a generous grant from the Siebert Lutheran Foundation of Wisconsin.

Prison Ministry recently published *Living Water*, a series of 30, 30-minute Bible studies for use by people mentoring recently released inmates. In development are 200 Bible studies with teacher’s guides designed for use by lay volunteers in jail and prisons and simplified commentaries on the Gospel of John and Romans.

Jail and Prison Ministry resources are available free of charge. Contact Dave Nack, administrator of WELS Prison Ministry, at welspm@newulmtel.net, 507-354-3130, or P.O. Box 452, New Ulm MN 56073.

Special Education Services

The Special Education Services Committee (SESC) addresses the spiritual needs of individuals who are developmentally disabled (mentally retarded or cognitively disabled). Committee members focus on three main areas:

1. The Special Needs Family Network, a parent/caregiver support system.
2. Promotion and marketing of Special Education resources.
3. Developing new program resources.

For more information, e-mail specialneeds@wels.net or call toll-free 1-866-550-9357.

Resources available include the following:

- *Dear Christian Friend*, a special education curriculum that helps parents and churches teach people with developmental disabilities the basic truths of the Bible. The Special Education Services Committee partners with Jesus Cares Ministries to produce this and other helpful resources.
- The He Cares, We Care Program, through which volunteers send out encouraging cards and greetings to more than 600 people with developmental disabilities.
- *Joy in Jesus*, a new special education Bible study base on the book of Philippians.

Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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

- offers training and resources for ministry to deaf and hard of hearing people;
- presented a one-week Winterim course at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in January 2008; and
- produces *Open to All*, a quarterly newsletter that is available upon request.

For more information, contact Dean Weigand, chairman of the Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, at hrgimp@aol.com.

Mission for the Visually Impaired

The Mission for the Visually Impaired helps people who are unable to read normal print. The mission, manned by volunteers and headquartered in St. Paul, Minn.,

- produces devotional and other materials in Braille, large print, and on cassette tape;
- distributes materials throughout the world to WELS and non-WELS visually impaired people, including a group of blind people in Africa; and
- provides all materials and services free of charge to visually impaired people.

Christian Worship: Supplement is now available in Braille in three volumes with 40 pages per volume, making them manageable Braille books.

To order materials or to learn more about this ministry, contact WELS Mission for the Visually Impaired, 375 Bridgepoint Drive, South St. Paul MN 55075-2466; welsvisimp@aol.com.

The Care Committee for Called Workers

The Care Committee for Called Workers is dedicated to supporting called workers and their families, encouraging them in their ministries, and enhancing their quality of life.

The committee commissioned a new CD/DVD resource titled *Care to Care*. 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. *Care to Care* was made possible through a grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

The committee is now developing resources to help called workers successfully plan and transition into retirement.

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

A program titled *Internet Addictions: Intervention and Treatment* is now available. This program can be adapted by WELS worker training schools and area Lutheran high schools to inform faculty, dormitory staff, and students about Internet addictions and pornography addiction. Intervention, mentoring, and help for students will be emphasized. The development of this program is funded in part by a \$17,500 grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

A series of descriptions of mental health illnesses, accompanied by Bible passages and Bible narratives have been developed to help Christians counsel other Christians who are afflicted with mental health needs.

Mental health sensitivity and awareness brochures are available at www.wels.net/csm.

The committee is also developing a networking list and certification/accreditation procedure for mental health professionals. This would include a required course in Bible-based counseling for mental health professionals in fellowship with WELS.

The chairman of the Committee on Mental Health Needs is Prof. Alan Siggelkow, siggelka@wls.wels.net.

A look ahead

Although faced with a significant loss of funding, WELS Special Ministries confidently looks to the future. God's Word assures us: "Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed" (Proverbs 16:3). Although WELS Prison Ministry will likely have to reduce its ministry plan, all eight units of Special Ministry will continue to serve WELS parishes and their communities with "the one thing needful."

For more information on any of these areas, visit www.wels.net/csm or contact Pastor Carl Ziemer, administrator of Special Ministries, at 414-256-3241 or carl.ziemer@sab.wels.net.

Rev. Carl Ziemer, reporter

Teacher Charles Buege, chairman
Rev. Joel Jaeger, vice chairman and chairman of the Military Services Committee
Mr. Leon Brands, chairman of the Prison Ministry Committee
Mr. Ron Freiling, 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 Committee
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 Special Education Services Committee
Rev. Carl Ziemer, administrator

Parish Assistance

Floor Committee #12

Our calling

The Parish Assistance consulting ministry was authorized by the synod in convention in 1991 at a time when an increasing number of congregations were seeking personalized onsite assistance with a variety of issues. Today our churches—mostly struggling ones, but some stable and even growing—continue to request the services of Parish Assistance, which focuses on “assisting God’s people with pursuing his mission.”

We believe that, under God, as we help churches become healthier, we will also help our synod become a healthier church body. This, in turn, will position the synod to expand and support its ministry efforts at home and abroad, train and send out more workers, and increase its potential to be a greater blessing to God’s kingdom.

Our core four-phase consulting service involves helping congregations accurately analyze current reality, create a compelling vision for future ministry, prioritize and reorganize for action, and pursue their renewed mission with heightened focus and trust in the Lord to bless their efforts. Leaders are especially appreciative as we help them see with clarity

- what *must never change* (God’s message and mission),
- what *may change* (methodology), and
- what *must change* (anything that gets in the way of proclaiming the gospel message and pursuing Christ’s make-disciples mission).

In addition to our core four-phase service, special consulting services are also provided. Resolving conflict, building teams, evaluating staff levels, developing leaders, mentoring, coaching, merging ministries, and managing change are some examples of these special services.

Forward with Lutheran Schools is an additional consulting ministry within Parish Assistance. It is designed to assist congregations as they analyze the opportunities and challenges associated with opening or strengthening day cares, preschools, elementary schools, and high schools. Second Wind, a streamlined school-strengthening process, has been piloted and is now available in all the districts of our synod. As with our entire consulting ministry, Forward with Lutheran Schools emphasizes the use of programs for outreach as well as nurture.

Parish Assistance has now served, in some capacity, 473 congregations and/or schools. Of these, 182 were served by Forward with Lutheran Schools. Fifty-eight were served more than once. Some form of special consulting was also provided to 106 congregations based on their unique needs.

Our current situation

Parish Assistance experienced several years of full-time staff vacancies. Over the last couple of years some congregations that applied for Parish Assistance’s services remained on a waiting list until we could work them into our schedule. We are convinced that this unfortunate situation caused some leaders, who intended to request our services, to back away or to look for help elsewhere.

Thankfully, even though we still have one defunded vacant position, two key full-time positions have now been filled. Teacher Greg Schmill began full-time work as our Forward with Lutheran Schools consultant in July 2007. Dr. Paul Kelm, who previously served as a Parish Assistance consultant, began serving again in November 2008. We are now better positioned to serve our congregations and schools without prolonged delays.

Pastor Elton Stroh continues to serve as both a consultant and the director of Parish Assistance. Parish Assistance also makes regular use of experienced part-time lead and associate consultants and is in the process of training more. These additional consultants add valuable insights from their own ministry experiences and build a stronger network of support and encouragement among the congregations throughout our synod.

A look ahead

A major project being undertaken by Parish Assistance, with funding from a Thrivent grant, will be a study of turnaround churches in WELS. Turnaround churches are defined as congregations between the years 1990 and 2008 that have declined at least 20 percent in worship attendance after which, by God's grace and blessing, they rebounded and rose above their original status (before their decline started) by at least 20 percent, and then sustained or increased their new worship average.

The goal is to study some of these turnaround congregations in depth and discover the primary factors that appear to be associated with the manner in which the Lord has blessed them. These findings would help inform and better enable our consulting ministry to assist additional congregations with pursuing turnaround.

For the past 17 years Parish Assistance has had the privilege of helping our churches and schools—both struggling and thriving—to address constructively their specific ministry challenges and to pursue passionately their local ministry opportunities. In the future, in whatever ways the Lord allows, Parish Assistance will continue to assist God's people with pursuing his mission.

With the potential restructuring of Parish Services and formation of a new Congregational Ministries Resource Team, Parish Assistance may be asked to expand its consulting services. The goal would be to help maximize the positive impact of Parish Services within the proposed budget allocations.

For additional information, contact Pastor Elton Stroh, 608-837-3819; elton.stroh@sab.wels.net, or visit www.wels.net/jump/bps-pa.

Rev. Elton Stroh, reporter

Subsidiaries

Floor Committee #13

A number of subsidiary groups serve the synod in a variety of ways. 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.

WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc.

Floor Committee #13

Our calling

WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. (CEF) is a self-supporting, not for profit corporation. Our calling, or mission, is to provide financing for mission-minded projects that are under the direction of WELS Board for Home Missions. The Church Extension Fund provides loans and grants to qualified mission congregations so they can acquire land and build or renovate worship/ministry facilities that are used as tools for gospel outreach.

Our current situation

The money to carry on our mission comes from two sources—investments and gifts. Individual WELS members, WELS congregations, and WELS affiliates may invest in WELS CEF certificates. More than 5,500 investors have entrusted WELS CEF with nearly \$67 million, which funds the Loan Program. In addition, gifts and bequests made directly to WELS CEF are earmarked for the Assistance/Grant Program. Because construction, land purchases, and grant distributions are at various phases, the figures reported below are approximate, as of April 2009.

Grant Program

Grants are made to mission congregations after they have shown the ability to raise a certain percentage of the down payment required for a land purchase or facility construction. The congregation's down payment, combined with the WELS CEF matching grant, allows the congregation to move forward with a more manageable mortgage. More than \$2 million has been granted to more than 20 different mission congregations since the 2007 synod convention. In addition, WELS Board for Home Missions received a \$1 million grant this spring to help alleviate the synod's financial challenge. Since 1993 more than \$22 million in grants have been disbursed to mission congregations across North America.

Loan Program

The Church Extension Fund, in partnership with Home Missions, has provided nearly \$22 million in loans to 25 different ministries to complete construction or renovation projects during the past two fiscal years. Outstanding loans total \$123.5 million and represent 250 WELS congregations and affiliates. Nearly three-quarters of the loans have mortgage rates ranging between 4 to 6 percent—rates considerably lower than a congregation would be able to access through a traditional financial institution.

Future activities

It takes a number of years from the time the Board for Home Missions approves the start up of a new mission congregation until that congregation is ready to move into a worship facility and become self-supporting. We are able to project with a certain degree of accuracy how many mission congregations will need loans or grants during the next two years. Projections beyond that point depend to a large degree upon the ability of Home Missions to fund new mission sites. We encourage individual WELS members and congregations to consider investing in WELS CEF certificates. Individuals can now invest in Retirement/IRA certificates, providing a new option for supporting missions. In recent years we have distributed more grant dollars than we received in gifts and bequests. Our ability to continue the Grant Program depends on individuals' willingness to remember WELS CEF with their gifts and bequests.

WELS CEF has no shareholders. WELS congregations are our members. Our articles and bylaws require an annual meeting of members. This year's meeting will be held in conjunction with our Board of Directors meeting on Sept. 10, 2009, in Milwaukee, Wis. Congregations are not expected to have a representative at this meeting, and no business is required to be transacted. Advisory, non-binding recommendations can be made at this meeting, or they can be sent at any time in care of the WELS CEF president.

For more information on the Church Extension Fund, contact us toll-free at 1-866-511-7793; cef@sab.wels.net, or visit www.welscef.org.

The purchase of WELS CEF securities are subject to risks, which are described in our Offering Circular. This is not an offer to sell, nor the solicitation to buy our securities. We will offer and sell our securities only in states where authorized. WELS CEF certificates are unsecured general debt obligations. WELS CEF is not a bank or regulated financial institution. This offering is made solely by the Offering Circular. Not FDIC or SIPC insured. Not a bank deposit. No synod guarantee.

Mr. Tim Probst, reporter

Board of Directors:

Rev. Richard Schleicher, chairman
Mr. Kenneth Gosch, vice chairman
Mr. Jude Peck, secretary
Mr. Norman Mischke
Mr. John Tappe
Mr. David Waldek
Mr. Joseph Worischeck

Advisory:

Rev. Harold Hagedorn, administrator of WELS Board for Home Missions
Mr. Todd Poppe, chief financial officer
Mr. Melvin Schuler, director of WELS Missions Operations

Officers:

Mr. James Buelow, president
Mr. Robert Moerchen, treasurer
Mr. Jared Justman, vice president
Mr. Kenneth McGhee, vice president
Mr. Timothy Probst, vice president
Mr. Gene Williams, vice president

WELS Foundation, Inc.

Floor Committee #13

Our calling

WELS Foundation exists to assist God's people in support of gospel ministry through WELS.

Established in 1965, WELS Foundation, Inc., is one of seven Support Services entities of WELS. As a WELS subsidiary corporation, WELS Foundation serves God's kingdom by providing gift administration for complex gifts that ultimately benefit charitable purposes consistent with the principles of the synod.

Our current situation

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 and WELS-affiliated ministries.

As of March 31, 2009, WELS Foundation served as trustee for 185 charitable remainder trusts with a combined market value of \$22.3 million and administers 590 charitable gift annuities with investment reserves of \$6.3 million. WELS Foundation also provides gift administration for donor advised funds and other donor designated gifts, endowments, life insurance contracts, and estate distributions.

As of March 31, 2009, the foundation's total assets were \$60.9 million with net assets of \$31.8 million. The net assets held by WELS Foundation are managed for the benefit of WELS ministries as designated by the donor. These ministries include WELS Home and World Missions, WELS Ministerial Education and its schools, congregations, area Lutheran high schools, and numerous other WELS-affiliated ministries.

During the last two years WELS Foundation has received gifts and bequests totaling \$30.0 million and distributed \$10.2 million to WELS ministries as designated or recommended by the donors.

WELS Foundation does not receive financial support from the synod's operating budget but instead relies primarily on gift administration fees to fund its operating costs. The economic challenges facing our country have affected our operating revenue. Operating revenue is primarily generated through fees based on the market value of the various gift instruments, so as the gift values decline, so does the revenue. To adjust for the decrease, we have placed on hold our plans to hire a full-time administrative assistant, opting instead to share the services of the administrative assistant currently serving WELS Investment Funds.

In order to meet the growing professional needs of WELS Foundation, which have resulted from increasing levels of activity and complexity in the gifts it receives, WELS Foundation has requested proposals from qualified firms interested in providing gift administration services. The request for proposals is intended to identify a more comprehensive and efficient method of obtaining the appropriate level of professional services.

Although the financial markets continue to drift upon waves of uncertainty, we hold firm to God's unwavering promises. We join with you in praising God for his abundant love and mercy as we work together in service to his church.

A look ahead

Through its strategic plan, WELS Foundation's Board of Directors has identified the services, products, and programs to assist in carrying out its mission. These are to provide

- knowledgeable planned giving support to WELS donors through WELS Christian giving counselors and other WELS advancement representatives;
- various giving opportunities including charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, donor advised funds, and endowment administration; and
- marketing support regarding various giving opportunities for WELS and WELS-affiliated organizations.

To learn more, contact WELS Foundation's executive director, Jim Holm at 414-256-3206 or jim.holm@sab.wels.net.

Mr. James Holm, reporter

Board of Directors:

Mr. Eugene Braam, chairman
Mr. Donald Schuppe, vice chairman
Mr. Todd Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer
Mr. Paul Beitlich
Mr. James Brenn
Mr. Timothy McDonald
Mr. Mark Schulz

Advisory:

Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Officers:

Rev. Dave Liggett, president
Mr. James Holm, vice president
Mr. Richard Wichinski, vice president
Mr. Jeffery Grant, vice president and treasurer
Mr. Gerald Heckmann, secretary

WELS Investment Funds, Inc.

Floor Committee #13

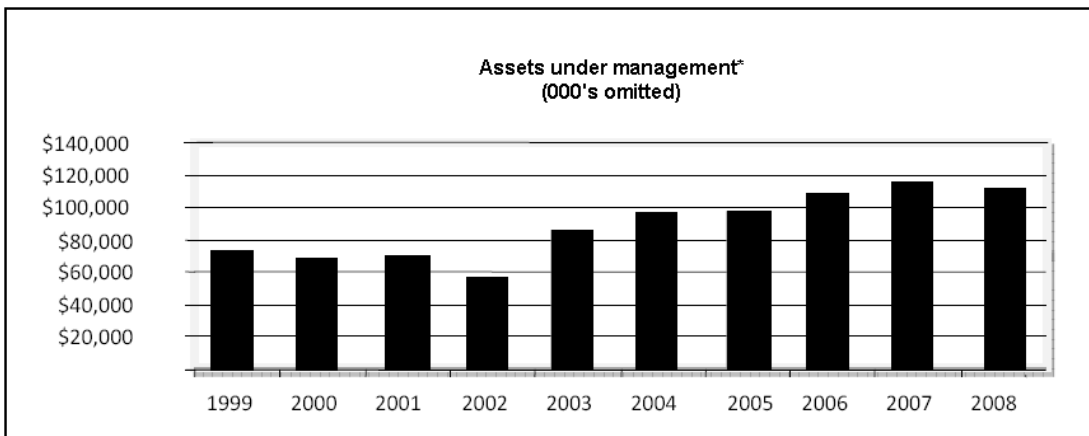
Our calling

WELS Investment Funds' mission is to strengthen and enhance the ministries of WELS and WELS-affiliated organizations by providing professionally managed investment portfolios.

More than 140 WELS organizations invest in the WELS Funds. The largest investor is WELS Foundation, Inc. WELS Foundation's \$40 million in charitable remainder trusts, charitable gift annuities, endowments, and donor advised funds represents 47 percent of the total investment in the WELS Funds.

Current situation

As of Dec. 31, 2008, WELS Investment Fund's assets under management totaled \$88.2 million, a decrease of \$24.1 million (21.5 percent) since June 30, 2008, primarily due to market downturn. It's well known that 2008 ended as one of the worst markets in history for U.S. equities and bonds. By the end of the calendar year, the major U.S. stock market indices had fallen by an average of 37 percent.



*as of June 30

Performance summary

AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN for the period ending Dec. 31, 2008					
	6 Months	1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years
WELS Balanced Allocation*	-21.6%	-26.3%	-4.6%	.5%	3.4%
WELS Equity Fund	-37.7%	-37.6%	-7.6%	-.9%	2.6%
WELS Income Fund	-6.5%	-6.7%	1.2%	2.1%	3.9%

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. Investment return and principal value will fluctuate so that fund units, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost.
 *Hypothetical returns that would have been received on an investment of 60% WELS Equity Fund and 40% in the WELS Income Fund for the period indicated.

Future activities

Future activities are to continue to work with WELS Communication Services, WELS Technology, and the Ministry of Christian Giving to serve and inform WELS congregations, area Lutheran high schools, and affiliated organizations about the investment portfolios available through the WELS Investment Funds.

If your congregation or WELS organization has an endowment or scholarship fund, please contact us toll-free at 1-877-888-8953 or at WELSFunds@sab.wels.net. WELS Investment Funds is another way we are walking together in support of WELS' mission of sharing Christ's love.

Past performance is no guarantee of future results. The performance data is current as of Dec. 31, 2008, 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. Kevin Eismann, chairman
Dr. Ronald White, vice chairman
Mr. James Abitz
Mr. Jon Bruss
Mr. Max Wenck
Mr. Kenneth Zehm

Ex officio:

Mr. Todd Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer
Rev. Mark Schroeder, WELS president

Advisory:

Rev. Dave Liggett, administrator of WELS Ministry of Christian Giving

Officers:

Mr. Mark E. Arnold, president
Mr. Jeffery Grant, vice president/treasurer
Ms. Monica Peavy, corporate secretary

Northwestern Publishing House

Floor Committee #13

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. Among those activities we find “by printing, publishing, purchasing, selling, and disseminating literature that maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice” and “by furnishing appropriate literature for parish schools, Sunday schools, missions, institutions, and churches.” For more than 100 years Northwestern Publishing House has prepared materials that are consistent with Lutheran doctrine and practice.

We do this without receiving funds from the WELS budget. Instead we fund 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 Northwestern Publishing House receives from these sales shall be used to develop and publish new materials. Our calling is to continue to proclaim God’s love in Christ through the careful use of the resources God grants to us.

Our current situation

Since our last report, we continued to produce materials we considered important to our 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 we have assisted other boards and commissions of the synod to prepare and distribute material to our congregations. For example, we distributed Multi-Language Publication material, produced monthly issues of *Forward in Christ*, participated in developing and publishing a new series of evangelism tracts, and worked with the Commission on Worship to produce *Christian Worship: Supplement*.

We have continued to use the resources we have to develop and improve the *Christ-Light* curriculum. We are working to make the new curriculum interactive and user friendly, making better use of current educational strategies and techniques. In addition, we will be adding a version of the curriculum specifically tailored to Sunday schools. Writing, editing, creating art, and putting it all together are challenging tasks. We are planning that the new materials will be ready for congregations and schools for fall 2013. For the latest information on this revision, visit www.nph.net/CL2.

The current economic situation has influenced our work as well as every other ministry in the synod. Anticipating some of the financial challenges, we abandoned the office space at 2949 N Mayfair Rd and moved our offices back to the same location as the store. This meant a reduction in the size of the retail store and warehouse in order to accommodate the offices necessary. We have discussed how to meet future financial challenges without diminishing our ability to serve the needs of the synod. We continue to look for ways to produce quality material that presents the Lutheran teachings we treasure.

We have explored the use of electronic means to distribute our material. The electronic version of The People's Bible is an example. Working together with Logos, Inc., not only have we made the Bible commentary series available to our own market, but it is now also available to the wider market of Logos customers. We continue to work at the concept of the NPH Electronic Library.

A look ahead

As we look ahead, we note with thanks and praise to God the blessings he has provided. We look around at the struggles of other Christian denominational publishers and note our blessings. At the same time, we may anticipate financial uncertainties and the erosion of our financial situation in the short term and the long term. 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.

This summer and fall we will release a revision of *WELS and Other Lutherans*. The second edition, written by Prof. John Brug, will take into consideration new developments in the last 15 years. Another little booklet, *Positively Lutheran*, presents simply and positively what we Lutherans believe and teach. A study of church and ministry will be available soon. It is a professional book entitled *Ministry of the Word*.

At the present time we have about 75 projects in various stages of development besides the *Christ-Light* curriculum. Our ongoing projects include resources for Christmas and Lent, *Parents Crosslink*, *Meditations*, and *Forward in Christ*. We are developing a new series of books, the Bible Discovery series. We hope to release the first of these books next year. Among others, new devotional books, materials available for download and use on congregational Web sites, more professional books for pastors, a continuation of the "A Lutheran Looks At" series, and a new version of *HymnSoft* are all included in our future planning.

Rev. John Braun, reporter

Mr. Jerome Bentz, chairman
Dr. Eugene Baer, vice chairman
Mr. William Strutz, secretary
Mr. Kenneth Hull, treasurer
Rev. Robert Gurgel
Mr. David Neujahr
Prof. John Schuetze
Rev. John Stellick
Prof. Keith Wessel

Ex officio:

Mr. Todd Poppe, WELS chief financial officer

WELS Benefit Plans

Floor Committee #13

Our calling

The WELS Benefit Plans Office serves synodical workers and organizations through the administration of the WELS Voluntary Employees' Benefit Association (VEBA) and Pension Plans. Oversight of each plan is the responsibility of separate commissions appointed by the WELS 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.

Update since the 2007 convention

A study of the Benefit Plans Office operations and its support of the WELS VEBA Commission was conducted during 2008. The study was conducted to help prioritize both short-term and long-term work efforts related to the VEBA Plan and its future structure. The goal was to help both the commission and staff develop a planning process that responds to the challenges presented by a health care environment that impacts the ministry of WELS organizations today. Key efforts in the areas of communications, staff size and responsibilities, administrative systems, and future plan structure will be initiated over the next two years to better service members and sponsoring organizations.

In January 2008, VEBA Plan administration and provider networks were moved to Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield National Accounts. Initial start-up issues delayed claims paying for Wisconsin plan participants but were worked through by late June 2008. The move has provided savings in both administration and medical costs with access to better provider discounts. These savings have allowed the VEBA Commission to keep cost increases well below medical trends for 2008 and 2009. For 2009, rates for all members were held at 2008 levels or below.

The WELS Pension Commission provided a 4 percent benefit increase to certain workers and beneficiaries beginning Jan. 1, 2009. While this increase was initiated and approved prior to the market collapses of late 2008, the commission's long-term view of providing enhanced benefits to all workers allowed this increase to go forward. Although early 2009 investment market performance was discouraging, recent results are sustaining the commission's decision to move ahead with the increase.

Current situation

The financial conditions plaguing all WELS organizations have required Benefit Plans staff to redouble efforts to support workers and organizations facing staffing reductions. Recent changes in health care plan continuation regulations providing subsidized COBRA premiums will provide short-term financial relief for workers involuntarily leaving service. These subsidies are scheduled to end on Dec. 31, 2009, but could continue well into 2010 for certain individuals depending on the timing of the job loss.

The previously mentioned market issues, which really started in late 2007 and continued through February 2009, affected the investment performance of both the VEBA and Pension trust portfolios. Although 2008 audit reports are pending, both plans remain financially sound with adequate net assets to pay current and future benefits for all participants. 2008 financial results will be posted to the Benefit Plans Web site, www.welsbpo.net, when available.

Future activities

The Benefit Plans Office will continue to focus on efforts to develop strategies that enhance communications between workers, sponsoring organizations of the benefit plans and Synod leadership. Wellness initiatives for members will be undertaken including incentives for activities and behavior that encourage healthful living and control costs. Over the next two years, partnerships will be evaluated that streamline the financial transactions with calling bodies, and current plan structures will be reviewed and compared to alternatives. These activities will provide the ongoing value of walking together in support of future WELS ministry work.

Look for developing information about WELS Benefit Plans at www.welsbpo.net.

Mr. Jon Flanagan, reporter

WELS VEBA Commission:

Rev. James Tauscher, chairman
Mr. Marcus Buch, vice chairman
Mr. Jeff Timm, secretary
Mr. Chris Fischer
Mr. Richard Hudock
Capt. Doug Miller

Ex officio:

Mr. Todd Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer

Advisory:

Mr. Jon Flanagan, director of Benefit Plans
Mrs. Janet Gomoll, benefits coordinator
Mr. Joshua Peterman, benefit analyst
Ms. Lori Schrank, claims coordinator

WELS Pension Commission:

Mr. Roger Kamin, chairman
Rev. David Kolander, vice chairman
Mr. Scott Uecker, secretary
Mr. Robert Abramowski
Mr. Scott Heins
Mr. Gene Szaj

Ex officio:

Mr. Todd Poppe, WELS chief financial officer and treasurer

Advisory:

Mr. Jon Flanagan, director of Benefit Plans
Mrs. Janet Gomoll, benefits coordinator
Mr. Joshua Peterman, benefit analyst

WELS Historical Institute

Floor Committee #13

The WELS Historical Institute works to preserve and present the story of God's grace to WELS. Synod members who have documents or artifacts to be preserved are invited to contact the WELS temporary Archives caretaker, Prof. John Hartwig, 262-242-8113, or the Historical Institute president, Prof. Robert Bock, 920-261-4352.

The institute publishes two issues of the *WELS Historical Institute Journal* and two *Historical Institute* newsletters each year. The editor is Dr. Arnold Lehmann, 417-725-1264. He invites articles dealing with people and events from our synod's past to be considered for publication.

The third area of the work of the institute involves the restoration and preservation of Salem Lutheran Landmark Church, constructed in 1865 and located in Milwaukee near the site of our synod's founding in 1850. The synod museum, on the lower level of the church, houses more than 1,000 artifacts and pictures from our synod's past. The church and museum are open for tours, which need to be arranged in advance with the museum curator, Charlotte Sampe, 414-464-3559.

There have been continuing estimates of the various projects that need to be done to the landmark church. A comprehensive mission-vision statement has also been formulated. The need for the mission-vision statement and estimates of all rehabbing of the church is found in the continuing writing of grant proposals. The institute's Ways and Means Committee has started a search for outside funds for the institute's various projects.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary student Mark Tiefel has taken a year-long sabbatical to work in the WELS Archives under the supervision of Prof. John Hartwig, a trained archivist. The Northwestern College Alumni Society underwrote most of this archival project. The project is almost complete.

Prof. Richard and Lois Balge completed extensive research gathering material for a teacher's manual and classroom curriculum for "The Little WELS School in the Woods" project. It is envisioned that fourth-grade students and older will be able to visit the Landmark Church to have a half-day experience of an 1880s classroom. The work completed by the Balges was very well done; it includes arithmetic, reading, writing, spelling, and religion lessons, as well as opportunities for students to perform some of the chores expected during a typical school day more than a century ago. The information in this curriculum is being looked at as a source on the Internet for WELS teachers and pastors.

The institute's revamped Web site, www.welshistory.org, is functioning well and will be upgraded as needed.

The WELS Historical Institute continues to operate with no budgetary support from WELS. All of the work of the institute is supported by gifts and subscriptions.

Prof. Robert Bock, reporter

Prof. Robert Bock, president

Prof. Alan Siggelkow, vice president

Mrs. Naomi Plocher, secretary

Mr. Duane Kuehl, treasurer

Mr. Steven Miller

Mr. Dan Nommensen

Prof. Joel Pless

Ms. Charlotte Sampe

Rev. Ray Schumacher

Committee on Constitutional Matters

Floor Committee #14

Our calling

The Committee on Constitutional Matters serves under the Conference of Presidents 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 at www.wels.net/jump/constitution. If you are unable to access the documents on the Web site, you may contact the President's Office to request a printed copy.

Current situation

The delegates to this summer's convention will have a number of proposed amendments to consider. None are included in our report, but we will tell you where to find them in this book. Since all of them involve amendments to the synod bylaws or the Constitution for the Districts, each will require a two-thirds majority vote for approval.

First, there are the proposed amendments that would implement the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Commission should they be approved. These are located as an addendum to the Ad Hoc Commission Report (pp. 198-209).

The other amendments follow this report. They include a second group of proposed amendments dealing primarily with fiscal matters, along with a final amendment, dealing with the makeup of our Committee on Constitutional Matters, Bylaws Section 4.70. A bit of history may help to explain the rationale behind that proposed amendment.

Prior to 1997 the WELS Committee on Constitutional Matters had been a three-man committee. In the 1997 restructuring it was changed to a seven-man committee, with a three-man executive committee that continued to do all the routine work. The full seven-man committee was only to meet in cases of widespread controversy where a formal hearing was required. In the past 12 years, the expanded committee has never met or functioned and is unlikely to do so in the future, except in the rarest cases. Unfortunately, since the synod bylaws (Section 2.90) limit the number of offices a person may hold, these talented men have been restricted from serving the Lord and their synod in other positions as well.

The proposed amendment to Section 4.70 of the bylaws restores the Committee on Constitutional Matters to a three-man committee. It still allows for the possibility of a formal hearing with an expanded committee of seven to review controversial questions but without requiring a standing committee of seven, four of whose members may well never function.

We wish to thank Mr. Charles Caskey, Mr. Peter Dorn, and Staff Minister Gordon Vetter, all of whom completed two full terms on our expanded committee though they were never asked to function, with but one recent exception. We thank them for their willingness to serve and trust that the Lord has put their gifts to good use in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

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 WELS Constitution and Bylaws. Notice will be given when the document is complete.

Rev. Paul Naumann, reporter

Rev. Paul Naumann, chairman

Mr. Charles Caskey

Mr. Peter Dorn
Rev. Steven Korth
Judge Victor Manian
Staff Minister Gordon Vetter
Rev. Michael Zuberbier

Proposed amendments to the bylaws

The following amendments to the synod's bylaws have been reviewed by the synod's Committee on Constitutional Matters. These proposed amendments will be discussed by Floor Committee #14 and will be placed before the convention with the committee's recommendations. Approval of an amendment to the bylaws requires a two-thirds majority vote.

Recommendation #1: Eligibility for serving as a circuit pastor **Submitted by: Conference of Presidents**

The COP respectfully submits the following proposals for an amendment to the district bylaws, Article X, Section 2. This change is intended to clarify that a circuit pastor is to be an *active parish pastor*. The added words are underlined:

ARTICLE X (district bylaws) **Conferences and Circuits**

- Section 1.** The district shall determine the number and boundaries of its conferences and circuits. A circuit shall consist normally of not more than 15 congregations.
- Section 2.** Each circuit shall have a circuit pastor. The circuit pastor shall be an active parish pastor elected by the delegate circuit meeting (or delegate conference) and shall serve a term of two years. Each pastor, each male teacher and each congregation in the circuit (or conference) shall have one vote each in the election of the circuit pastor.
- Section 3.** Regular meetings of the circuits (or conferences) shall be held. At least once a biennium a circuit meeting or conference shall be held consisting of pastors, male teachers and lay delegates of congregations. The delegates shall hear reports on and discuss the work of the synod.

Recommendation #2: Membership of the Committee on Constitutional Matters **Submitted by: Conference of Presidents**

As currently constituted, the synod constitution committee is composed of seven members, three of whom serve as an executive committee. The current bylaws call for the functioning of the full committee only in rare cases where matters are disputed. In practice, the full committee has not functioned for many years. The COP submits the following recommendation for amending the bylaws to reflect more accurately the way in which the committee functions. By reducing the size of the committee, the four members who are now a part of the constitution committee, but who have not functioned, will be free to serve in other appointed synodical positions. The recommendation includes provision for handling controversial cases.

Section 4.70 **Committee on Constitutional Matters**

- (a) There shall be a Committee on Constitutional Matters that shall serve under the Conference of Presidents to interpret the constitution and bylaws.
1. The committee shall be composed of ~~seven~~ three members appointed by the Conference of

- Presidents for a term of six years. Committee members may succeed themselves once.
2. The committee shall report to the president ~~through the vice-president for mission and ministry.~~
 3. The Conference of Presidents shall designate the chairman of the committee ~~and two committee members as an executive committee of the committee.~~
 4. The ~~executive~~ committee shall examine all proposed amendments to the constitution and bylaws and submit its recommendations on all proposed changes to the synod in convention. After each convention of the synod, the ~~executive~~ committee shall publish the constitution and bylaws as amended by the convention. Supplements only may be issued at the discretion of the committee.
 5. The ~~executive~~ committee shall have access to the synod's legal counsel through the president.
- (b) Any communicant member of the synod may request an interpretation of the constitution or bylaws. In cases of routine interpretational differences of opinion or controversy, interpretation shall be made by the ~~executive~~ committee, without hearing.
- (c) ~~If the a~~ request for interpretation is significant, substantial, and of widespread interest in one or more districts of the synod, the ~~entire~~ committee may determine that a formal hearing is to be held to decide the matter. This determination is primarily that of the committee; however, the Conference of Presidents, by majority vote, may direct that a hearing be held. The hearing shall be conducted according to the following procedure: shall interpret the constitution or bylaw provision(s) in dispute and there shall be a hearing as described in section (c):
- ~~(c) Requests for interpretation shall be addressed to the chairman of the committee:~~
1. ~~When the chairman receives a request for interpretation, he shall convene the executive committee to determine if the executive committee may make the determination. The executive committee's decision shall be final. The chairman shall inform the president of the synod that a formal hearing is to be held.~~
 2. ~~If the executive committee determines that the whole committee is required to make a determination, the committee shall adhere to the following procedure: The Conference of Presidents shall appoint four members from the chairmen of the district constitution committees to serve along with the three members of the synod constitution committee to reach a decision on the matter in question.~~
 - A hearing is held:
 3. The committee shall determine who are the interested parties, and its decision shall be final.
 4. Notice of formal hearing shall be mailed to all parties at least 20 days before the time set for the formal hearing.
 5. The chairman shall make the rules and set the time and place for the formal hearing.
 6. The hearing shall be designed to provide an opportunity for the interested parties to present their interpretation(s) of the constitution or bylaws.
 7. Following the presentations, the chairman shall declare the hearing closed and the committee shall make its decision.
 8. The committee shall render a written decision.
- (d) Decisions of the committee shall be final and only the synod in convention shall have the ability to modify decisions of the committee.

Recommendation #3: Creating consistency in the Support Services **Submitted by: Synodical Council**

At the February Synodical Council (SC) meeting, a resolution proposing a modification to Section 7 of WELS Bylaws was approved. The proposed amendment is intended to modify the language in Section 7 of the bylaws so that it is consistent with Section 2.60(c) of the bylaws.

WHEREAS 1) the delegates of the WELS 2007 Biennial Convention adopted Floor Committee Number 12 — Constitutional Matters' Resolution No. 3. This resolution amended WELS Bylaws Section

7.3(g), which addresses the reporting relationship between WELS Investment Fund, Inc., and the Synodical Council. The purpose of this resolution was to create reporting consistency among the entities identified in the WELS Bylaws, under Support Services. These entities include: 7.00 Northwestern Publishing House, 7.10 WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc., 7.20 WELS Foundation, Inc., 7.30 WELS Investment Funds, Inc., 7.40 WELS Pension Commission, 7.50 WELS VEBA Commission, (there is no Section 7.60), and 7.70 WELS Historical Institute; and

WHEREAS 2) the delegates of the 2007 Biennial Convention also adopted Floor Committee Number 11 — Restructuring’s Resolution No. 7. This resolution changed the reporting relationships for all Support Service entities, except WELS Investment Funds, Inc.; and

WHEREAS 3) clearly defined and consistent reporting relationships facilitate orderly exchanges of information between the Support Service entity, the synod president or designee, and the Synodical Council; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that WELS Bylaws be modified as follows:

Section 2.60 Chief Financial Officer

- (a) There shall be a chief financial officer who, under the direction of the president, shall have overall responsibility for the financial activities of the synod. These activities include accounting, audit, budget, financial planning and reporting, forecasting, investments, tax, and treasury.
- (b) The chief financial officer shall be hired by the president after consultation with the Synodical Council. He shall be an employee of the synod and accountable to the president.
- (c) The chief financial officer shall be responsible for areas of ministry support assigned to him by the president. He shall be an ex-officio advisory member of any board, commission, and committee of the synod assigned to report through his office as assigned by the president unless otherwise specified in these bylaws.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Services, which assists and undergirds mission and ministry, includes but is not limited to accounting, archives/history, budgeting, benefit plans, data information services, finance, human resources, legal, lending, planning, real estate, and revenue forecasting. The president oversees this area through advisory members he appoints to support the corporations, committees, and commissions accountable to the Synodical Council.

Section 7.00 Northwestern Publishing House

- (a) There shall be a subsidiary corporation named Northwestern Publishing House that shall serve the synod’s gospel ministry (also other Christians and unchurched) by publishing and providing biblically sound materials that communicate, foster, and support the Christian faith and life.
- (b) Northwestern Publishing House will be governed by a board of directors elected by the synod. The board of directors will consist of two parish pastors, one professor from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, one professor from Martin Luther College, one elementary or secondary teacher, and four laymen elected by the synod for a term of six years from a slate of candidates proposed by the synod nominating committee. The members may succeed themselves once. The president’s designee, if one is appointed per 7.00(g), shall be an advisory member of the board of directors. The president shall appoint advisors to represent him.
- (c) The Northwestern Publishing House board of directors shall adopt such policies as it may deem necessary and advisable for the operation of the corporation. Any changes in the corporation’s articles of incorporation or bylaws shall be subject to the approval of the Synodical Council.

- (d) All of Northwestern Publishing House's proprietary publications shall contain only materials that are doctrinally correct. To that end, it will submit them to the Publication Review Committee for review. Northwestern Publishing House shall screen all other products it offers for sale, reviewing them for theological content.
- (e) Northwestern Publishing House as the primary synod publisher shall coordinate its publishing plans with those of the synod's boards and commissions through the Publication Coordinating Commission.
- (f) Northwestern Publishing House shall function as a self-supporting, self-funded operation. Northwestern Publishing House shall use net income generated to fund its own operation without synod subsidy, to expand its operation, to develop new products, and to assist in funding joint publishing projects with the synod's boards and commissions.
- (g) ~~For oversight purposes, the corporation shall report to the Synodical Council through the synod president or his designee. The synod president may select a designee to provide operational oversight to the synod employees assigned to the corporation. Northwestern Publishing House shall report its activities to the Synodical Council through the president at least on an annual basis. The Synodical Council through the president may require regular reports including but not limited to financial statements, operations, and future plans.~~

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 loans and gifts from members and loans from organizations, as necessary, to provide loans and grants to mission congregations for parsonages, land, and other necessary facilities. 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.
- (b) The membership, term of office, and manner of election of the board of directors of this corporation shall be prescribed by the articles of incorporation or bylaws of the corporation. The president's designee, if one is appointed per 7.10(e), shall be an advisory member of the board of directors.
- (c) Any changes in the corporation's articles of incorporation or bylaws shall be subject to the approval of the Synodical Council after receiving recommendations from the board of directors or the Board for Home Missions.
- (d) The board of directors of the corporation shall adopt such rules and regulations as it may deem necessary and advisable for the operation of the corporation.
- (e) For oversight purposes the corporation shall report to the Synodical Council through the synod president or his designee. The synod president may select a designee to provide operational oversight to the synod employees assigned to the corporation.

Section 7.20
WELS Foundation, Inc.

- (a) There shall be a subsidiary corporation named WELS Foundation, Inc. The corporation shall serve the Synodical Council by organizing exclusively to provide, direct, channel, and manage funds for religious, charitable, and educational purposes consistent with the principles of the synod. Expenditure of funds for such purposes shall be subject to the policies approved by the Synodical Council.
- (b) The membership, term of office, and manner of election of the board of directors shall be prescribed by the articles of incorporation or bylaws of the corporation. The president's designee, if one is appointed per 7.20(e), shall be an advisory member of the board of directors.

- (c) Any changes in the corporation's articles of incorporation or bylaws shall be subject to the approval of the Synodical Council after receiving recommendations from the board of directors or the Conference of Presidents.
- (d) The board of directors of the corporation shall adopt such rules and regulations as it may deem necessary and advisable for the operation of the corporation.
- (e) For oversight purposes, the corporation shall report to the Synodical Council through the synod president or his designee. The synod president may select a designee to provide operational oversight to the synod employees assigned to the corporation.

Section 7.30
WELS Investment Funds, Inc.

- (a) There shall be a subsidiary corporation named WELS Investment Funds, Inc. The corporation shall serve ~~under~~ the Synodical Council by providing investment portfolios for the benefit of the synod and its affiliated organizations.
- (b) The membership, term of office, and manner of election of the board of directors shall be prescribed by the articles of incorporation or bylaws of the corporation. The president's designee, if one is appointed per 7:30(g), shall be an advisory member of the board of directors.
- (c) Any changes in the corporation's articles of incorporation or bylaws shall be subject to the approval of the Synodical Council after receiving recommendations from the board of directors.
- (d) The board of directors of the corporation shall adopt such rules and regulations as it may deem necessary and advisable for the operation of the corporation.
- (e) The board of directors shall draw up its own investment objectives and guidelines subject to the approval of the Synodical Council. The investment objectives and guidelines shall be reviewed periodically by the board of directors and the Synodical Council.
- (f) WELS Investment Funds shall function as a self-supporting organization. Operational expenses of WELS Investment Funds shall be allocated to its investment portfolios. WELS and its affiliated organizations shall be encouraged to utilize the investment portfolios provided by WELS Investment Funds.
- (g) For oversight purposes the corporation shall report to the Synodical Council through the synod president ~~via the chief financial officer~~ or his designee. The synod president may select a designee to provide operational oversight to the synod employees assigned to the corporation.

Section 7.40
WELS Pension Commission

- (a) There shall be a WELS Pension Commission that shall serve ~~under~~ the Synodical Council ~~to assist them by administering and promoting~~ the synod's pension plan in keeping with the plan document(s) approved by the Synodical Council.
- (b) The ~~e~~Commission shall consist of one pastor, one teacher and four laymen appointed by the Synodical Council. Appointments shall be for a term of three years. The terms of two members shall expire each year. Members may succeed themselves three times. The president's designee, if one is appointed per 7.40(d), shall be an advisory member of the Commission.
- (c) The Commission shall develop its own investment objectives and guidelines subject to the approval of the Synodical Council. The investment objectives and guidelines shall be reviewed periodically by the Commission and the Synodical Council. The Commission shall also adopt such other policies it may deem necessary and advisable for the operation of the plan.

- (de) For oversight purposes, the Commission shall report to the Synodical Council through the synod president or his designee. The synod president may select a designee to provide operational oversight to the synod employees assigned to the Commission. The commission shall report to the president.

Section 7.50
WELS VEBA Commission

- (a) There shall be a WELS Voluntary Employees Beneficiary Association (VEBA) Commission that shall serve the Synodical Council by operating and administrating the group medical plan(s) approved by the Synodical Council for the benefit of the synod's workers and such other workers within the synod who may qualify under the plan(s).
- (b) The Commission shall consist of one pastor, one teacher, and four laymen appointed by the Synodical Council for a term of three years. The terms of two members shall expire each year. Members may succeed themselves three times. The president's designee, if one is appointed per section 7.50(d), shall be an advisory member of the Commission.
- (c) ~~The Commission shall study and implement new procedures or~~ make improvements in the plans, in accordance with proper procedure and sound fiscal management. The plans shall be reviewed periodically by the Commission and the Synodical Council. The Commission shall also adopt such other policies it may deem necessary and advisable for the operation of the plan.
- (d) For oversight purposes, the corporation shall report to the Synodical Council through the synod president or his designee. The synod president may select a designee to provide operational oversight to the synod employees assigned to the Commission. For oversight purposes the commission shall report to the Synodical Council.

Section 7.70
WELS Historical Institute

- (a) There shall be a subsidiary corporation named WELS Historical Institute that shall serve the Synodical Council by organized for the purpose of fostering and promoting interest in the history of Lutheranism, especially WELS.
- (b) The makeup, term of office and manner of election of the board of directors of this corporation shall be prescribed by the articles of incorporation or bylaws of the corporation. The president's designee, if one is appointed per 7.70(d), shall be an advisory member of the board of directors.
- (c) Any change in the corporation's articles of incorporation or bylaws shall be subject to the approval of the Synodical Council. The board of directors of the corporation shall adopt such rules and regulations as it may deem necessary and advisable for the operation of the corporation.
- (d) For oversight purposes the corporation shall report to the Synodical Council through the synod president or his designee.

Recommendation #4: Elimination of Section 5.50 from the bylaws
Submitted by: Synodical Council

WHEREAS 1) the WELS Bylaws, Section 5.50(a) establishes that the synod treasurer shall establish funds for investment as he may deem necessary to fulfill the needs and desires of the synod and others; and

WHEREAS 2) the WELS Bylaws, Section 5.50(b) identifies the synod treasurer as the person responsible for the administration of such funds, and

- WHEREAS 3) the WELS Bylaws, Section 7.30(a) states, "There shall be a subsidiary corporation named WELS Investment Funds, Inc. The corporation shall serve under the Synodical Council by providing investment portfolios for the benefit of the synod and its affiliated organizations"; and
- WHEREAS 4) the WELS Bylaws, Section 5.50(c) specifies that the principal of trusts, life income plans, annuities, and pooled income funds, created for the benefit of the synod, shall be placed into funds for investment; and
- WHEREAS 5) the WELS Bylaws, Section 5.50(d) states, "Trust income and principal shall be distributed only in accordance with the terms of the respective trusts."; and
- WHEREAS 6) the WELS Bylaws, Section 7.20(a) states, "There shall be a subsidiary corporation named WELS Foundation, Inc. The corporation shall serve the Synodical Council by organizing exclusively to provide, direct, channel, and manage funds for religious, charitable, and educational purposes consistent with the principles of the synod; and
- WHEREAS 7) the WELS Foundation, Inc., provides the gift administration for trusts, life income plans, annuities, and pooled income funds created for the benefit of the synod; and
- WHEREAS 8) the WELS Bylaws, Section 5.50(e) states, "The treasurer shall submit annual reports to all departments of the synod, related agencies, and others with whose funds he is entrusted."; and
- WHEREAS 9) the WELS Investment Funds, Inc., provides quarterly statements to all departments of the synod, related agencies, and other affiliated organizations with funds invested in WELS Funds. Access to daily account information is also available to participating organizations online; and
- WHEREAS 10) the duties and responsibilities addressed under WELS Bylaws Section 5.50 Trusts and Other Funds Held for Investment, have been assigned to two WELS Support Service entities, WELS Investment Funds, Inc., and WELS Foundation, Inc.; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that Section 5.50 Trusts and Other Funds Held for Investment be removed from the WELS Bylaws.

Section 5.50
Trusts and Other Funds Held for Investment

- ~~(a) The treasurer shall establish such funds for investment as he may deem necessary to fulfill the needs and desires of the synod and others.~~
- ~~(b) The administration of such funds shall be the responsibility of the treasurer.~~
- ~~(c) The principal portion of trusts, including, but not limited to, living trusts, testamentary trusts, life income plans, annuities, and pooled income fund, created for the benefit of the synod, shall be placed into funds for investment.~~
- ~~(d) Trust income and principal shall be distributed only in accordance with the terms of the respective trusts.~~
- ~~(e) The treasurer shall submit annual reports to all departments of the synod, related agencies, and others with whose funds he is entrusted.~~

Miscellaneous memorials

Floor Committee #18

Memorial (2009-02)

Subject: *Dealing with allegations of sexual impropriety*

- WHEREAS 1) there are a large number of allegations of sexual impropriety being made against professionals in the United States, including pastors and teachers, including, from time to time, pastors and teachers in WELS, and there is no established policy within WELS to assist the district presidents, circuit pastors, and individual congregations to deal with such allegations; and
- WHEREAS 2) these allegations require expertise in the areas of psychology, social work, and the law, areas in which the district presidents are not trained, but for which they are responsible; and
- WHEREAS 3) the rights and careers of all pastors and other called workers are placed in jeopardy by such allegations, as well as the well-being of the individual congregations and WELS; and
- WHEREAS 4) it is in the best interest of WELS, member congregations of WELS, and pastors and other called workers of WELS to formulate a procedure to guide the district presidents and circuit pastors in dealing with allegations of sexual impropriety against pastors and other called worker; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that WELS needs to recognize that it is necessary to provide the district presidents with the tools to deal with these allegations when they are made; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that it is important for WELS to protect the lives and careers of its pastors and called workers and to protect its own best interest and that of its individual congregations in the event that allegations of sexual impropriety are made against pastors or other called workers; and be it finally
- Resolved, c) that the Conference of Presidents are hereby directed to establish a procedure outlining the steps which the district presidents shall follow in the event a pastor or other called worker is alleged to have committed some act or acts of sexual impropriety, including but not limited to a consultation with legal counsel of his choice, in order to determine the best course of action that will protect the rights of the accused pastor or called worker and protect the best interest of WELS and the congregation of the pastor or called worker.

Rev. Dennis Lemke, Weyauwega, Wis.
Rev. David Pagel, Oshkosh, Wis.
Rev. Joel Lillo, Appleton, Wis.
Mr. David L. Werth, Weyauwega, Wis.

Memorial (2009-03)

Subject: *Eligibility of called workers whose calls have been rescinded*

- WHEREAS 1) from time to time pastors and other called workers have had their divine call rescinded by the congregation which had extended it and in many of these cases the district president has been asked to counsel the congregation in the process of rescinding the call; and
- WHEREAS 2) the eligibility of the pastor or other called worker to receive another call is dependent upon the same district president who must agree to place the name of the pastor or other called worker on the call list for the district or recommend the placement of the name of the pastor or other called worker on the call list of another district, thereby placing the district president in the untenable position of having to assist a pastor or other called worker to obtain another call when he may have been

counseling the congregation of the pastor or other called worker in its effort to rescind the call and thereby creating the appearance of a conflict of interest; and

WHEREAS 3) the rescission of the call may be justified because the pastor or other called worker is in need of professional counseling in order to return to the ministry, and each district is not equipped to provide such counseling, and it would best serve the interest of WELS and those affected pastors and other called workers to have a uniform synod procedure to assist them in receiving professional counseling when it is deemed appropriate; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that it is in the best interest of WELS, at a synodical level, to assist its pastors and other called workers whose divine calls have been rescinded in restoring them to the ministry; and be it further

Resolved, b) that in order to provide such assistance, WELS shall create a synod board to determine the eligibility of all pastors and other called workers whose divine calls have been rescinded to return to the active ministry and be made available to be placed on a call list; and be it finally

Resolved, c) that such a synod board shall include among its duties the duty to provide professional counseling, when it is deemed appropriate, to assist those affected pastors and other called workers to enable them to be placed on a call list for the purpose of returning them to the active ministry.

Rev. Dennis Lemke, Weyauwega, Wis.

Rev. David Pagel, Oshkosh, Wis.

Rev. Joel Lillo, Appleton, Wis.

Mr. David L. Werth, Weyauwega, Wis.

Memorial (2009-04)

Subject: *Flood geology*

WHEREAS 1) there is no evidence in the Bible or in science for the secular claim that life was self-created in the distant past; and

WHEREAS 2) there is equally no valid evidence in the Bible or in science for the religious tradition that an average mile or more of earth's upper crust is proof of Noah's flood in the recent past; and

WHEREAS 3) Christians should not want to subtract from or add to anything in the Bible; and

WHEREAS 4) we pray in our WELS hymnal that God would bless the use of our minds in knowing the wonders of his creation; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod continue its witness against any "science falsely so called" that robs God of the glory of the manifold intricacies of his creation; and be it further

Resolved, b) that our WELS Conference of Presidents, in consultation with the faculty of Martin Luther College, the editors of Northwestern Publishing House, and other interested parties, establish the extent of an unexamined teaching of "Flood-fossil geology" in WELS publications; and be it further

Resolved, c) that the Conference of Presidents name a committee of WELS members willing to examine the probable validity of any geologic "proofs" for what Bible science has claimed regarding Noah's flood; and be it finally

Resolved, d) that this committee, effectively organized and communicating mostly by e-mail, report to the 2010 district conventions of WELS, recommending what steps should be taken in WELS to correct past unrealities and to give the world a valid apologetic in understanding the events of Genesis 1-11.

Mr. Gerhold L. Lemke

Memorial (2009-05)

Subject: *Reconciliation process*

WHEREAS 1) unresolved conflict and broken relationships within our churches, schools, parachurch organizations, and the synod fragment and divide God's people; impede and obstruct the ministry

of the church; create a false and negative impression to the unbelieving world of what it means to be a follower of Jesus; and are undoubtedly responsible for untold losses to our church in terms of congregations, Lutheran schools, members, ministry resources, and lost opportunities to extend God's kingdom; and

WHEREAS 2) Jesus desires that we live with one another in peace and unity as we do the work of preaching and teaching his gospel of peace (John 17:20-23, et al.); and

WHEREAS 3) a thorough approach to providing biblical assistance to conflicted congregations, schools, parachurch organizations, or subgroups within the synod's structure requires an extraordinary amount of time and energy to complete the tasks of training, instructing, interviewing, mediating, evaluating, reporting, and following up on proposed action plans; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that our synod's president be directed to establish a task force to study the need for restructuring our synod's approach to resolving internal or organizational conflict; and be it further

Resolved, b) that the members of said task force should focus their study and subsequent recommendations on an approach to resolving church conflict that is consistent with biblical principles and, wherever possible, seeks to resolve conflicts through a reconciliation process that includes repentance, confession, absolution, and full reinstatement into God's family of believers; and be it further

Resolved, c) that the study focus of said task force and its recommendations strive for an approach to resolving conflict that will respond to an impending threat of conflict in a timely fashion and, in certain situations, can serve to proactively disarm potential conflicts before it is too late; and be it further

Resolved, d) that the work of said task force and its recommendations embrace the vital importance of objective fact-gathering as an effort is made to determine the root causes of a conflict; and be it further

Resolved, e) that the task force work toward defining a process that is committed to guiding and encouraging the organization's professional and lay leaders to respond with biblical faithfulness; and be it further

Resolved, f) that said task force be encouraged to develop a system for addressing conflict in our churches, schools, and other organizational groups within the synod that upholds the value of fair-minded procedure and open, yet discreet, communication, and be it further

Resolved, g) that said task force be instructed to implement sound pedagogical theory in selecting and/or developing coursework and other materials that will be used to help congregations address past, present, or future internal conflicts; and be it further

Resolved, h) that said task force be encouraged to develop an approach to resolving conflict among Christians that demonstrates godly compassion for all of the engaged parties; and be it further

Resolved, i) that said task force be appointed in a way that will provide for a mixed balance of clergy, Christian educators, and lay members, and that all of the appointments to the taskforce have had personal experience with and/or training in biblical conflict-resolution strategies; and be it finally

Resolved, j) that the appointed task force report to the 2011 synod in convention with its analysis, conclusions, and recommendations for structuring, implementing, and funding a program that will provide adequate assistance to conflicted WELS congregations, schools, parachurch organizations, and our synod of the future.

Teacher Kenneth J. Kremer

**Report and
recommendations of the
Ad Hoc Commission
Floor Committees #20-25**

1 Introduction

2
3 The 2007 Synod in Convention approved Resolution #7 of Floor Committee 7, which stated that
4 “solutions to our long-term spiritual and financial problems must be based on a thorough analysis of
5 our present problems and our future potential” and “a thorough analysis should lead to a
6 comprehensive long-term plan.” In order to conduct that analysis and establish that plan, the
7 convention authorized an *ad hoc commission*. Resolution #1D of Floor Committee 2 stated, “We
8 direct and authorize the synod president and the Synodical Council, in consultation with the
9 Conference of Presidents, to evaluate all current programs and staffing and to make any changes
10 deemed necessary to carry out the core work of the synod.” The Ad Hoc Commission was to assist
11 the president and Synodical Council in carrying out these assigned tasks.
12

13 The 2007 convention elected Rev. Joel Voss as the commission’s chairman. The convention directed
14 Rev. Voss and President Schroeder to appoint the other members of the commission. The following
15 were appointed and comprise the commission:

16 Rev. John Braun
17 Rev. Jon Buchholz
18 Mr. James Drexler
19 Rev. Vilas Glaeske (selected by the Conference of Presidents as its representative)
20 Mr. Ron Hillmann (selected by the Synodical Council as its representative)
21 Mr. Mark Neumann
22 Rev. Jonathan Schroeder
23 Teacher Greg Thiesfeldt
24 Mr. Danny Wehmeyer
25 Teacher Eric Ziel

26 Synod President Mark Schroeder served as an advisory member of the commission.

27 The commission organized itself into three committees: Ministry Direction, Ministry Structure and
28 Administration, and Ministry Support.

29 As we began our work, as well as each time we met, we asked the Lord of the Church to guide us in
30 our deliberations and to bless our efforts. We proceeded with our task confident in God’s grace and
31 promises.

32 Defining the task

33 Early in its work the commission determined that it was not in a position to articulate and develop a
34 specific or strategic plan of ministry for the entire synod. It was clear that such planning can only be
35 carried out by the various areas of ministry and overseen by the Synodical Council, which has been
36 given this responsibility by the synod constitution. Rather than viewing its task as one that would
37 propose a specific long-term strategic plan, the commission concluded that its primary function
38 would be to provide recommendations that would serve as a foundation and a starting point from
39 which such planning could be carried out in the near future.

40 The synod has undertaken a number of restructuring studies in recent years. The commission was
41 familiar with these studies and their conclusions. The commission was not, however, established
42 primarily as a *restructuring* group. Its assigned task was broader and deeper. The commission
43 approached its work with ministry in mind and resolved to include recommendations for structural
44 changes only when such changes were clearly necessary to address specific needs that the broader
45 task identified.

46 The commission also realized that its recommendations would not be a single answer to all of the
47 various challenges confronting our synod today. We do not view our report as a “cure-all” or as a
48 comprehensive solution. Rather, we view these recommendations as the beginning of an ongoing
49 effort to carry out the mission of the synod in the most effective and faithful way.

50 In some cases, the commission’s recommendations will deal with situations that can be addressed
51 immediately and relatively easily. In other cases, recommendations will identify issues that can only
52 be addressed over a longer timeframe and with further study and additional input.

53 With these initial thoughts in mind, the commission resolved to carry out its task by addressing the
54 following areas:

55 1) **The synod’s mission and purpose:** The commission seeks to articulate the mission, nature,
56 and purpose of the synod, as directed and defined by recent synod conventions.

57 2) **The 2007 commitment to expand efforts:** The commission seeks to carry out an overall
58 evaluation of structure, programs, staffing, budgeting, accountability, and direction in
59 keeping with the stated mission of the synod and the synod’s desire to expand its ministry
60 efforts with adequate and continuing financial support.

61 3) **The commission will submit recommendations that are intended to:**

62 a) Enable the synod to carry out its mission **efficiently in keeping with adopted**
63 **priorities.**

64 b) Enhance the transparency and clarity in synodical **communications.**

65 c) Build **confidence and trust** in the synod’s direction, its leaders, and its ministries.

66 d) Identify specific areas in which to **expand or improve** efforts or programs.

67 e) Identify specific areas in which to **reduce or eliminate** programs.

68 f) Identify areas of concern to be addressed by **other responsible groups** in the future.

69 g) Define and articulate **accountability** between various levels of administration.

70 h) Provide means to enable and encourage **constituent feedback** to synodical leaders.

71 i) Enable the synod to address **doctrinal and spiritual issues** in unity.

72 j) Identify ways, through faithful use of the means of grace, to **address spiritual issues**
73 in congregations.

74 **Recommendation:**

75 **I.1 We recommend that the Synodical Council, with input from the areas of ministry,**
76 **develop a long-range strategic plan for the synod to be presented to the 2011 Synod in**
77 **Convention.**

78

79 **Guiding principles**

80 As the commission began its work, it identified a number of principles that would guide us in our
81 discussions and decisions. Those principles are:

82 1) God’s Word is the foundation and primary guiding principle in our planning.

83 2) The gospel alone provides the motivation for all we do as Christians and as a synod.

- 83 3) The synod is an extension of the ministries of individuals and congregations, intended to do
84 the kind of kingdom work that cannot be easily done by congregations or individuals.
- 85 4) The core mission of the synod must be clearly articulated and emphasized.
- 86 5) Both the short- and long-term effects of recommendations should be considered.
- 87 6) Efficiency and faithful stewardship in planning and budgeting are crucial.
- 88 7) Greater identification with and support for the synod by congregations and individuals are
89 vital.
- 90 8) Simplicity over complexity is preferred.
- 91 9) Grass roots participation should be maintained.
- 92 10) Implementation of recommendations should be flexible.

93

94 **The mission and purpose of the synod**

95 We believe and confess that the church is people who have saving faith in Jesus Christ. The Holy
96 Spirit gathers people together around the gospel in Word and sacrament. These are the marks of the
97 church because the Holy Spirit works through the gospel. So wherever the gospel is in use, we expect
98 to find believers, that is, Christ's church. The work of any assembly of believers is to proclaim the
99 gospel. Thereby they encourage and strengthen believers and gather new disciples of the Lord. As
100 confessional Lutherans, we agree and believe that the assembly of these believers becomes evident
101 in visible organizations in various places. The New Testament asserts this principle (Cf. Acts and the
102 letters of Paul). Certainly, both believers and unbelievers belong to such visible organizations.

103 Every local assembly of believers becomes a visible organization, a "church." Those gathered
104 together in a visible church have the responsibilities Christ gave to his church, such as, retaining the
105 truth of God's revealed Word, teaching its members of all ages, preparing future leaders, and
106 extending Christ's kingdom by proclaiming the gospel. These are the tasks of Christians individually
107 and together jointly however they are organized into visible groups.

108 Other visible organizations can also correctly be called "church." We have no disagreement among us
109 that the synod is "church" in a theological and biblical sense. Wherever two or three (or 400,000) are
110 gathered together in Christ's name, he is there in their midst. They are his church, his people, and his
111 disciples. And as such, collectively, they have been given all of the tasks that God has given to
112 individual Christians and to Christian congregations as they proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

113 We also believe that the local congregation is responsible for the administration of its own affairs as
114 it carries out the responsibilities given to it by the Lord—sharing the gospel; teaching members;
115 worshiping; owning its own property; calling pastors, teachers, and others; paying its bills; and in
116 every other way taking care of its day to day responsibilities.

117 The local congregation even chooses to align itself with other congregations that share the same
118 beliefs. Believers recognize one another by their confession and join others of the same confession.
119 The decision of visible local believers in various congregations to seek some association with other
120 congregations creates the larger visible church organization. The confession of the association of
121 congregations mirrors that of the individual congregations aligned together. While some differences
122 exist between a local congregation and an organization composed of a collection of local
123 congregations, the larger group has the same task as the separate congregations: retain the truth,
124 teach God's truth, prepare leaders, and extend the kingdom by proclaiming the gospel. Because the
125 larger assembly is derived from the member congregations, it is not a hierarchy but a confederation.
126 Nevertheless, the separate congregations of the association may depend on the larger association to
127 do things that the separate congregations cannot do as efficiently without the assistance of the other
128 congregations drawn together by their common confession. This larger assembly we call synod

129 becomes important to member congregations when it carries out its mission for them and with
130 them.

131 In our fellowship, the larger visible organization does not own the property of the local group, nor
132 does it exercise authority to remove called workers or dissolve local congregations. On the other
133 hand, it may own its own property, call workers, and in other ways operate as an independent entity.
134 We believe that each local congregation is an independent assembly of believers and one group of
135 believers does not presume to dictate to other brothers and sisters in Christ. Instead, believers treat
136 one another as equal children of God. The same attitudes apply when groups of believers forming
137 local congregations interact with other groups. The relationship between such equal bodies is
138 marked by respect and love.

139 We agree with these principles. Those who seek to gather together with others with the same
140 confession establish a structure for the operation of the confederation. Some, like federations
141 supporting schools, limit the area of cooperation to the maintenance of elementary or high schools.
142 Others limit their association to mutual encouragement and edification, as is the case with the
143 Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC). The congregations that are affiliated with the
144 synod operate with a constitution that outlines the scope of the work carried out by the synod.

145 In conducting our work we adhered to the definition of the purpose of the synod clearly articulated
146 by the 2005 and 2007 synod conventions: *“Historically, the purpose of our synod has been to do
147 together what we cannot do as individual congregations.”* We believe that this convention statement
148 is fully in keeping with the spirit of the definition of the synod’s purpose as stated in the synod
149 constitution. The constitution describes this work in the following way:

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

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

162
163 The larger group we call synod has “the object and purpose . . . to extend and conserve the true
164 doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.” It carries out that purpose *“by assisting
165 and counseling in every appropriate way the pastors, teachers, and congregations affiliated with the
166 synod.”* Its relationship with the member congregations is one of assisting, advising, and counseling.
167 The focus of that counsel, in the context of the constitution, is conserving biblical Lutheran doctrine.
168 The gospel alone is the power of God among us. Without it, we neither walk together in Christ nor
169 grow spiritually. It is understandable that the framers of our constitution focused first on conserving
170 true doctrine and practice.

171 Responsibility to maintain the truth and avoid error belongs to every Christian. We are all called to
172 mark and avoid false teachers. But congregations join together for mutual encouragement in the
173 truth of God. Separately they can encourage other congregations nearby, but joined together they
174 can assign the larger group the task of maintaining confessional integrity with the weight of their
175 collective confession. Together we have carried out that responsibility by various organizational
176 structures such as districts, conferences, and circuits among others. Those elected or called to roles
177 of oversight, administration, or service, such as district presidents, circuit pastors, and others,
178 encourage congregations to maintain the truth, confront the doctrinal distortions that develop, and

179 offer assistance when congregations and their workers face challenging issues. Through the
180 encouragement of others in Christ, we foster unity in doctrine and practice. We preserve our
181 commitment to the gospel so that we can proclaim it with one voice.

182 Yet our synod does not dictate to local congregations. District presidents do not and cannot force a
183 congregation to adopt the common confession of the larger group. They present the truth, encourage
184 study, and promote unity. Yet a congregation may withdraw from the synod or the synod may
185 suspend a congregation from membership if its confession is different from the other congregations
186 gathered together to form the synod. The effort needed to maintain confessional integrity among the
187 congregations of the synod is carried out with love that does not sacrifice the treasured truths of
188 God's Word. Instead, in love we acknowledge fellowship with like-minded confessing Christians; we
189 also acknowledge that others are not like-minded and therefore suspend fellowship. We need one
190 another to carry out this difficult task. In addition, we need fierce commitment to the truth and deep
191 love for others, which has the concern for their spiritual welfare firmly in focus.

192 As an association of believers we also work together to maintain the truth of the gospel among us.
193 We take another step when we work to share the gospel with the next generation. The constitution
194 expresses this second step when it says that we "extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice
195 of the Evangelical Lutheran Church . . . by *establishing and maintaining theological seminaries,*
196 *colleges, academies, schools, and other institutions of learning.*" Each congregation of the synod has
197 that responsibility, and each congregation chooses to conduct its educational efforts in a way that it
198 deems important. Some establish elementary schools; others choose not to establish elementary
199 schools but to teach their children in other ways.

200 Some efforts to train the next generation in God's truth are more difficult for local congregations to
201 do on their own. A local congregation may desire to train its youth beyond elementary school, only
202 to face the reality that it does not have enough students or financial resources to undertake the task
203 alone. Establishing Lutheran high schools or any institutions of learning beyond the congregation's
204 elementary school is best done when the resources of the congregation are pooled with those of
205 other congregations who share the same goal.

206 In another application of the same principle, the congregations that align themselves together and
207 form a synod pool their resources to educate the next generation. But for us, such an effort has
208 concentrated on training a new generation of called workers. The single purpose of the schools of
209 the synod—whether on the high school level, the college level, or the seminary level—has been to
210 supply congregations of the synod with called workers to carry out their own ministries.
211 Congregations have long understood that a day will come when they will need to replace a teacher
212 or add an additional teacher in order to expand their schools. Likewise, congregations anticipate the
213 replacement of pastors or the expansion of their pastoral ministries. Congregations joined together
214 assign to the synod the task of training future called workers grounded in the truth of the gospel.
215 Clearly, what one congregation would find difficult to do alone can be carried out together with the
216 other congregations.

217 In addition, the congregations focus on sharing the gospel and extending the reach of each local
218 congregation. Local congregations have the privilege of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with
219 the communities in which they are located. They are to make energetic and ongoing efforts to "make
220 disciples." They are simply organized in this way so that each can address the issues at hand,
221 following the outline of its constitution. Outreach efforts are a primary part of each congregation's
222 ministry. But sharing the gospel stretches beyond the horizon of the local congregation. As believers,
223 gathered first into local congregations and then bound together by a common faith into a larger
224 association, we desire to extend the stakes of our "little tent." The Lord directs us to "make disciples
225 of all nations," and together that is exactly what we try to do through pooling our resources for home
226 and world missions.

227 In all three of these cases—unity of doctrine, education, and missions—it should be clear that the
228 synod—the voluntary gathering of local congregations—is doing what is more difficult for individual

229 congregations to do on their own. In order to carry out its role, the synod requires congregational
230 resources. The synod acquires the responsibility of funding the gospel ministry given to it by local
231 congregations and administering it. The administration of the work given to the synod also requires
232 human resources in other areas in order to manage the resources wisely and efficiently.

233 Because the synod as an organization looks beyond the work of any local congregation, it has the
234 opportunity to raise the vision of those in local congregations. While a congregation might see the
235 fields “ripe for harvest” in its own backyard, the Lord places opportunities and opens doors far
236 beyond that local field. The synod’s perception of the fields “ripe for harvest” is wider and broader.
237 The larger church will have the task of communicating its wider and broader vision and encouraging
238 God’s people to rise beyond their own horizons. In another example, the congregation may be
239 content with its called workers and its ministry. It may not see or wish to see a time when its
240 ministry or its called workers will change. But the vision of the synod extends beyond the years of
241 any faithful servant’s ministry to the time when a new called worker will need to be called as a
242 replacement. The vision of the synod then includes a commitment to training enough called servants
243 to meet the needs of the future, and it will seek to prepare qualified and competent called servants
244 for the fields it sees as “ripe for the harvest.” With the resources committed by the individual
245 congregations, the synod will exercise faithful stewardship and wisdom in using those resources to
246 walk through the doors the Lord opens for us while maintaining essential core ministries for the
247 present and future.

248 In another area, the synod does what is more difficult for local congregations to do on their own. In
249 order “to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church” we
250 have assigned the synod the responsibility of “*printing, publishing, purchasing, selling, and*
251 *disseminating literature that maintains Lutheran doctrine and practice*” and of “*furnishing*
252 *appropriate literature for parish schools, Sunday schools, missions, institutions, and churches.*” The
253 gathering of local congregations has assigned this task, for the most part, to a publishing house and
254 established a review committee to make sure that the literature produced “maintains Lutheran
255 doctrine and practice.” As this function of the synod has developed over the years, the materials
256 produced have required no funds from the budget established by the synod to do its work. The
257 funding has come from the sale of the materials. But no matter how it is funded, the charter of the
258 publishing house is to extend and conserve the truth of the gospel for our congregations as well as to
259 offer a published public witness to the truths we hold dear.

260 As we look at the work we do together, we thank our Lord, who has purchased us with his blood. We
261 praise him for the privilege of participating in the work of his kingdom. Under his care and by his
262 power, we have grown from small confessional Lutheran groups in Wisconsin, Michigan, and
263 Minnesota. Our confession remains true to the doctrine of the evangelical Lutheran church. God has
264 blessed our efforts to establish new congregations so that we can share the gospel far beyond our
265 Midwest base. Our missions extend into many nations of the world. And the schools we maintain
266 continue to supply congregations with called workers who are committed to the truth of God’s
267 Word. The tasks have sometimes been difficult and challenging, but the Lord has permitted us to
268 share his truth in this world so desperately in need of it.

269 Some of the challenges and difficulties have come when congregations have encountered their own
270 difficulties and hardships. Local congregations face dwindling memberships for various reasons, find
271 it difficult to maintain their gospel witness for financial reasons, grow weary in their efforts, or need
272 encouragement to face challenges. The spiritual health of a congregation rests with the congregation,
273 its members and local leaders including the pastor. Yet as believers joined together, we have the
274 responsibility to encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ. Such encouragement comes from
275 other congregations within their own area and through the district president and circuit pastor, but
276 all congregations share in the concern for others. Because all share the concern, the association of
277 congregations, the synod, has another task to fulfill. The synod in convention established an
278 organized approach to help congregations “in their ministries of nurture, outreach, worship, and

279 service.” Such efforts augment encouragements from others and offer a consistent and organized
280 approach that is available to congregations who need these services and encouragements.

281 The commission maintains—as have the last two conventions—that the corporate synod was
282 conceived and established primarily as a means or an instrument to carry out those kinds of
283 kingdom work that cannot easily be done by individual Christians or congregations. The commission
284 agrees with the recent convention resolutions that, in a practical sense, the structure of the human
285 *organization* we refer to as the “synod” has not been established to carry out or to duplicate all of the
286 tasks given to individual Christians and congregations on a larger scale. Rather, the synodical
287 structure and organization is intended to carry out the kind of kingdom work that *assists*
288 congregations in carrying out their ministry or that *requires* the large scale pooling of resources,
289 efforts, and leadership, doing together those things that cannot easily be done separately.

290 Having established an association of congregations bound together in a common faith, and having
291 taken on the core function of doing together what cannot easily be done separately, we expect that
292 workers within the synod we have established would conduct its work as faithful stewards. We
293 expect them to be diligent in their efforts and accountable, not only to the boards and commissions
294 charged with overseeing the work but also to the individual congregations that make up the synod.
295 Those who conduct our joint work should not be satisfied with mediocrity but should pursue
296 excellence in all things. We should encourage one another to excel. As brothers and sisters of Christ,
297 those who carry out the work of the synod will be humble servants of the Lord of the church, listen
298 to their brothers and sisters in the congregations, and offer encouragement and correction when
299 necessary in an evangelical and loving way. Their service will flow from a deep commitment to the
300 Lord of the church and a humble persistence that understands the autonomy of the local
301 congregations. In other words, they will always have the building of the body of Christ as their goal.
302 Those individual Christians in the congregations who have charged them with their tasks should
303 hold them accountable for faithfulness to God’s truth and for excellence in their work. Local
304 congregations will exhibit the same characteristics: faithfulness to the Lord of the church, humility in
305 his service, and a desire for excellence.

306 We have one task to do together “to extend and conserve the true doctrine and practice of the
307 evangelical Lutheran church.” When we make use of the gospel, the Holy Spirit does his work. He has
308 promised to work through this powerful means, and we have no such promise when we fail to use
309 this “power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16). When we use the
310 gospel, God’s work will be done. But we will not be satisfied with anything but the best efforts at
311 sharing God’s truth. Our desire for excellence in the ministry of the Word leads us to encourage one
312 another to continue to grow spiritually by regular study of the Word in an individual and personal
313 way and also in a formal, organized way. For members of our congregations, this means encouraging
314 attendance at worship services and Bible classes. For pastors it means personal study and making
315 use of educational opportunities beyond graduating from our seminary. For teachers and other
316 called servants, it means the same commitment to personal study and continuing education.

317 A simple note is in place at this point concerning the use of God’s Word. As Lutherans we understand
318 the necessity of both the law and the gospel. We are confronted daily with our own failures and sins,
319 and the law reveals them clearly and painfully. We are led daily to despair of our failures, because
320 they deserve the judgment of Christ the Lord. But the Lord does not leave us in despair. Instead, he
321 announces his sweet love and forgiveness. Daily we turn from what is so foul within us and by his
322 power turn toward his grace. In that daily repentance we find the comfort, strength, courage, and
323 commitment to live as his witnesses here in this world. So often an exhortation to turn to the Word
324 of God means to follow the recipes found there, and it becomes so easy to make the Word of God a
325 legal canon. It is, instead, a powerful tool by which God leads us away from our own shortcomings to
326 his grace. This understanding is important for each member of each congregation, each called
327 worker in local congregations, and everyone entrusted with the joint work of those congregations of
328 the synod.

329 There will always be room for discussion about which specific ministry efforts and leadership
330 functions fit into the stated definition of the synod. But it is clear that the synod can and does run
331 into difficulty when it, with all good intentions, broadens the narrower purpose and loses its focus
332 on its core reasons for existence. While we conduct our work together, issues will arise as to the
333 appropriate relationship between the local congregations of the synod and the leadership we have
334 established to carry out the assignments of the synod. We might struggle with differences of opinion
335 as to which efforts can *best* be carried out together (synodically) as opposed to individually (by
336 congregations or individual Christians). But through brotherly discussion and debate, we can settle
337 on which have the highest priority at a particular time, within the level of available support. We
338 believe that the discussion of this commission’s report will help to clarify those issues and will
339 enable us to arrive at a unified understanding of the synod and its mission.

340 Finally, any human effort, discussion, decision, or debate within the visible church here on earth will
341 be flawed by our sinful natures—individually and corporately. Unintended consequences often
342 attend actions even when carefully and prayerfully taken. We therefore turn to the Lord of the
343 church, humbly asking for his guidance in all we think, say, and do. Our goal is the welfare of our
344 visible church, and we cling to the promise of our Lord that he will make all work out for the good of
345 his saints in spite of our shortcomings. May he keep us faithful to his truth and bless our humble
346 efforts to witness to his grace.

347 **The nature of this report**

348 The commission was most grateful for the feedback to its preliminary report, which it received from
349 the 12 districts. In that report the commission stated “we intend to give full and serious
350 consideration to these reactions, as well as to those provided by various leadership groups within
351 the synod, such as the Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents.” The commission
352 conducted that full and serious consideration. It was pleased to learn that approximately 80 of its 86
353 recommendations received overwhelming or majority support. As evidence that it listened to the
354 grassroots input of the districts, the commission amended or removed those recommendations from
355 its preliminary report that did not receive majority support.

356 As we conducted our work and prepared our report, we were mindful that our attention to practical,
357 financial, procedural, and structural issues should not overshadow the fact that the ministry of the
358 gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ are the heart and center of all we do. We are devoting
359 much time and attention to external things, not because they are important in themselves but
360 because we want to create a setting in which God’s people can work together more closely and more
361 efficiently in proclaiming God’s living Word to a dying world.

362 The commission heard and discussed the responses from districts, boards, administrators, and
363 individuals. But since then a new challenge has become evident. The financial crisis that has affected
364 so much of our economy has also reached out to entangle us. We are very grateful that
365 congregational support has remained strong; however, we have experienced a significant decrease
366 in gifts from individuals and foundations.

367 The decrease in available financial resources poses serious challenges for us in our work together.
368 The commission was created during a time of financial challenge in order to address several issues
369 faced by our synod, not the least of which is the purpose and mission of the synod. We assert the
370 simple direction adopted by two consecutive conventions: that the synod ought to concentrate on
371 doing work that is more easily carried out jointly than by separate individual congregations. This
372 means principally training future workers and stretching our mission work beyond what individual
373 congregations can do either in our own country or in the world.

374 What does that mean in our current financial situation? It means hard and difficult choices for us all.
375 We observe in our review of the budget process (Section 2), “The task of prioritizing the overall

376 budget has sometimes been driven by financial factors rather than by clearly adopted ministry
377 priorities. The result is that ministry does not always dominate budget discussion, and convention
378 priorities are not consistently applied.”

379 The commission recognizes that some proposals involving additional costs may not be feasible in
380 our current situation. If the convention approves these proposals, they would be implemented only
381 if funding becomes available in the next two years or is provided for in the budget for 2011-2013.

382 We also recommend (2.25) “that continuing efforts be made by leaders of the synod to articulate and
383 communicate the synod’s overall ministry” and (2.26) “that areas of ministry create budgets that
384 reflect their part of the entire synod’s work, but, at the same time, that they give attention to the
385 larger ministry efforts of the synod in their own budget preparation.”

386 The new situation suggests that the application of the principles articulated both by the synod in
387 convention and by the commission will mean honoring the priorities even, and perhaps especially, in
388 these challenging times. We recognize that budgetary reductions will affect all areas of ministry and
389 that the cuts may not be proportionate. This may mean combining some Parish Services ministries
390 or even eliminating them. It may also mean eliminating the full-time position of Vice President of
391 Mission and Ministry (currently vacant) and reverting to a part-time position. The challenges ahead
392 may also lead to reducing the number of other administrators.

393 Whatever the responses to this challenge might be, we still believe that sharing the gospel through
394 our mission work in our country and around the world, preparing future workers who will share the
395 gospel in our congregations and mission efforts, and preparing materials that faithfully present the
396 gospel are the priorities of any discussion. Our prayer is that the Lord of the church will again bless
397 us with the financial resources necessary to fund the work we currently do. But if he challenges us to
398 choose what to do together, we choose to share the gospel in the ways described above.

399 The commission’s preliminary report included the endorsement of efforts already begun or
400 completed as our synod’s leadership addressed current problems, issues, and situations. Those
401 endorsements and several additional ones are listed in the appropriate sections of this report.

402

403 ***Section 1: Expansion of mission efforts***

404

405 **Background and Overview:** Resolution # 1 of Floor Committee 2 of the 2007 synod convention
406 committed our church body to a renewed expansion of “mission efforts at home and throughout the
407 world, using both traditional and innovative means of gospel outreach, as God provides the
408 resources.” We see clear progress being made in both of these areas of ministry, as evidenced in the
409 efforts of the Board for Home Missions to plant new mission congregations and in the decision of the
410 Board for World Missions to enter a new world mission field (Mozambique) for the first time in
411 many years. We thank God for these blessings, we applaud those efforts, and we urge the boards to
412 continue to explore new opportunities for mission expansion at home and throughout the world.

413 **Endorsements:**

- 414 **1.1 We endorse the direction taken by the Board for Home Missions (BHM) to grant**
415 **greater decision-making authority to its executive committee. This change is similar**
416 **to the change that was approved for World Missions at the 2007 convention.**
417 **1.2 We endorse the changes to the World Missions administrative structure approved by**
418 **the 2007 convention. The transfer of decision making from the field committees to an**
419 **executive committee has put the authority into the hands of an impartial group able to**
420 **make informed decisions. This appears to be working well.**

- 421 1.3 We endorse the selection of China by the Board for World Missions (BWM) as its
422 highest priority for the near future.
- 423 1.4 We endorse the approach taken by the Board for World Missions to strive to make
424 manpower decisions for strategic, rather than solely for financial, reasons.
- 425 1.5 We endorse the goal of the Board for World Missions to develop self-sustaining
426 indigenous church bodies whenever and wherever possible.
- 427 1.6 We endorse the Board for Home Missions' prioritization of requests that give higher
428 priority to the mission enhancement that puts feet on the ground (manpower) for
429 gospel ministry and give lower priority to the mission enhancement requests that
430 were for smaller amounts of money for projects supporting congregational programs
431 without providing new manpower.
- 432 1.7 We endorse the efforts of the Board for Home Missions and its District Mission Boards
433 to be proactive in finding mission establishment sites.
- 434 1.8 We endorse the work of the Board for Home Missions in the area of cross-cultural
435 work. We also endorse the BHM's ongoing assessment of the percentage of its budget
436 used for cross-cultural ministry. (Currently, the cross-cultural component represents
437 approximately 30% of the total budget and often requires long-term funding
438 commitments.)

439

440 Recommendations:

441

- 442 1.9 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions and the Board for World Missions
443 retrench and reprioritize where appropriate to preserve their ability to start new
444 churches and fields.
- 445 1.10 We recommend that the Board for Home Missions and the seminary retain the Vicar in
446 a Mission Setting program.

447 **Rationale:** The primary function of the BHM and the BWM is to share the gospel with all people
448 living in domestic and foreign mission fields respectively. Establishing new fields and new churches
449 requires an ongoing commitment to support those efforts as they mature. However, we recommend
450 that the boards retrench as necessary to be able to open new churches or fields as God provides
451 opportunities. We believe that opening new missions is vital for our synod, and we need to keep
452 opening missions (even if it's only one) as we retrench and reprioritize.

453 The Vicar in a Mission Setting program provides excellent opportunities to develop pastoral leaders
454 who are prepared to serve as pastors in an outreach setting. The program selects congregations and
455 supervising pastors on the basis of their ability to provide a learning environment and mentoring for
456 the vicars. Those congregations then receive varying amounts of support to pay for the costs of
457 training a vicar for one year. The program has the full support of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary as an
458 example of the way that all vicar training could be done. This program will provide positive results
459 for the synod for years to come.

460

461 ***Section 2: Synodical budget and finances***

462

463 **Fragmentation of financial resources**

464 **Background and overview:** Many agencies and ministries (both synodical and parasynodical) are
465 providing good and necessary services. As these agencies and ministries seek funding, congregations
466 and individuals are often asked to support many different entities. Appeals come to congregations
467 and to individuals from many directions and can give the impression that there is a competition for

468 financial gifts. At times this can pit one ministry against another and local concerns against synodical
469 concerns.

470 The proliferation of special funds and appeals for niche efforts have resulted in a fragmentation of
471 synodical financing. Special funds, gifts from individuals, and income from fees make up a significant
472 portion of the revenue for synodical ministry. In some cases, funding for ministry has been drawn
473 not from the synodical budget but partly or completely from special funds.

474 We note the positive progress made in the fiscal office and in the budgetary process.

475 We believe that the gospel alone must motivate God's people joyfully and willingly to share their
476 resources for the proclamation of Jesus.

477 We recognize that long-term support for the work of the synod will be an ongoing problem if
478 spiritual issues are not addressed. We note with concern that in 1992 WELS averaged 192,999
479 worshipers every Sunday (44% of our membership), but in 2007 WELS averaged 174,216
480 worshipers every Sunday (still 44% of our membership). WELS is losing members; the base of
481 financial support for the work of the synod is also shrinking. Many opinions have been suggested in
482 the discussion about the reasons for the decline. We believe that the spiritual issues can be at least
483 initially addressed through the steps outlined by the commission in the recommendations entitled
484 "Strengthening congregations and their members" (Section 3). We also recognize that synodical
485 leaders will continue to discuss the nature and reasons for these declines in an effort to develop
486 long-term solutions grounded in the gospel.

487 We also note with concern that numerous congregations provide little or no support for the synod's
488 work through the Congregation Mission Offering (CMO). There may be many reasons for these
489 situations, but congregations need to be encouraged to exercise faithful stewardship in their support
490 of our common synodical mission.

491 **Endorsements:**

492 **2.1 We endorse the action taken by the Conference of Presidents and the Synodical**
493 **Council, reaffirming that the Congregation Mission Offerings are the primary and**
494 **foundational method of support for the synod's various ministries and that the**
495 **Ministry of Christian Giving will continue to stress this. At the same time, we recognize**
496 **the value and importance of Individual Mission Offerings (IMO).**
497

498 **2.2 We endorse the position of the Conference of Presidents, which asserts that, when**
499 **special needs arise that must be addressed and placed before the eyes of our people,**
500 **the Conference of Presidents and the Ministry of Christian Giving will work to ensure**
501 **that all appeals for support will be gospel-based and will clearly and faithfully utilize**
502 **biblical stewardship principles.**
503

504 **2.3 We endorse the position of the Conference of Presidents, expressing its desire and**
505 **intent to limit the use of special offerings.**
506

507 **2.4 We endorse the incorporation of special funds into the budget planning process.**

508 **2.5 We endorse the changes that have been made in the fiscal office procedures and**
509 **reporting. We believe that this has helped to regain the confidence of members of the**
510 **synod in our financial systems and reporting.**

511 **2.6 We endorse the new *program budgeting process* in which areas of ministry will**
512 **provide detailed descriptions of their ministry in distinct programs; these programs**

- 513 will be outlined in terms of a description of the work to be done and how it relates to
 514 the synod's mission, the total cost of the program, the staffing required, and the
 515 anticipated source of funding.
- 516 **2.7 We endorse the president's plan to use the information provided in the program**
 517 **budgeting process to construct a proposed budget, since it will provide the necessary**
 518 **means to review areas of ministry budget proposals and to make budgetary**
 519 **recommendations to the Synodical Council on the basis of convention priorities.**
- 520 **2.8 We endorse the change in the budget planning and reporting process that will include**
 521 **the planned use of special funds in the building and reporting of the budget, providing**
 522 **a complete picture of all ministry and enabling the convention to adopt a**
 523 **comprehensive rather than partial budget.**
- 524 **2.9 We endorse the current practice of the Synodical Council that has support forecasts**
 525 **(revenue projections) performed separately and independently from those who**
 526 **directly oversee the actual ministries funded by the budget.**
- 527 **2.10 We endorse the action of the Synodical Council that has consolidated all capital debt of**
 528 **the synod into a single synodical debt with one interest rate and a schedule to**
 529 **amortize the entire debt over ten years.**
- 530 **2.11 We endorse the decision of the Conference of Presidents authorizing a synodwide**
 531 **effort to reduce or eliminate the synod's capital debt (Year of Jubilee).**
- 532 **2.12 We endorse the stated commitment of the Synodical Council to carry out the directives**
 533 **and priorities of the synod convention.**
- 534 **2.13 We endorse the efforts to provide timely, accurate, and relevant financial information**
 535 **to the synod's constituency.**
- 536 **2.14 We endorse the plans to provide more information in the printed *Report to the Twelve***
 537 ***Districts* and *Book of Reports and Memorials* rather than posting significant amounts of**
 538 **detailed information only on the synod's Web site.**
- 539 **2.15 We endorse the action of the Synodical Council that established a standing**
 540 **Compensation Review Committee.**
- 541 **2.16 We endorse the efforts already being made to enable the Conference of Presidents and**
 542 **the Synodical Council to work more closely with each other in a number of areas,**
 543 **including the budget process. Communication between the two leadership groups has**
 544 **been emphasized; one joint meeting already took place in November 2008.**
- 545 **Recommendations:**
- 546 **2.17 We recommend that all funding appeals from synodical entities be coordinated with**
 547 **or by the Ministry of Christian Giving.**
- 548 **2.18 We recommend that the Ministry of Christian Giving explore ways of working more**
 549 **closely with parasynodical agencies and others who are also making appeals in order**
 550 **to foster closer cooperation and better communication to enable all groups and**
 551 **ministries to work together in greater harmony for the good of the entire work of**
 552 **God's people in the synod.**

- 553 2.19 We recommend that the synod president, with input from the fiscal office and the
554 areas of ministry, develop a gift policy governing the creation of new special funds.
555 This policy will ensure that special gifts are in keeping with the adopted ministry
556 program and direction of the synod approved by the synod in convention and will
557 serve to limit the creation of new special funds.
- 558 2.20 We recommend that the gift policy include a provision for spending down and
559 eliminating special funds so that they do not exist in perpetuity.
- 560 2.21 We recommend that the number of special funds should be significantly reduced
561 within four years.
- 562 2.22 We recommend that the Synodical Council investigate all possible and appropriate
563 means, including the use of unrestricted special funds in the areas of ministry, to
564 eliminate the synodical debt. It is intended that unrestricted special funds may replace
565 budgeted dollars such that the budgeted dollars are freed up for debt repayment.
- 566 2.23 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents specifically address the issue of
567 congregations that contribute little or nothing to the joint work of the synod through
568 Congregation Mission Offering and develop ways to encourage more active
569 participation in the support of the synod through the Congregation Mission Offering.
- 570 2.24 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents analyze the current function and
571 level of staffing in the Ministry of Christian Giving.

572 **The budget process**

573 **Background and overview:** The existing budget process has not consistently led to funding areas of
574 ministry that clearly reflect the priorities set by the synod in convention. Some of the difficulty has
575 arisen from varied interpretations of convention priorities. Another factor is that areas of ministry
576 naturally tend to focus first on their own ministries—rightly so—but are not always in the best
577 position to see the entire picture of the synod’s overall mission and ministry. The task of prioritizing
578 the overall budget has sometimes been driven by financial factors rather than by clearly adopted
579 ministry priorities. The result is that ministry does not always dominate budget discussion and
580 convention priorities are not consistently applied.

581 We also note that the budget presented to and adopted by the synod in convention (the “operating
582 budget”) has represented only about 75% of the ministry actually carried out by the synod. The
583 remaining 25% of ministry has been funded outside of the operating budget by special funds and is
584 not part of the budget adoption process at the convention. This process does not present a complete
585 picture of what the synod is doing and places a significant portion of the synod’s work outside of the
586 decision-making responsibility that properly belongs to the convention. We believe that as the
587 convention considers the overall ministry of the synod, revenue from all sources should be
588 considered and that the adopted budget should reflect 100% of the synod’s ministry.

589 We also note that the new budgetary process does enable the Conference of Presidents, the body
590 charged with the funding of the budget, to provide timely reaction and input to the budget prepared
591 by the administrators, president, and Synodical Council. The district presidents have the
592 responsibility to encourage the congregations of their districts to support the synod’s budget. This
593 means that their support for the proposed ministry plan and budget is vital. Because of the
594 significant weight their words carry in the districts, their advocacy of the budget and the work of the
595 synod is a significant factor in generating necessary financial support for the synod’s ministry.

596 **Recommendations:**

597 **2.25 We recommend that continuing efforts be made by the leaders of the synod to**
598 **articulate and communicate the synod’s overall ministry.**

599 **2.26 We recommend that areas of ministry create budgets that reflect their part of the**
600 **entire synod’s work, but, at the same time, that they give attention to the larger**
601 **ministry efforts of the synod in their own budget preparation.**

602 **2.27 We recommend that all areas of ministry and WELS subsidiaries conduct a study of**
603 **staffing levels in each budgeting cycle. The goal of this study should be to reduce**
604 **staffing wherever possible without inherently interfering with the implementation of**
605 **synodical directives. Staff positions should be included in the budget only if clearly**
606 **justified.**

607 **2.28 We recommend that the Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents, under the**
608 **direction of the president, continue to explore ways to improve their work together in**
609 **the budget process.**

610 **2.29 We recommend that the entire Conference of Presidents participate in this process**
611 **and that its participation not be limited to the Conference of Presidents**
612 **representatives on the Synodical Council.**

613 **2.30 We recommend that the district presidents continue to be advocates for the synod’s**
614 **work within the districts, urging pastors and their congregations to contribute to the**
615 **work of the synod.**
616

617 ***Section 3: Strengthening congregations and their*** 618 ***members***

619
620 **Background and overview:** In nearly all of Paul’s letters, he thanked God for the spiritual blessings
621 that God had poured out on the congregations of believers to whom Paul was writing. He also clearly
622 encouraged them to continue to grow in their faith and service through the power of the Holy Spirit
623 working through the means of grace. Paul’s opening words to the Christians at Philippi are typical of
624 his encouragements: “I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I
625 always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being
626 confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of
627 Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:3-6).

628 We thank God for those same kinds of blessings on the congregations and Christians in our synod.
629 God has blessed us through the means of grace. He has created a wonderful partnership in the
630 gospel. And we share the apostle Paul’s confidence that God will continue to work graciously in the
631 hearts and lives of God’s people.

632 But just as Paul thankfully acknowledged the spiritual blessings of God on those congregations, he
633 did not hesitate to encourage them to continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

634 We agree with those who have observed that a spiritually strong synod requires spiritually strong
635 congregations. And we maintain that genuine spiritual strength and health occurs in only one way:
636 through the powerful, life-giving, faith-renewing work of the Holy Spirit through Word and
637 sacrament in the hearts of people.

638 As long as the church remains the church militant, it will struggle with the effects of sin and with
639 Satan's attempts to draw God's people away from his gracious promises. It should not surprise us
640 that congregations—and by extension the synod—are engaged in that same struggle. Symptoms are
641 not difficult to find. The number of people in worship services and Bible classes has decreased in
642 recent years. Membership has declined due to a combination of lost members and fewer adult
643 confirmands. Elementary school enrollments have dropped. This will negatively influence high
644 school enrollments in the future. A significant number of congregations have closed schools or even
645 closed the doors of the church. Families and individuals in our congregations face the daily pressures
646 of life in a sinful world—a world that all too often inserts its godless influences into the hearts and
647 lives of Christians.

648 Solomon said that there is nothing new under the sun. It is true that the struggles and difficulties
649 faced by God's people today are not new. At the same time, this should not be cause for suggesting
650 that there is nothing that can or should be done to address these issues. The questions before us are,
651 How can we, as a synod, best address these problems? How can we, confident in the power of the
652 means of grace alone, work to strengthen our congregations and our members in their faith and in
653 their lives as Christians?

654 Since our trust is in the gospel, the solution must be centered in that setting where the gospel is
655 proclaimed directly to God's people, that is, in the local congregations of our synod. While the
656 corporate synod does not carry out this work directly, the synod does have a role to play in assisting
657 and encouraging this kind of faithful gospel ministry. Any synodical role should be designed to
658 facilitate the powerful working of the Word in the hearts of God's people in congregations and
659 should provide assistance to those who have been called by God to minister to God's people.

660 Our proposal to strengthen congregations is a multifaceted approach that integrates changes across
661 several levels of the synod's ministries and structure. It is designed to create a **cooperative team**
662 **approach** to congregational health, joining the district president, the circuit pastor, mission
663 counselors, gift-planning counselors, and Parish Services ministries into a comprehensive support
664 system for congregational spiritual strengthening. This is not a proposal that will necessarily
665 provide immediate results; rather, it represents the start of a long-term effort to create an
666 atmosphere and a setting for the Spirit to work through the means of grace in our congregations and
667 their members.

668 **Recommendations:**

669 **3.1 We recommend that the 2009 Synod in Convention appoint a group to bring a** 670 **comprehensive redistricting recommendation to the 2011 convention.**

671 **Rationale:** The district president is called to oversee all doctrine and practice within the district; he
672 is also, in a very real sense, the pastor of the called workers in a district and is responsible for their
673 spiritual and professional well-being. He counsels, encourages, mediates, and motivates
674 congregations and called workers under his care. Historically we have been committed to the idea
675 that district presidents should continue to serve as parish pastors (rather than becoming full-time
676 district administrators). The synod provides manpower assistance to the district presidents to make
677 this possible. At the same time, however, we ask them to have more contact, more communication,
678 and more involvement with the congregations and called workers in their district. This burden is
679 proportionately heavier in the larger districts. The sheer number of congregations and called
680 workers in the largest districts creates genuine difficulty for the district president to work
681 proactively with congregations as they address spiritual and congregational issues. Note the size of
682 the districts in terms of congregations and called workers:

683

District	Cong	Pastors	Male Teachers	Female Teachers	Souls
Northern Wisconsin	156	170	115	214	74,000
Southeastern Wis	149	189	178	329	71,000
Western Wisconsin	170	176	118	196	71,000
Minnesota	162	162	72	132	52,000
Michigan	148	154	66	114	42,000
Arizona-California	113	121	59	97	24,000
Nebraska	90	73	22	37	14,000
South Atlantic	73	74	15	39	11,000
Dakota-Montana	78	54	9	19	10,000
South Central	45	43	14	23	7,000
Pacific Northwest	47	42	16	29	6,000
North Atlantic	45	42	4	7	6,000

684

685 As a result of the size of the largest districts, the president of a large district is often able to deal with
686 problems reactively only after problems have surfaced.

687 The three largest districts each have more than 70,000 members, with 500-700 called workers; the
688 three smallest districts, by contrast, have fewer than 10,000 members each with fewer than 100
689 called workers.

690 We believe that a change in the size of districts is necessary to enable district presidents to carry out
691 their weighty responsibilities in a more personal and proactive way.

692 We believe that this recommendation will allow district presidents to continue to serve as parish
693 pastors. We believe that making the office of district president full time is, for a number of reasons,
694 not in the best interest of the synod and its congregations.

695 We considered other solutions, including:

- 696 1) Provide an assistant district president in the largest districts.
- 697 2) Provide a congregational assistant to a district vice president so that he can take over more
698 district president duties.
- 699 3) Provide a near-term solution until more study can be done.
- 700 4) Provide funding and let each district choose its preference.

701 Each of the solutions above has drawbacks. We believe that the creation of new districts enables
702 district presidents to serve more effectively, retains the district president as a parish pastor and
703 part-time district president, and maintains uniformity across districts in structure and function of
704 the district president.

705 **3.2 We recommend that we improve and strengthen the circuit pastor system.**

706 **Background and overview:** In many cases, our circuit pastor system is working well, and we thank
707 God for that. But there is a clear unevenness in how the position functions. Especially in the case of
708 large circuits, the circuit pastor can have difficulty in establishing and maintaining a close personal
709 knowledge of the congregations and the called workers in his circuit, and the congregation does not
710 necessarily work closely with the circuit pastor on an ongoing basis. The circuit pastor is often called
711 upon only after problems develop in a congregation or among called workers and is asked to settle
712 disputes or preside over disciplinary situations. In some situations the circuit pastor is primarily the
713 distributor of synodical materials. Circuit pastors are sometimes chosen for the wrong reasons, such

714 as his seniority, his availability, or his personality. There is also a lack of clarity in the accountability
715 of congregations to the circuit pastor and vice versa.

716 **Endorsements:**

717 **3.2.1 We endorse the plans of the Conference of Presidents to re-articulate the duties and**
718 **responsibilities of the circuit pastor and provide for improved circuit pastor training.**

719 **Recommendations:**

720 **3.2.2 We recommend that the size of circuits be reduced to 6-8 congregations where**
721 **possible.**

722 **3.2.3 We recommend that circuit pastors be given intensive training on their role and**
723 **responsibilities.**

724 **3.2.4 We recommend that circuit pastors shall be in close personal contact with their**
725 **congregations and called workers on a regular basis (personal visit at least annually).**

726 **3.2.5 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents re-articulate the duties and**
727 **responsibilities of the circuit pastor and include these responsibilities in an updated**
728 **circuit pastor manual.**

729 **3.2.6 We recommend that it be clearly understood that, when circuits elect circuit pastors,**
730 **they are calling him to provide pastoral guidance and direction when appropriate.**

731 ***Rationale:*** Strengthening and defining more clearly the role of the circuit pastor is intended to
732 enable circuit pastors to deal proactively with congregational and personnel issues rather than
733 reactively to problems that arise. It is an opportunity to enable pastoral review, accountability, and
734 evangelical encouragement on an ongoing basis. Reducing the size of circuits will enable him to be
735 more familiar with his congregations and called workers.

736 The circuit pastor must be in his member parishes with regular frequency. If the circuit pastor is to
737 have the role of encouragement and accountability, it requires him to be familiar with the called
738 workers and congregations under his care. In larger circuits, neighboring parishes with multiple
739 pastors can help free him to carry out his call. In mission areas, the occasional use of lay readers
740 could enable the circuit pastor to visit congregations in the circuit.

741 The call as a circuit pastor implicitly carries with it the responsibility to encourage, review, and hold
742 congregations and pastors accountable. The circuit pastor's call would obligate him to provide that
743 encouragement and accountability and it would imply that all congregations in the circuit recognize
744 his role in providing such a ministry.

745 We believe that circuit pastors will need training in order to provide appropriate encouragement,
746 review, and accountability.

747 **3.3 We recommend that we redeploy and reconfigure the functions of Parish Services.**

748 **Background and overview:** The commission analyzed the ministries carried out by the various
749 entities under the supervision of the Board for Parish Services (BPS). They include the following:
750 Parish Assistance, the Commission on Evangelism, the Commission on Worship, the Commission on
751 Youth Discipleship, the Commission on Parish Schools, the Commission on Adult Discipleship, and
752 the Commission on Special Ministries. Each of these ministries arose in response to needs addressed
753 by district and synodical conventions over the years. For example, the Commission on Youth
754 Discipleship called a man to oversee the publication of a new coordinated religion curriculum after

755 the need for such a step was demonstrated. The curriculum was published in 1997 as a joint effort
756 between the Commission and Northwestern Publishing House. The curriculum is now in use in most
757 of our congregational elementary schools and Sunday schools. A new curriculum is being developed
758 by NPH, while the administrator has focused on other issues facing our congregations. Similar
759 histories can be cited for the creation of most of the ministries that constitute Parish Services. Some
760 of the ministries have very long histories, the longest being the Commission on Parish Schools.

761 Today the Board for Parish Services has a full-time administrator to coordinate the work done by the
762 various ministries that comprise Parish Services. Each of these ministries also has a full-time
763 administrator to oversee and coordinate the particular work assigned to each area of ministry. In
764 addition, these administrators have the responsibility of initiating new approaches and directions
765 for the ministry they are called to direct. Over the years, administrators were added as a way to
766 address the needs perceived by synodical conventions. The longest standing administrative position
767 is the one that assists parish schools. The most recent administrative position of Parish Services is
768 the administrator for worship.

769 The commission concluded that the work of Parish Services offers many benefits to the
770 congregations of our synod. Parish Assistance provides services to congregations evaluating their
771 ministry and looking for ways to improve the local ministries. Parish Schools and Youth Discipleship
772 provide coordination and leadership for our extensive system of Christian education and assist in
773 the local congregations' efforts to serve young people and their families. Worship provides
774 important guidance and education in a time when worship topics are in the forefront of discussion in
775 our synod. Special Ministries serves wide but specific constituencies that would be difficult for
776 individual congregations to serve. Evangelism and Adult Discipleship, especially through the
777 workshops they conduct throughout the synod, offer valuable guidance and advice. All of these
778 ministries provide direct assistance and resources to called workers or congregations, as well as
779 training opportunities for called workers and lay leaders. The commission endorses the work of
780 Parish Services, underscores its importance to the local congregations, and recommends the
781 continuance of these ministries in some form so that they may assist in the spiritual and ministry
782 needs of congregations and members. Their essential function is to assist congregations in carrying
783 out their ministries. Additionally some of the functions of Parish Services, in particular Special
784 Ministries, carry out ministries that could not easily be done by individual congregations.

785 The commission recognized, however, that some of the ministries of Parish Services have not always
786 been readily or extensively utilized by many congregations. For example, according to the estimate
787 of the administrator of Parish Services, about 400 congregations have either made use of Parish
788 Assistance or have inquired about it. But of these 400 congregations not all have used the four
789 phases of the program. At any given time, 75-100 congregations are actively using the service at
790 some level. While some congregations use the service two or more times, others do not use it at all.
791 Attendance at workshops and seminars conducted by other ministries of Parish Services could also
792 be cited to support the observation that the ministry is underutilized. Understandably, most of those
793 who have used the services offered are very positive about their experiences, and Parish Services
794 administrators, as well as the board and individual commissions, believe in the value of their service
795 to the synod and their Lord.

796 We wrestled with this issue and others at some length both before the preliminary report and after
797 we heard responses, including that of Parish Services (Oct. 3, 2008) and the discussion of the
798 Synodical Council (Nov. 15 and 16, 2008, and April 14 and 15, 2009). Other issues included
799 demographic changes (urban shift, aging of the WELS, migration of membership, declining school
800 enrollments), congregational issues (plateaued or declining membership, attendance at worship and
801 Bible study, ministry models, approaches to family ministry, relationship between congregations
802 and called workers), and synodical fragmentation (philosophy of ministry, approach to worship and
803 outreach, as well as matters of doctrine and practice). We would hope that a continued brotherly

804 discussion of these issues will take place in connection with the theological studies suggested in
805 Section 5 of this report.

806 These issues are not new or unique to us. They are topics of conversation and prayer at every level
807 of the synod and also confront almost every organized visible church body. We looked at our own
808 situation to assess the scope of our challenges. Many of our congregations continue to struggle.

809 Parish Services is not the only area of ministry to address these issues, but it is one of them. Another
810 responsible group addressing these issues is the Conference of Presidents. The district presidents
811 share a concern for the spiritual health of the congregations within their own districts as well as the
812 congregations of the entire synod. Drafting call lists for congregations facing vacancies, counseling
813 pastors and congregations in the Lord's Word, and dealing with cases of discipline place district
814 presidents in direct contact with many of the challenges before us all.

815 As an example of this concern, and in a desire to maintain unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace,
816 the Conference of Presidents has called for a scriptural study of the principles that unite us in our
817 Christian freedom in worship and other areas on the one hand, and in our desire to remain faithful to
818 the Scriptures on the other.

819 We feel that bringing together the Conference of Presidents and the functions of Parish Services
820 would be advantageous to all. The commission was convinced that continuing with the status quo in
821 how Parish Services ministries function would not bring about necessary improvements to the
822 spiritual health of congregations and their members. We believe that a new approach is needed.

823 We have attempted to address the issues in other parts of this report by recommending a more
824 significant role for circuit pastors and reducing the size of large districts to allow district presidents
825 to be more proactive. The commission was mindful not to add significant amounts of administrative
826 responsibilities to already busy district presidents. We believe that as this team approach to
827 congregational health matures, the individual district presidents may, in fact, see relief in some of
828 their commitment of time, since problems and conflicts will be addressed proactively rather than
829 reactively.

830 The recommendations that follow address the ministry of Parish Services.

831 **3.3.1 We recommend that the functions (and appropriate grassroots commissions) of**
832 **Evangelism, Worship, Special Ministries, Adult Discipleship, Parish Schools, Youth**
833 **Discipleship, and Parish Assistance be retained in some form.**

834 **3.3.2 We recommend that Parish Services be consolidated into fewer commissions with a**
835 **corresponding reduction in administrative and clerical staff. We further recommend**
836 **that Parish Services be involved in the process of determining how this consolidation**
837 **should best take place.**

838 **3.3.3 We recommend that the Board for Parish Services and the position of Board for Parish**
839 **Services administrator be eliminated. One of the remaining administrators will serve**
840 **as the coordinator of Parish Services.**

841 **3.3.4 We recommend that Parish Services be placed under the direct responsibility of the**
842 **Conference of Presidents and be accountable to it. This will place additional resources**
843 **at the direction of the Conference of Presidents and support the Conference of**
844 **Presidents in its responsibility to strengthen and support congregations.**

845 **3.3.5 We recommend that the coordinator of Parish Services report to the Conference of**
846 **Presidents much as the Director of the Ministry of Christian Giving and the Director of**
847 **Communications do now.**

848 **3.3.6 We recommend that administrators of the commissions of Parish Services be called by**
849 **the Conference of Presidents, in consultation with the responsible commissions, as is**
850 **done in the case of the Ministry of Christian Giving and Communications.**

851 **3.3.7 We recommend that the support and clerical staffs of these ministries be reconfigured**
852 **as necessary to create new efficiencies and shared duties where possible.**

853 **3.4 We recommend that the publishing needs of the synod continue to be directed to the**
854 **Publication Coordinating Commission and Northwestern Publishing House.**
855 **(Northwestern Publishing House has published material for Worship, Adult**
856 **Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, and Evangelism.)**

857 ***Rationale:*** In this proposal, the separate ministries now a part of Parish Services all become
858 accountable to the Conference of Presidents. The common thread among all of these ministries,
859 unlike missions and ministerial education, is that their work takes place primarily in direct contact
860 with congregations. The role of Parish Services is one of encouraging, counseling, and assisting local
861 congregations to carry out their ministries. Through their calling, the district presidents are
862 primarily responsible for doctrine and practice, and thereby the spiritual health of congregations.
863 Shifting overall accountability of these Parish Services ministries to the Conference of Presidents
864 creates a close connection between the Conference of Presidents and the work of these commissions
865 and, in effect, makes them extensions of the office of district president. It will ensure more extensive
866 implementation of their work within the districts and a high level of trust and confidence in the
867 ministry programs and resources they offer. This will also clarify the lines of communication and
868 reporting regarding the work of Parish Services among the congregations of our districts. It will also
869 help eliminate the perception that Parish Services and the Conference of Presidents operate with
870 different philosophies of ministry and will remove the potential for disharmony between two groups
871 dedicated to the welfare of our congregations.

872 We already follow a similar line of accountability in the Ministry of Christian Giving and in
873 Communication Services, which are directly accountable to the Conference of Presidents through the
874 president and vice president.

875 Like other areas of Parish Services, the Parish Assistance program shall be an arm of the Conference
876 of Presidents used to assist the district presidents in their work of advising the congregations and
877 called workers of their districts. Parish Assistance could assist the district presidents in the training
878 of circuit pastors as outlined in the commission's recommendation on revitalization of the circuit
879 pastor (Recommendation 3.2). Parish Assistance, as a part of the new team approach to
880 congregational health, could work closely with the circuit pastors and district presidents to analyze
881 how congregations can improve and expand their ministries. Like the other parish services, Parish
882 Assistance will report to the Conference of Presidents through the president and vice president. Calls
883 to its positions, both full- and part-time, will be issued by the Conference of Presidents. The response
884 of the Board for Parish Services also endorsed a closer connection between Parish Services and the
885 Conference of Presidents (Oct. 3, 2008, p. 3).

886 This proposal retains all of Parish Services ministries, with grassroots commissions functioning as
887 appropriate. The close connection between the Conference of Presidents and the work of these
888 ministries will ensure the ready implementation of their work within the districts. This will also
889 clarify the lines of communication and reporting regarding the work of Parish Services among the
890 congregations of our districts.

891
892 We expect that Northwestern Publishing House will continue to be the synod's publisher of
893 materials for worship, adult discipleship, youth discipleship, and evangelism as necessary and
894 feasible. When necessary the Publication Coordinating Commission can provide grants for some
895 publishing projects.

896

897 ***Section 4: Pursuing excellence among called workers***

898

899 **Background and overview:** Our educational system for training called workers has been a great
900 blessing to our synod. We support the system with a great deal of our resources of time and treasure.
901 Students who enroll at our terminal schools are well prepared for the studies before them. Called
902 workers who enter the public ministry are well prepared for the work before them. But we also
903 want to be diligent in making our system even better. How can we encourage the pursuit of
904 excellence among us?

905 The commission has no intention of attacking our system of education or our called workers. But it is
906 always good to make an honest assessment of where we are in an attempt to improve what we are
907 doing.

908 Does our system lack a consistent emphasis on and acknowledgment of excellence in academics? If
909 so, this can easily result in a tacit acceptance of mediocrity. Coupled with our lack of emphasis on
910 creating lifelong learners, a cultural and historical aversion to accountability, the absence of a
911 program for continuing education for called workers, and the lack of a system to ensure the
912 implementation of such a program, we face numerous hindrances to the pursuit of excellence in
913 ministry among us.

914 We believe that excellence should be pursued by all who are preparing for ministry, as well as by
915 those already serving in the ministry. This is true simply because it is the duty of servants in the
916 Lord's kingdom and among those who proclaim the gospel of Christ. But how can we as a church
917 body demonstrate our commitment to pursuing excellence? We can foster excellence in our recruits,
918 in our students, and in those who are now serving in the field by providing programs, policies, and
919 accountability to that end.

920 **Endorsements:**

921 **4.1 We endorse the recent growth in merit-based scholarships at Martin Luther College**
922 **and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.**

923 ***Pursuing excellence: High school level***

924 **Recommendations:**

925 **4.2 As a means to encourage the pursuit of excellence on the high school level, we**
926 **recommend that a number of full-tuition scholarships to Martin Luther College be**
927 **provided to academically gifted high school students enrolling at MLC.**

928 ***Rationale:*** These students would receive generous scholarships at almost any other school in the
929 nation; they should receive the same at Martin Luther College. Top students have so many things
930 calling them away from ministry; this will remove one of the obstacles. If these top students
931 comprised a greater portion of incoming Martin Luther College classes, the long-term positive effect
932 on the emphasis on excellence would be significant.

933 The prep schools exist to prepare young people for the public ministry in WELS. The curriculum is
934 designed to furnish graduates with the specific skills and knowledge required for ministerial studies
935 on the college level. Full-tuition scholarships will encourage excellence on the prep level and will
936 provide encouragement for academically gifted students already in the system to continue their
937 training for ministry.

938 ***Pursuing excellence: College level***

939 **4.3 As a means to encourage the pursuit of excellence on the college level, we recommend**
940 **that Martin Luther College provide a significant number of undergraduate and**
941 **graduate scholarships tied to merit or excellence in areas such as academics, music,**
942 **the arts, leadership, campus service, and evangelism.**
943

944 **Rationale:** These steps would encourage an atmosphere of excellence in our college. Awarding
945 scholarships to those gifted in areas other than academics will provide encouragement and
946 additional development opportunities for those who possess other aptitudes beneficial to the
947 ministry. We recommend that the administration of Martin Luther College take into consideration
948 the current and future needs of the synod as it awards such scholarships. These scholarships could
949 be used to help provide candidates to meet the imminent needs of the synod.

950 ***Pursuing excellence: Seminary level***

951 **Background and overview:** At the seminary we need to emphasize the importance of lifelong
952 learning and the need to develop the future leaders of our church body. By the time they enter the
953 seminary, it's fairly apparent which members of the class will be leaders in linguistics, music,
954 outreach, etc. They may never serve as seminary professors, but they *will* be leaders in their circuit,
955 conference, and district for decades. Our current seminary education, however, does not consistently
956 give them sufficient opportunity to hone their skills and develop into the leaders we need.

957 **4.4 We recommend that the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary faculty develop and establish a**
958 **program of study fellowships based on gifts for ministry.**

959 **Rationale:** The seminary faculty would encourage excellence, leadership, and service among its
960 student body by establishing a program of study fellowships that allow students the time and ability
961 to pursue areas of giftedness in service to the church. An example of how such fellowships might be
962 implemented is given below. This example is meant only to illustrate the concept. The seminary
963 faculty would have the freedom to implement the concept in a way that fits their mission and
964 campus culture.

965 **An example:** Each year four Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary students could be selected to receive
966 study fellowships. These students would receive a stipend for advanced study or development of
967 specific ministry skills in place of a part-time job. We estimate that this would require approximately
968 \$5,500 per fellowship. Oversight of the advanced study would be done by the faculty advisor.
969 Selection of these students would recognize excellence in gifts for ministry. The seminary could have
970 12 fellows on campus who would be examples of excellence and models for ministry. This would
971 contribute to improving the seminary's ability to encourage a culture committed to excellence.

972 **4.5 We recommend that the seminary continue and expand directed study programs for**
973 **all students and explore ways to increase the use of directed study programs with in-**
974 **class components.**

975 **Rationale:** This will provide encouragement for students to develop a commitment to lifelong
976 learning and continuing professional development. This would require additional part-time faculty
977 at the estimated cost of \$40,000 annually.

978 ***Pursuing excellence: Post-seminary graduate study***

979 **Background and overview:** Historically we have not consistently encouraged pastoral students to
980 pursue advanced degrees following their graduation from the seminary. One motive has been to
981 keep our students from falling into pits Satan has dug in the world of secular higher education. There
982 has also been a desire to enable men to begin as soon as possible the parish ministry for which they
983 have trained. These cautions have inadvertently contributed to a situation in which advanced

984 education is not common and in which aspirations to excellence are not consistently encouraged or
985 applauded.

986 **4.6 We recommend that seminary graduates who aspire to higher learning and broad**
987 **educational experience for the good of the parish ministry be provided seminary**
988 **faculty guidance.**

989 **Rationale:** The church will benefit from those who decide to become experts in fields that are
990 important to the life and ministry of the church.

991 **4.7 We recommend that a robust sabbatical program be re-instituted at the seminary.**

992 **Rationale:** The loss of the sabbatical program at the seminary has impeded the ability to pursue
993 advanced degrees by the men we have called to train our future pastors. The sabbatical program
994 would enable release time for advanced degrees, parish experience, and projects that benefit our
995 synod at large. The estimated cost of each sabbatical is \$80,000 annually.

996 ***Pursuing excellence: In the field***

997

998 **Background and overview:** Having a program of lifelong learning and professional development is
999 recognized as vitally important in virtually every field and occupation. It should be no less important
1000 for those who are entrusted with the faithful proclamation of God's truth and with the spiritual
1001 health of souls in their care.

1002

1003 Historically, many called workers have indeed been diligent in maintaining and improving their
1004 professional, theological, and practical skills through a variety of means. But this commitment has
1005 not been universal. We believe that continuing professional education for those serving in the public
1006 ministry is a matter that should not be debatable.

1007

1008 We believe that all who serve in the ministry should be involved in some type of ongoing and regular
1009 professional growth. Given the time constraints of ministry and the costs often associated with
1010 formal courses of study, we also believe that any requirement of continuing education should be as
1011 flexible as possible, with options for many different types of professional growth activities. We
1012 believe that all called workers will want to use their time and talents to the very best of their ability,
1013 and that they will want to be sure that all of their education (both theological and practical) does not
1014 atrophy with time or lack of attention.

1015

1016 **Recommendations:**

1017 **4.8 We recommend that a flexible program of continuing education with standards and**
1018 **minimum requirements for all called workers be developed by the Committee for**
1019 **Continuing Education of Called Workers and presented to the 2011 Synod Convention.**

1020

1021 **Rationale:** We believe that there is a need to develop a coordinated and comprehensive program of
1022 continuing education for called workers that meets real ministry needs and that understands
1023 various learning styles and preferences of our workers. Programs of professional growth can be
1024 flexible and can incorporate many different kinds of professional growth opportunities, such as
1025 specialized courses, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary summer quarter, Martin Luther College summer
1026 school and Master's program, seminary satellite courses, institutes, seminars, workshops, circuit
1027 studies, conference papers, writing assignments, and self-directed study. Minimum standards should
1028 be adopted to ensure that called workers are continually growing in their knowledge of Scripture
1029 and in their ability to carry out their ministries. The program should enable requirements to be met
1030 even if abundant funding is not available.

1031
1032 This recommendation emphasizes the importance of continuing education for called workers. It
1033 acknowledges the benefits that will result when called workers are committed to keeping their skills
1034 sharp and to increasing their academic and practical knowledge.

1035
1036 Participation in the program is voluntary. However, congregations are encouraged to monitor and
1037 provide funding for continuing education opportunities for their called workers.
1038

1039 ***Section 5: Synodwide theological study***

1040
1041 **Background and overview:** WELS has been shaped by a number of doctrinal controversies
1042 throughout its history. It had to overcome its initial unionistic bent at its inception. The synod
1043 survived the election controversy of the later 1800s and the fellowship battles of the mid-1900s.
1044 Whether articulating the roles of men and women, preserving the practice of close Communion, or
1045 standing up for the inerrant and infallible Scriptures, the Wisconsin Synod, by God’s grace, has
1046 weathered numerous storms involving doctrine and practice. Each of these helped to shape and to
1047 define the character of our synod today. To this day we cherish our unity in doctrine and practice.

1048 At the same time, numerous negative influences continue to challenge our synod today. The
1049 influence of postmodern thought and the Arminian (“decision theology”) evangelical culture
1050 challenge us to remain firm in our understanding. The devil is constantly circling and attacking from
1051 different angles. Some of his attacks are hardly new; he assaults doctrines and practical
1052 understandings that have been with the church for centuries. Each generation must fight the
1053 doctrinal battles particular to its time, while not failing to take ownership of the victories of
1054 generations past. We must remain alert to specifically modern challenges to our faith, as well as new
1055 challenges arising from old controversies in the church that have become coated with the patina of
1056 time and forgotten in history. In such cases, we need to revisit our church fathers and early
1057 dogmaticians, focus our attention on the Word, and find fresh insights for today.

1058

1059 **A timely opportunity for study and reflection**

1060 **Recommendations:**

1061 **5.1 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents initiate a synodwide review of key**
1062 **doctrines and practical issues pertinent to challenges facing WELS today in an effort to**
1063 **foster and preserve unity in doctrine and practice.**

1064 **5.2 We recommend that guidance be given for studies at circuits, delegate conferences,**
1065 **pastor and teacher conferences, and district and synod conventions, focusing on key**
1066 **issues and deriving maximum benefit from study materials.**

1067 **5.3 We recommend that assistance be provided to local program committees at all levels**
1068 **(congregation, circuit, conference, district, synod) in compiling edifying and focused**
1069 **agendas with the best potential for increasing awareness and understanding among**
1070 **pastors, teachers, and laypeople.**

1071 **5.4 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents encourage and promote the**
1072 **opportunity for personal, congregational, pastoral, and synodical soul-searching and**
1073 **introspective reflection, with a view toward repentance where necessary and creating**
1074 **opportunities to address timely issues in doctrine and practice.**

1075 **Study approach**

1076 **Recommendations:**

- 1077 **5.5 We recommend that the Conference of Presidents assign topics for study and**
1078 **preparation to eminently qualified presenters from our fellowship recognized for**
1079 **their knowledge of the subject, doctrinal insight, and evangelical approach.**
- 1080 **5.6 We recommend that that the Conference of Presidents encourage a fresh approach to**
1081 **examining each study topic—an approach characterized by both its depth and its**
1082 **breadth. The study approach should be firmly grounded in a solid method of exegesis**
1083 **of Holy Scripture. The approach to study should incorporate insights from church**
1084 **fathers, Lutheran confessional documents, Lutheran dogmaticians; it should**
1085 **incorporate insights from the history and the experience of the Christian church**
1086 **through the ages. This approach is intended to stimulate a fresh, vigorous study of the**
1087 **issues, and to discourage a mere repetition of often-used terms and statements.**
- 1088 **5.7 We recommend that for each suggested study, a comprehensive list of propositional**
1089 **statements will be offered to the presenter(s) as a foundation for the study. The**
1090 **propositional statements will provide a framework for the study materials and help**
1091 **the persons preparing the study materials to focus on key issues.**
- 1092 **5.8 We recommend that appropriate materials be developed for use at the synod**
1093 **convention, district conventions, pastors' and teachers' conferences, circuit study**
1094 **groups, and congregational Bible studies.**
- 1095 **5.9 We recommend that materials, as well as suggestions for presenters, will be made**
1096 **available to the various groups identified above, starting with the 2009 Synod**
1097 **Convention and extending to conferences, conventions, circuits, and congregations for**
1098 **study in the latter half of 2009 through the first half of 2011.**

1099

1100 **Specific issues suggested for study**

1101 ***Year One: The Efficacy of the Means of Grace***

1102 Year one presents a study examining a simple question: What is the raw power of God's Word—both
1103 to convert and to harden?

1104 The Holy Spirit uses the means of grace to create and strengthen saving faith. We want to keep our
1105 focus on the gospel of Jesus Christ in Word and sacrament as the only tool through which God's
1106 Spirit operates on human hearts. In matters such as worship, education, and outreach, we have
1107 marvelous freedom to use human methods, forms, styles, and techniques in the service of the gospel.
1108 Our freedom must be exercised in a way consistent with sound doctrine and practice. As
1109 confessional Lutherans walking a narrow, evangelical road, we wish to avoid pitfalls on either side.
1110 On the one hand, we wish to avoid relying on methods—especially those that have their origins in
1111 false theology or that obscure the means of grace—instead of trusting the gospel. On the other hand,
1112 we are not content with a spirit of mediocrity, which uses the pretext of “trusting the means of
1113 grace” as a smokescreen for poor preparation, fear of change, and lack of creativity and innovation.
1114 Both pitfalls must be understood and avoided.

1115 ***Year Two: Vocation, Church, and Ministry***

1116 Considerable attention has been given to ministry issues in recent years. However, many of the
1117 discussions on ministry have taken place in a context that is separated from the larger question of
1118 Christian vocation. A synodwide study on vocation, church, and ministry—in close cooperation with

1119 our brothers in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)—can help clarify understanding and provide
1120 answers to difficult questions.

1121 This recommended study focuses on crystallizing a proper understanding of church and ministry,
1122 while clearing up confusion raised by careless writing, exegesis in a historical vacuum, adoption of
1123 anticlerical notions, misunderstandings about Christian vocation, and the potential influence of
1124 Arminian evangelicalism upon our synod and upon our understanding of ministry, Christian service,
1125 and vocation.

1126 ***Year Three: Care of Souls***

1127 Our congregations are facing discipline challenges more than ever. Whether dealing with open,
1128 defiant sin that expects the church to accept worldly behavior, or meeting cold indifference that
1129 shows in worship statistics and giving patterns, pastors and congregations can benefit from
1130 guidance and encouragement to shepherd the souls in their care.

1131 At the heart of a study on church discipline is the doctrine and practice of the ministry of the keys.
1132 Our synod will benefit from a consistent understanding and practice of the office of the keys, as
1133 pastors carry out the work of correcting, rebuking, encouraging, and training in righteousness (2
1134 Timothy 4).

1135 Statistical reports indicate that member inactivity is a serious problem across our church body. This
1136 is a spiritual problem, to be addressed faithfully by proper application of law and gospel and correct
1137 use of the keys.

1138

1139 ***Year Four: The Sacramental Life***

1140 This study suggestion is geared toward developing a greater awareness of the means of grace as the
1141 center and focus of all the Christian life.

1142 Prior to the 1700s, the life of the evangelical Lutheran church was more immersed in and focused
1143 upon the sacraments as part of the Christian's regular spiritual nourishment. German pietism in the
1144 1700s downplayed the sacraments, and the Lutheran church has never fully recovered from
1145 pietism's detrimental effects.

1146 First, this study will emphasize that the gospel is primarily nourishment for the soul and not mere
1147 information. Second, this study will emphasize the very Lutheran understanding of daily baptismal
1148 awareness and Holy Communion as the tangible expression of the gospel. Third, the study will
1149 emphasize a thirst for and appreciation of confession and absolution.

1150

1151 ***Section 6: Structure and organization***

1152

1153 **Leadership: The Synodical Council and the Conference of Presidents**

1154 **Background and Overview:** It is essential that the two primary leadership groups of the synod
1155 work closely together in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation as they carry out their respective
1156 responsibilities. While not infringing on the responsibilities of each other, each group needs to be
1157 kept informed of the decisions and direction of the other group. Such communication and sharing of
1158 important information will build a relationship of mutual trust, respect, and cooperation.

1159 Because of the authority that rests with the Synodical Council as the governing body of our synod
1160 between conventions, they will continue to face difficult decisions that impact people and programs.
1161 It is very important that our Conference of Presidents is not only aware of the rationale for decisions
1162 that are made but that they are part of those decisions. District presidents regularly convey

1163 information about synodical issues and decisions to their districts; their views understandably and
1164 properly carry significant weight and influence. When there is complete agreement between these
1165 two leadership groups, it should be clearly communicated as they speak with one voice. When there
1166 is disagreement, that disagreement should be discussed and resolved whenever possible prior to
1167 any recommendation on important issues.

1168 The commission also analyzed the position of the vice president as a member of the Conference of
1169 Presidents and as the one who has been charged with overseeing the areas of ministry that report to
1170 the Synodical Council. That position has been vacant since mid-2008. While our synod president
1171 valued the assistance and support this position offered, the commission felt that the synod president
1172 has provided adequate oversight of the areas of ministry during this vacancy. The commission feels
1173 that this position could be filled on a part-time basis, thereby offering the synod president some
1174 assistance while greatly reducing the cost of this position. This move would make this position
1175 similar to the major restructuring that took place in 1997.

1176 **Recommendations:**

1177 **6.1 We recommend that, in order to continue improving communication and**
1178 **coordination, at least one joint meeting of the Synodical Council and the Conference of**
1179 **Presidents be held annually. Additional cooperative efforts should be explored.**

1180 **6.2 We recommend that, since he is the chairman of both groups, the president is tasked**
1181 **with fostering and enabling the timely exchange of crucial information and**
1182 **communication between these two leadership groups.**

1183 **6.3 We recommend that the position of first vice-president of the synod be made a part-**
1184 **time position, held by a pastor elected by the synod in convention, for an estimated**
1185 **cost savings of \$80,000.**

1186 **Lines of authority and accountability**

1187

1188 **Background and overview:** Several recent restructuring groups have concluded that our current
1189 structure creates a degree of uncertainty and confusion when it comes to accountability and
1190 responsibility. For example, administrators of the areas of ministry have, at times, been unclear as to
1191 whether they are primarily accountable to their boards or to the Synodical Council via the president
1192 and vice president. Some are confused as to whether boards for the areas of ministry are
1193 accountable to the Synodical Council, directly to the convention, or in some way to the president and
1194 vice president. More than one of those studies has recommended that the boards and their
1195 administrators are accountable to the Synodical Council and that this relationship could be clarified
1196 by having the Synodical Council issue the calls for area administrators.

1197

1198 The 2007 convention did not accept that recommendation.

1199

1200 We believe that the current constitution is clear when it specifies the lines of authority and
1201 accountability in budgetary and in all other areas. The constitution draws those lines clearly,
1202 proceeding first from the synod in convention, then to the president and the Synodical Council, then
1203 to the boards of the areas of ministry, then to the administrators called by their boards.

1204

1205 **Recommendations:**

1206

1207 **6.4 We recommend that all levels of the synodical structure review and comply with the**
1208 **lines of accountability and responsibility outlined in the constitution.**

1209

1210 **Structure of the Synodical Council**

1211 **Background and overview:** The “Preliminary Report and Recommendations of the Ad Hoc
1212 Commission” stated the following: “The commission discussed the composition of the Synodical
1213 Council and reached some general conclusions. We concluded that the size of the Synodical Council
1214 is larger than it needs to be in order to accomplish its tasks. The commission also recognized the
1215 potential difficulties in having a large number of members (8) representing the areas of ministry
1216 serving on a board charged with the responsibility of overseeing those ministries.”
1217

1218 According to the synod’s constitution, the Synodical Council is comprised of:
1219

1220 ***Voting members (22):***

1221 President (1) (*President votes only in cases of a tie*)
1222 One lay representative elected by each district (12)
1223 At-large members (pastors and teachers) elected by the synod in convention (6)
1224 Conference of Presidents representatives (3)
1225

1226 ***Non-voting advisory members (10)***

1227 First Vice President (1)
1228 Second Vice President (1)
1229 Chief Financial Officer/Treasurer (1)
1230 Director of Communications (1)
1231 Director of Christian Giving (1)
1232 *Chief Technology Officer (1)
1233 Area of Ministry administrators (4)
1234

1235 **Not specified in the bylaws but permitted when the bylaws state that “additional advisory members
1236 may be appointed by the chairman as necessary.”*
1237

1238 The Ad Hoc Commission approached the subject of the size and composition of the Synodical Council
1239 with one primary question in mind: Can a change in the composition or structure of the Synodical
1240 Council enable it to carry out its important functions more efficiently and effectively?
1241

1242 Two areas of concern were easily identified. The first is the size of the Synodical Council. Plenary
1243 meetings of the Synodical Council include all 32 voting and non-voting advisory members. The
1244 Commission was convinced that a group this large does not lend itself well to effective discussion
1245 and decision making.
1246

1247 A second area of concern centered on the composition of the Synodical Council (SC). The SC is
1248 responsible for the broad oversight of all areas of the synod’s mission and ministry between
1249 conventions. The SC also is charged with developing an overall strategic plan for the synod and
1250 recommending to the synod convention a budget that reflects that planning and synodical priorities.
1251

1252 The Synodical Council, therefore, must make decisions and plans that directly affect the areas of
1253 ministry. These decisions take place on an ongoing basis between conventions and especially during
1254 the process of formulating a budget that will be recommended to the synod convention.
1255

1256 While the constitution states that the SC should include six “at-large” members elected by the
1257 convention, the bylaws have specified that four of those at large positions be held by the four board
1258 chairmen of the areas of ministry. The result is that the four areas of ministry are represented on the
1259 SC both by their chairmen as voting members and by their administrators as advisory members. This
1260 creates a situation in which people responsible for carrying out ministry are in a position of making
1261 supervisory and oversight decisions regarding the programs and activities of their own boards. The

1262 Commission certainly believes that the areas of ministry should have ample opportunity to
1263 communicate with the Synodical Council and to present their programs and needs. But to do this, it
1264 is not necessary or advisable for the areas of ministry to have voting and advisory membership on
1265 the Synodical Council.
1266

1267 The 2007 convention arrived at this same conclusion when it considered and approved a change to
1268 the structure of the Board for World Missions. Previously, each of the world mission fields was
1269 represented on the board. Understandably, representatives of the various fields felt naturally
1270 compelled to be advocates for their respective fields. This situation often made it difficult for the
1271 board to be objective in its overall planning and decision making. The change approved by the
1272 convention created a new, objective board with members independent of the various fields. Early
1273 indications are that this change has been a positive one and has improved the ability of the board to
1274 oversee the entire program of ministry.
1275

1276 The very same rationale applied when the presidents of the synodical schools were removed from
1277 voting membership of the Board for Ministerial Education several years ago.
1278

1279 The Commission believes that the same principles apply to the composition of the Synodical Council.
1280

1281 The current constitution stipulates that the Synodical Council voting membership include the
1282 president, one lay member from each district, the three Conference of Presidents representatives,
1283 and "six at-large members from among the pastors and teachers active in the ministry." The bylaws
1284 have further defined the six at-large members in this way: "Six at-large members elected by the
1285 synod convention: a pastor, a male teacher, and the four chairmen of the areas of ministry."
1286

1287 **Recommendations:**

1288
1289 **6.5 We recommend that the four area of ministry chairmen be replaced by three pastors**
1290 **and one teacher elected by the convention. This results in six at-large pastor/teacher**
1291 **voting members of the council. Furthermore, the chairmen of the areas of ministry**
1292 **will serve the Synodical Council as non-voting advisory members.**
1293

1294 **6.6 We recommend that the non-voting advisory members attend committee and plenary**
1295 **sessions of the Synodical Council upon the request of the Synodical Council and/or the**
1296 **president.**
1297

1298 **Rationale:** This proposal accomplishes several objectives:
1299

- 1300 • It reflects more closely what appears to be the original intent of the constitution rather than
1301 the interpretation specified in the bylaws.
- 1302 • It reduces the size of the plenary meetings of the Synodical Council from 32 to 22 members.
- 1303 • It improves grassroots representation with the addition of four at-large members.
- 1304 • It fosters objective decision making by a Synodical Council whose members have no direct
1305 ties to areas of ministry.
- 1306 • It retains the ability of advisory members of the board to provide information and guidance
1307 to the council and its committees on an as-needed basis.
1308
1309

1310 **The President's Advisory Council**

1311
1312 Until fall 2007, a group called the Ministry Operations Team met regularly to address issues, make
1313 recommendations to the Synodical Council, and ensure coordination among the areas of ministry

1314 and the other administrative areas in the Synod Administration Building. This group had been
1315 comprised of the president as chairman, the vice president, the administrators of the four areas of
1316 ministry, the chief financial officer, the chief technology officer, the director of Christian giving, the
1317 director of communications, and the editor of *Forward in Christ*. A number of factors led to fairly
1318 widespread misunderstandings on the part of those outside of the Synod Administration Building as
1319 to the nature and purpose of this group.

1320
1321 In the fall of 2007 the name of this group was changed to the President's Advisory Council to reflect
1322 more accurately its role and function. The make-up of the group remained the same as the Ministry
1323 Operations Team, but the purpose and function of the group was clarified and communicated. The
1324 President's Advisory Council functions as its name implies: it serves as a sounding board and source
1325 of valuable input and advice to the president as he prepares the agenda and recommendations to the
1326 Synodical Council. It also continues to be a forum for the president to work closely with the
1327 leadership team, and for communication and coordination among the various ministries and
1328 departments of the synod's administration. Its function is solely advisory, not decision making or
1329 policy setting.

1330 **Endorsements:**

1331 **6.7 We endorse the efforts to clarify and articulate the role now served by the President's**
1332 **Advisory Council.**

1333 **6.8 We endorse the continued functioning of the President's Advisory Council as it is now**
1334 **constituted.**

1335

1336 ***Section 7: Synod and district conventions***

1337

1338 **Background and overview:** The synod convention is the ultimate authority for all synodical
1339 decisions. As such, it's important to explore every possible means to enable conventions to carry out
1340 their business in an informed and efficient manner.

1341 Convention inefficiencies exist. First, the delegates to the synod must assimilate a large amount of
1342 information in a short period of time. Second, other than advisory delegates, there is no continuity
1343 from convention to convention because each convention convenes with a new and different roster of
1344 delegates. Third, the synod meets in convention one month into the biennium for which the budget
1345 is being proposed, making it difficult for the convention to make significant budgetary changes for
1346 the first year of the biennium. Finally, the timetable of the budget development process now
1347 requires the Synodical Council to adopt a budget proposal five months prior to the convention itself.

1348 In the case of district conventions, the timing of all district conventions in the same week creates
1349 difficulty in having appropriate synodical representatives available to all district conventions. This
1350 results in unevenness in the delivery of important information, discourages discussion of issues, and
1351 carries significant costs as synodical representatives travel to district conventions across the nation.

1352 **Recommendations:**

1353 **7.1 We recommend that the administration explore ways to allow information to flow to**
1354 **delegates in a more timely fashion. Newer publishing technology and electronic**
1355 **distribution should be used to shorten the time between the adoption of a proposed**
1356 **budget by the Synodical Council and the publication and dissemination of the**
1357 **proposed budget to the delegates.**

- 1358 7.2 We recommend that all necessary and vital information be included in the printed
 1359 *Book of Reports and Memorials* and in the printed *Report to the Twelve Districts*.
 1360 Supplemental information can be provided electronically on the WELS Web site, but
 1361 only when it is truly supplemental (rather than vital) or when timing issues prevent
 1362 its inclusion in the printed reports. Efforts to keep the cost of the publications lower
 1363 should not sacrifice the furnishing of vital information.
- 1364 7.3 We recommend that convention planners consider whether the synod convention can
 1365 be shortened and/or scheduled at a more appropriate time.
- 1366 7.4 We recommend that the president and the Conference of Presidents develop and
 1367 implement a comprehensive review process for the *Book of Reports and Memorials*
 1368 materials at the circuit, conference, and district levels.
- 1369 7.5 We recommend that the synod administration, with the assistance of the director of
 1370 communications, improve the system for reporting results of conventions to the
 1371 constituency of the synod.
- 1372 7.6 We recommend that the administration investigate the possibility of having synodical
 1373 personnel report to district conventions via two-way video communications.

1374

1375 ***Section 8: Synodical communications***

1376

1377 **Background and overview:** Timely and accurate communication between the synod and its
 1378 constituency is vital. The flow of information to congregations and called workers is essential for
 1379 developing the support necessary for the synod to carry out its work.

1380

1381 **Endorsements:**

- 1382 8.1 The commission endorses the efforts already begun by the WELS Director of
 1383 Communications and the administration and urges these efforts be continued and
 1384 pursued.

1385 **These include:**

- 1386 a) The production and distribution of a single, regular, and timely electronic
 1387 newsletter (*Together*) to communicate important synodical news to our constituents.
 1388 b) The effort to unify and coordinate the various WELS communications in order to
 1389 have a single, recognizable, consistent look and feel across all areas of ministry and
 1390 assigning responsibility for *WELS Connection* to Communication Services.
 1391 c) The shift in the emphasis of *WELS Connection* away from unusual ministry ideas to
 1392 clear portrayals of the synodical ministry efforts being conducted as a result of our
 1393 walking together as a synod.
 1394 d) The adoption and implementation of a communications strategy and policies in
 1395 which Communication Services has the responsibility to coordinate the manner,
 1396 vehicle, format, and timing of synodical news and information, including vesting the
 1397 Communication Services office to establish and implement policies governing the use
 1398 of the synod's technology (Web site, electronic communications) to disseminate
 1399 information.
 1400 e) The development of an updated Web site.

- 1401 f) Identifying and implementing ways to improve the timeliness and content of pre-
1402 convention information (*Book of Reports and Memorials, Report to the Twelve*
1403 *Districts*).
1404 g) Including all vital information in the *Report to the Twelve Districts and Book of*
1405 *Reports and Memorials*, even when such inclusion requires additional space.
1406

1407 **Recommendation:**

- 1408
1409 **8.2 We recommend that the communications and technology offices investigate new**
1410 **technology that can be utilized in carrying out the synod's mission, including the**
1411 **appropriate and God-pleasing use of such things as online social networking or other**
1412 **means that may develop.**
1413

1414 **Rationale:** The WELS Web site is a valuable communications tool. It serves not only those within our
1415 fellowship but also provides an introduction to WELS and serves as a means for communicating the
1416 gospel for those outside of the synod. We believe that every effort should be made to make this
1417 resource more usable for our own members and to insure that the "face" of WELS presented to the
1418 world sends the right kind of message about our synod and its mission.
1419

1420 With rapid changes in communications and technology in our world, especially as it involves teens
1421 and young adults, it may seem wise for our synod to investigate any and all technologies that may
1422 enable us to communicate the gospel with a wider audience.
1423

1424 ***Section 9: The cost of ministerial education***

1425

1426 **Background and overview:** At the last convention the synod reaffirmed the importance of our
1427 worker training system in its current form (seminary, college, and two prep schools). It further
1428 resolved that we maintain that system in an effective and affordable fashion. The recent trends in
1429 our synodically supported ministerial education schools show the challenges we currently face,
1430 including declining enrollment, increased matriculation costs, declining synodical support, and
1431 increased student indebtedness. These issues are adversely affecting the number of ministerial
1432 candidates available for assignment, thus hampering the overall mission of the church.

1433 Particular concerns include:

1434 a) The cost of an education at our ministerial education schools has increased significantly, to the
1435 point where costs are becoming a deterrent to people desiring to study for the ministry. If we allow
1436 tuition to rise to levels where called workers and lay families cannot afford to send their children
1437 through the system, we will face serious difficulties in recruiting and training an adequate number of
1438 young people for ministry.

1439 b) Many students are graduating from Martin Luther College with a significant debt load.
1440 Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary reports the average indebted first year student at the seminary comes
1441 with \$16,389 in student debt. This amount has doubled in the past decade. Seminarians who marry
1442 an MLC graduate can expect much higher student debt. This means that new called workers entering
1443 the ministry must do so more and more with significant student loan payments, impacting adversely
1444 their financial situation from the outset of their ministerial careers and potentially impacting their
1445 stewardship and the stewardship example they set for the congregations they serve.

1446 c) Prep school enrollment has declined steadily since its peak in 2001. While some of this decline
1447 is attributable to demographics, evidence indicates that the increase of tuition and fees, coupled with
1448 the decline in available financial aid, has also played a significant role in the decline.

1449 There is no easy or inexpensive solution to changing these trends. Initial investment of synod
1450 support will ease the cost of education for students—but only at considerable expense to the synod.
1451 Over the long term, however, we hope that the additional cost to the synod will be offset by
1452 increasing enrollment and the associated increase in revenue.

1453 Implementation of these recommendations may require a significant initial increase in operational
1454 subsidy from the synod. If they are adopted, it may only be possible to implement them
1455 incrementally, as the synod’s financial situation stabilizes and funding becomes available.

1456 With these considerations in mind, the commission offers the following recommendations for
1457 implementation by the Board for Ministerial Education (BME) as expeditiously as possible within a
1458 six-year time frame.

1459 **Prep level**

1460 **Recommendations:**

1461 **9.1 We recommend that the BME and the governing boards of our two prep schools make**
1462 **it a priority to reduce spending levels on a per student basis; this should be**
1463 **accomplished via prioritized reductions in budgetary expenditures in all areas,**
1464 **including faculty and support staff, and that these reductions be reflected in the**
1465 **planning for the 2011-2013 budget.**

1466 **9.2 We recommend that we follow the principle that tuition and fees (not including room**
1467 **and board) at our two synod preparatory schools shall be comparable with that of**
1468 **area Lutheran high schools in the same region, thus preventing cost from becoming a**
1469 **primary factor for ministry-minded students weighing enrollment in a prep school.**

1470 **9.3 In view of the significant synodical investment in the prep schools, we recommend**
1471 **that the prep schools’ curriculum shall continue to reflect the single purpose of the**
1472 **schools, namely, to prepare young men and women for matriculation at Martin Luther**
1473 **College. The entire culture of the preparatory schools shall continue to be built around**
1474 **encouragement of students for the public ministry of the Word.**

1475 **College level**

1476 The issue of college tuition and costs presents additional challenges, primarily because of the larger
1477 dollar amounts involved. We believe that it is vitally important to address issues of affordability and
1478 long-term student debt.

1479 The commission has observed that, while the education offered by our college of ministerial
1480 education has essentially remained the same over the last decade or two, the cost of that education
1481 has risen sharply.
1482

1483 **Endorsement:**

1485 **9.4 We endorse the efforts made during the past few years to increase the synod’s share of**
1486 **the cost of education at our ministerial education college.**

1487 **Recommendations:**

1488 **9.5 We recommend that the BME and the governing board of Martin Luther College make**
1489 **it a priority to reduce spending levels on a per student basis; this should be**
1490 **accomplished via prioritized reductions in budgetary expenditures in all areas,**

1491 including faculty and support staff, and that these reductions be reflected in the
1492 planning for the 2011-2013 budget.

1493 **9.6 We recommend that one or both of the following options be explored and**
1494 **implemented by the Board for Ministerial Education:**

1495 ***Option one:***

1496 Tuition and fees at Martin Luther College shall be comparable and competitive with nominal in-state
1497 tuition and fees for the primary regions served by the college, namely, the states of Minnesota,
1498 Wisconsin, and Michigan, so that cost need not be a deterring factor for students considering
1499 enrollment at Martin Luther College or a local public university. (The current difference is
1500 approximately \$3,000 to \$4,000.) The goal is to implement this plan within the next six years.

1501 This option addresses up-front costs and may help the cost from becoming a deterrent to any
1502 student who is considering enrollment.

1503 ***Option two:***

1504 A reimbursement program, based upon years of service in the ministry, shall be implemented. Such a
1505 program will help to ease the debt load on students who have graduated and have begun to serve in
1506 the teaching ministry or have enrolled in the seminary. (A rebate program was in place several years
1507 ago, but it was phased out. This proposal for a reimbursement program is significantly different from
1508 the old rebate program.)

1509 The reimbursement will be approximately equivalent to the average debt load carried by graduates
1510 of Martin Luther College (\$12,000 - \$15,000). The reimbursement will be disbursed incrementally,
1511 over the first ten years after graduation. Any former student serving full-time in the ministry or as a
1512 seminary student will receive a reimbursement installment.

1513 If this option is implemented, there is a high likelihood that a significant portion of the
1514 reimbursement installments will never be paid out. Students who leave the ministry to pursue other
1515 careers or to get married will not receive installments for the years they are not in the ministry.
1516 Individuals who enter or re-enter the ministry more than ten years after graduation will not receive
1517 the reimbursement.

1518 This plan will only subsidize the education of those students who serve long-term in the full-time
1519 ministry.

1520 While a reimbursement program to called workers may help ease debt load after graduation, it will
1521 not address the issue of high up-front costs, and it may not prevent costs from deterring potential
1522 students for ministry.

1523

1524 ***Soli Deo Gloria!***

Note: To see the existing WELS organizational chart and how the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations would affect the synod's organizational chart, visit www.wels.net/convention.

Bylaw changes

*Required upon approval of Ad Hoc Commission recommendations; reviewed by the Committee on Constitutional Matters
(current bylaw language on the left; revised on the right)*

Size of circuits

3.2.2 We recommend that the size of circuits be reduced to 6-8 congregations where possible.

(Constitution for the district) ARTICLE X Conferences and Circuits

Section 1. The district shall determine the number and boundaries of its conferences and circuits. A circuit shall consist normally of not more than 15 congregations.

Section 2. Each circuit shall have a circuit pastor. The circuit pastor shall be elected by the delegate circuit meeting (or delegate conference) and shall serve a term of two years. Each pastor, each male teacher, and each congregation in the circuit (or conference) shall have one vote each in the election of a circuit pastor.

(Constitution for the district) ARTICLE X Conferences and Circuits

Section 1. The district shall determine the number and boundaries of its conferences and circuits. A circuit shall consist normally of not more than ~~15~~ 8 congregations.

Section 2. Each circuit shall have a circuit pastor. The circuit pastor shall be an active parish pastor* elected by the delegate circuit meeting (or delegate conference) and shall serve a term of two years. Each pastor, each male teacher, and each congregation in the circuit (or conference) shall have one vote each in the election of a circuit pastor.

****change recommended by the Conference of Presidents; this recommendation is to be acted upon by the convention regardless of action taken on the Ad Hoc Commission.***

Redeployment/Reconfiguration of Parish Services

- 3.3.1 We recommend that the functions (and appropriate grassroots commissions) of Evangelism, Worship, Special Ministries, Adult Discipleship, Parish Schools, Youth Discipleship, and Parish Assistance be retained in some form.**
- 3.3.2 We recommend that Parish Services be consolidated into three commissions with a corresponding reduction in administrative and clerical staff. We further recommend that Parish Services be involved in the process of determining how this consolidation should best take place.**
- 3.3.3 We recommend that the Board for Parish Services and the position of Board for Parish Services administrator be eliminated. One of the four remaining administrators will serve as the coordinator of Parish Services.**
- 3.3.4 We recommend that Parish Services be placed under the direct responsibility of the Conference of Presidents and be accountable to it. This will place additional resources at the direction of the Conference of Presidents and support the Conference of Presidents in its responsibility to strengthen and support congregations.**
- 3.3.5 We recommend that the coordinator of Parish Services report to the Conference of Presidents much as the Director of the Ministry of Christian Giving and the Director of Communications do now.**
- 3.3.6 We recommend that administrators of the commissions of Parish Services be called by the Conference of Presidents, in consultation with the responsible commissions, as is done in the case of the Ministry of Christian Giving and Communications.**
- 3.3.7 We recommend that the support and clerical staffs of these ministries be reconfigured as necessary to create new efficiencies and shared duties where possible.**

PARISH SERVICES

WELS Parish Services shall have the purpose of serving the congregations of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in ways that will help them in their ministries of nurture, outreach, worship, and service.

Section 6.60 Board for Parish Services

- (a) There shall be a Board for Parish Services that shall review, coordinate, and prioritize the programs and budgets of the board and its commissions. It shall appoint commission members except the commission chairmen, upon the recommendation of the commission chairman and administrator. The board shall issue calls for all parish services staff members, in consultation with appropriate commissions. Called staff members shall be accountable and reportable to the Board for Parish Services through its board administrator and to their

Replace entire Parish Services section with new section under Conference of Presidents:

Section 4.15 Commissions for Parish Services

- (a) There shall be an appropriate number of commissions that shall serve under the Conference of Presidents to provide services and resources to congregations, schools, and individuals in the areas of parish schools, special ministries, worship, evangelism, youth and adult discipleship.
- (b) The Conference of Presidents will recommend the appropriate number and nature of the commissions to the synod in convention.
- (c) The Conference of Presidents shall

- commissions.
- (b) The board shall consist of a chairman, one teacher, and two laymen who serve as members at large, and the chairman of each of the commissions: Evangelism, Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, Parish Schools, Worship, and Special Ministries. Members at large and commission chairmen shall be elected by the synod for terms of six years, with the terms of two commission chairmen and one member at large expiring every two years. The members of the board may succeed themselves once. All elections shall be from slates of candidates proposed by the synod's Nominating Committee.
- (c) The chairman of the board shall be a parish pastor elected by the synod for a term of four years. The chairman may succeed himself twice. He is responsible and accountable to the board and to the Synodical Council through the president via the vice president for mission and ministry.
- (d) The executive committee of the board shall be elected from the board members and shall have the authority as prescribed by the board to act on behalf of the board between meetings.
- (e) The parish services administrator, commission administrators, and the director of Parish Assistance shall serve as advisory members of the board. The Board for Ministerial Education shall appoint one advisory member each from the faculty of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and of Martin Luther College. Northwestern Publishing House shall be represented by one advisory member of its designation.
- (f) The board shall establish means of communication and coordination with district boards for parish services and their chairmen.
- (g) At least every four years the board shall review the mission, objective, and policy statements, or equivalent, of the board and each commission and, as necessary, coordinate policy among the commissions.
- determine the number of members of each commission.
- (d) The commissions, their chairmen, and their administrator are accountable to the Conference of Presidents.
- (e) Each commission shall consist of no fewer than five members, with a chairman elected by the synod in convention for a term of four years. Each chairman may succeed himself twice. Commission members shall be appointed by the Conference of Presidents for a term of four years. A commission member may be appointed to no more than three consecutive terms. Insofar as practicable, appointments shall reflect the synod's geographic diversity. Appointments shall provide appropriate representation of pastors, teachers, staff ministers, and laymen, as well as appropriate advisory members from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and Martin Luther College.
- (f) The administrator of each commission shall be called by the Conference of Presidents in consultation with the commission.
- (g) Each commission administrator shall establish means of communication and coordination with district coordinators in carrying out the work of the commission.

Section 6.64 Commissions

- (a) There shall be six commissions to provide resources and services that are faithful to Scripture to congregations, called workers, and lay leaders. Each commission shall serve in an advisory capacity to its commission

administrator and the Board for Parish Services.

- (b) WELS Evangelism shall provide resources and services that encourage and support gospel outreach and evangelism.
- (c) WELS Worship shall provide resources and services that encourage and support the worship life in congregations.
- (d) WELS Youth Discipleship shall provide resources and services that encourage and support ministry to children and families, from birth through high school years.
- (e) WELS Parish Schools shall provide resources and services that encourage, support, and accredit Lutheran school ministry.
- (f) WELS Adult Discipleship shall provide resources and services that encourage and support adult spiritual growth.
- (g) WELS Special Ministries shall provide resources and services that encourage and support individuals with special needs and/or in special circumstances.

Section 6.68 Parish Assistance

- (a) There shall be a Parish Assistance consulting service that shall provide congregations with assistance in comprehensive ministry assessment and planning.
- (b) WELS Parish Assistance shall provide specialized resources and services to congregations in the areas of staffing, leadership development, ministry resources management, and other areas as directed by the Board for Parish Services.

Section 6.72 Organization

- (a) The commissions shall consist of no fewer than five members, with a chairman elected by the synod. The Board for Parish Services shall determine the number of commission members and appoint them, upon the recommendation of the commission chairman and administrator. Appointments shall be for a term of two years. The appointed members of the commission may serve unlimited consecutive terms. Insofar as practicable, appointments shall reflect the synod's geographic diversity. Appointments shall provide appropriate representation of laymen, teachers, staff ministers, and pastors as well as appropriate advisory members from Wisconsin Lutheran

Seminary or Martin Luther College.

- (b) The commission administrator, with input from the commission and upon the ratification of the Board for Parish Services, shall determine the number, nature, and membership of standing committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, and ministry groups that may serve in carrying out the work of the commission.
- (c) The commission administrator shall establish means of communication and coordination with district coordinators in carrying out the work of the commission.

Section 3.40 Nominating Committee

- (e) In January of the convention year, the Nominating Committee shall nominate by ballot three candidates for each position on the following boards as terms expire: the Board for World Missions; the Board for Parish Services; the board of directors of Northwestern Publishing House; the Board for Ministerial Education; the chairmen of the following boards: Home Missions, World Missions, Parish Services, and Ministerial Education; the Board of Appeals; and the chairmen of the Governing Boards of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Martin Luther College, Luther Preparatory School and Michigan Lutheran Seminary; all of whom shall be parish pastors. It shall nominate the pastor and teacher at large members of the Synodical Council as their terms expire.

Section 5.00(c) ...Parish Services...

Section 5.10 Synod Operations

- (a) In order to effect coordination of immediate and long-range work programs, the operational units of the synod shall be grouped in the five following areas of ministry: Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, Parish Services, and Ministry Support. Operational units shall be assigned to their proper area of ministry by the president.
- (b) Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, and Parish Services are described elsewhere in the bylaws.

Section 3.40 Nominating Committee

- (e) In January of the convention year, the Nominating Committee shall nominate by ballot three candidates for each position on the following boards as terms expire: the Board for World Missions; ~~the Board for Parish Services~~; the board of directors of Northwestern Publishing House; the Board for Ministerial Education; the chairmen of the following boards: Home Missions, World Missions, ~~Parish Services~~, and Ministerial Education; the Board of Appeals; and the chairmen of the Governing Boards of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Martin Luther College, Luther Preparatory School and Michigan Lutheran Seminary; all of whom shall be parish pastors. It shall nominate the pastor and teacher at large members of the Synodical Council as their terms expire.

5.00(c) ~~...Parish Services...~~

Section 5.10 Synod Operations

- (a) ~~In order to effect coordination of immediate and long-range work programs, the operational units~~ The operations of the synod shall be grouped ~~in the~~ into five following areas of ministry: Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, Parish Services, Congregational and District Ministry, and Ministry Support. ~~Operational units shall be assigned to their proper area of ministry by the president.~~
- (b) Home Missions, World Missions, and Ministerial Education, ~~and Parish Services~~ are described elsewhere in the bylaws.

- (c) The Ministry Support area includes three operational groups: 1) the synod in convention, Conference of Presidents, Synodical Council, and synod officers; 2) the mission and ministry group; 3) the support services group.
- (d) The president, vice president for mission and ministry, and the chief financial officer shall be responsible for Ministry Support.

(c) Congregational and District Ministry includes the Conference of Presidents and the various ministries accountable to, or under the oversight of, the Conference of Presidents as specified in the bylaws.

(ed) The Ministry Support area includes the praesidium, three operational groups: 1) the synod in convention, Conference of Presidents, the Synodical Council as specified in the bylaws, as well as the departments of Financial Services, Technology, Human Resources, and Facilities, and synod officers; 2) the mission and ministry group; 3) the support services group.

~~(de) The president, vice president for mission and ministry, and the chief financial officer shall be responsible for Ministry Support.~~

Section 5.60 Administrators

- (a) The area of ministry administrators for Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, and Parish Services shall be accountable and reportable to their boards and to the president.

Section 5.60 Administrators

- (a) The area of ministry administrators for Home Missions, World Missions, and Ministerial Education, and Parish Services shall be accountable and reportable to their boards and to the president.

Introduction to Mission and Ministry (6.00):

MISSION AND MINISTRY

Mission and Ministry includes Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, and Parish Services. The president oversees this area through the vice president for mission and ministry.

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MISSION AND MINISTRY

Mission and Ministry includes Home Missions, World Missions, and Ministerial Education, and Parish Services. The president oversees this area through the vice president for mission and ministry.

Section 6.68 Publishing Coordinating Commission

- (d) The commission shall be chaired by the vice presidents of publishing services of Northwestern Publishing House. Northwestern Publishing House shall appoint another member to the commission. The Board for Parish Services shall appoint three members to the commission. The Board for Home Missions, the Board for Ministerial Education, and the Board for World Missions shall each appoint one member. Appointments shall be for a term of two years, with no limit on the number of terms served. The director of communications shall be an advisory member of the commission.

Section 6.68 Publishing Coordinating Commission

- (d) The commission shall be chaired by the vice presidents of publishing services of Northwestern Publishing House. Northwestern Publishing House shall appoint another member to the commission. The Board for Parish Services Conference of Presidents shall appoint three members to the commission. The Board for Home Missions, the Board for Ministerial Education, and the Board for World Missions shall each appoint one member. Appointments shall be for a term of two years, with no limit on the number of terms served. The director of communications shall be an advisory member of

Additional advisory members may be appointed by the chairman as necessary.

SUPPORT SERVICES [introduction to Section 7]

Support services, which assists and undergirds mission and ministry, includes but is not limited to accounting, archives/history, budgeting, benefit plans, data information services, finance, human resources, legal, lending, planning, real estate, and revenue forecasting. The president oversees this area through advisors he appoints to support the corporations, committees, and commissions accountable to the Synodical Council.

District Bylaws: ARTICLE XV Board for Parish Services

Section 1. There shall be a board for parish services composed of six coordinators, one to be elected for each of the following parish service functions: evangelism, worship, youth discipleship, parish schools, adult discipleship, and special ministries. Coordinators shall be elected for a term of six years and may succeed themselves once. The terms shall be staggered within the board.

Section 2. The coordinators shall be the liaisons with their respective synodical commissions. Each biennium the six coordinators shall choose one from among their number to serve as the chairman of the board.

Section 3. Coordinators, in consultation with the district presidents, may organize standing committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, and ministry groups to serve in carrying out the work of the coordinator.

Section 4. The six coordinators shall carry out on the district level, as feasible, the duties and responsibilities assigned to the six synodical commissions.

the commission. Additional advisory members may be appointed by the chairman as necessary.

SUPPORT SERVICES MINISTRY SUPPORT [introduction to Section 7]

~~Support services, Ministry Support,~~ which assists and undergirds mission and ministry, includes but is not limited to accounting, archives/history, budgeting, benefit plans, data information services, finance, human resources, legal, lending, planning, real estate, ~~and~~ revenue forecasting, and technology. The president oversees this area through advisors he appoints to support the corporations, committees, and commissions accountable to the Synodical Council.

District Bylaws: ARTICLE XV Board for Parish Services

Section 1. There shall be a district board for parish services to assist congregations in the following areas of ministry: composed of six coordinators, one to be elected for each of the following parish service functions: evangelism, worship, youth discipleship, parish schools, adult discipleship, and special ministries. The board shall consist of as many coordinators as the district deems appropriate to cover these six areas of ministry. Coordinators shall be elected for a term of six years and may succeed themselves once. The terms shall be staggered within the board.

Section 2. The coordinators shall ~~be the liaisons with their respective~~ provide a link with the synodical commissions. Each biennium the six coordinators shall choose one from among their number to serve as the chairman of the board.

Section 3. Coordinators, in consultation with the district presidents, may organize standing committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, and ministry groups to serve in carrying out the work of the coordinator.

Section 4. The ~~six~~ coordinators shall carry out on the district level, as feasible, the duties and responsibilities assigned to the ~~six~~ synodical commissions.

Changing Full time First Vice President to Part Time

6.3 We recommend that the position of first vice-president of the synod be made a part-time position, held by a pastor elected by the synod in convention, for an estimated cost savings of \$80,000

Section 5.10 Synod operations

(d) The president, vice president for mission and ministry, and the chief financial officer shall be responsible for Ministry Support.

Section 2.10 First Vice President

(a) The first vice president shall assist the president, serve on the Conference of Presidents, and serve as the vice president for mission and ministry. He shall serve as a non-voting ex-officio vice chairman of the Synodical Council. He shall also serve as acting president whenever the president shall be prevented from discharging his duties, and in case of a vacancy in the presidency, shall serve until the next convention of the synod.

(b) The first vice president shall be a pastor elected by the synod for a four-year term with no limitation on the number of terms. The office shall be full time. The Synodical Council shall establish the salary of the first vice president and provide adequate housing for him. In the event the first vice president is not re-elected, the Synodical Council shall make financial arrangements for his support for such time as it deems necessary.

(c) In the case of a vacancy in the first vice presidency, the second vice president shall serve until the next convention of the synod.

Section 2.50 Vice President for Mission and Ministry

(a) There shall be a vice president for mission and ministry who, under the direction of the president, shall oversee and coordinate the activities of Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, Parish Services, and the operational units assigned to him. The day-to-day operation and management of

Section 5.10 Synod operations

(d) The president, ~~vice president for mission and ministry,~~ and the chief financial officer shall be responsible for Ministry Support.

Section 2.10 First Vice President

(a) The first vice president shall assist the president and shall serve on the Conference of Presidents, ~~and serve as the vice president for mission and ministry.~~ He shall serve as a non-voting ex-officio vice chairman of the Synodical Council. He shall also serve as acting president whenever the president shall be prevented from discharging his duties, and in case of a vacancy in the presidency, shall serve until the next convention of the synod. The first vice president shall carry out such assignments the president may assign or are prescribed under these bylaws.

(b) The first vice president shall be a pastor elected by the synod for a four-year term with no limitation on the number of terms. The office shall be part time. ~~full time.~~ The Synodical Council shall establish the salary of the first vice president and provide adequate housing for him. ~~In the event the first vice president is not re-elected, the Synodical Council shall make financial arrangements for his support for such time as it deems necessary.~~

(c) In the case of a vacancy in the first vice presidency, the second vice president shall serve until the next convention of the synod.

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(a) ~~There shall be a vice president for mission and ministry who, under the direction of the president, shall oversee and coordinate the activities of Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, Parish Services, and the operational units assigned to him. The day-to-day operation and management of the~~

the areas of ministry and units will remain with each area administrator and unit supervisor.

- (b) The vice president for mission and ministry shall serve as an ex officio member of all boards, commissions, and committees of the synod that report through his office unless otherwise specified in these bylaws.
- (c) The first vice president shall serve as the vice president for mission and ministry.

Section 2.80 Election of the President, Vice Presidents, and Recording Secretary

- (b) The nomination of candidates for the offices of president and second vice president or first vice president and recording secretary shall be conducted by the synod in alternate conventions on written nominating ballots. For the office of president or first vice president anyone listed on the most current roster of “pastors—active” shall be eligible. For the office of second vice president, only parish pastors on the same roster shall be eligible. For the office of recording secretary, all male called workers listed as active in the most current synodical roster shall be eligible.
- (d) Nomination of candidates and the election for the office of first vice president shall follow the same procedure as followed in the nomination and election of the president
- (e) The nomination and election of the second vice president and recording secretary shall follow the same procedure as followed in the nomination and election of the president, except that the three nominees who shall have received the largest number of votes on the nominating ballot for second vice president and recording secretary shall be the candidates for the respective office.
- (f) The term of any newly elected office shall begin immediately after the close of the regular convention at which the officer is elected.

Section 2.90 Restriction on Offices and Appointments Held

- (h) No person except the president and the first

~~areas of ministry and units will remain with each area administrator and unit supervisor.~~

- ~~(b) The vice president for mission and ministry shall serve as an ex officio member of all boards, commissions, and committees of the synod that report through his office unless otherwise specified in these bylaws.~~
- ~~(c) The first vice president shall serve as the vice president for mission and ministry.~~

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- ~~(d) Nomination of candidates and the election for the office of first vice president shall follow the same procedure as followed in the nomination and election of the president~~
- ~~(e)~~ (d) The nomination and election of the ~~second~~ vice presidents and recording secretary shall follow the same procedure as followed in the nomination and election of the president, except that the three nominees who shall have received the largest number of votes on the nominating ballot for first vice president, second vice president, and recording secretary shall be the candidates for the respective office.
- ~~(f)~~ (e) The term of any newly elected office shall begin immediately after the close of the regular convention at which the officer is elected.

Section 2.90 Restriction on Offices and Appointments Held

- (h) No person except the president ~~and the first~~

vice president whose salary is derived in whole or in part directly from the synod shall be eligible for membership on the Synodical Council.

Section 3.40 Nominating Committee

- (i) The committee shall report to the president through the vice president for mission and ministry.

Section 4.70 Committee on Constitutional Matters

- (a) 2. The committee shall report to the president through the vice-president for mission and ministry.

Section 5.10 Synod Operations

- (d) The president, vice president for mission and ministry, and the chief financial officer shall be responsible for Ministry Support.

MISSION AND MINISTRY

Mission and Ministry includes Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, and Parish Services. The president oversees this area through the vice president for mission and ministry.

Note references to “via the vice president for mission and ministry” or “through the vice president for mission and ministry” in the following locations:

- 6.00(c)** via the vice president for mission and ministry.
- 616(c)** via the vice president for mission and ministry.
- 6.32(d)** via the vice president for mission and ministry.
- 6.60(c)** via the vice president for mission and ministry.
- 6.88(e)** via the vice president for mission and ministry.
- 6.92(d)** through the Vice President for Mission and Ministry.

~~vice president~~ whose salary is derived in whole or in part directly from the synod shall be eligible for membership on the Synodical Council.

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- (d) The president, ~~vice president for mission and ministry,~~ and the chief financial officer shall be responsible for Ministry Support.

~~MISSION AND MINISTRY~~

~~Mission and Ministry includes Home Missions, World Missions, Ministerial Education, and Parish Services. The president oversees this area through the vice president for mission and ministry.~~

~~Delete references to “via the vice president for mission and ministry” or “through the vice president for mission and ministry” in the following locations:~~

- ~~6.00(c) via the vice president for mission and ministry.~~
- ~~616(c) via the vice president for mission and ministry.~~
- ~~6.32(d) via the vice president for mission and ministry.~~
- ~~6.60(c) via the vice president for mission and ministry.~~
- ~~6.88(e) via the vice president for mission and ministry.~~
- ~~6.92(d) through the Vice President for Mission and Ministry.~~

The structure of the Synodical Council

- 6.5 We recommend that the four area of ministry chairmen be replaced by three pastors and one teacher elected by the convention. This results in six at-large pastor/teacher voting members of the council. Furthermore, the chairmen of the areas of ministry will serve the Synodical Council as non-voting advisory members.**
- 6.6 We recommend that the non-voting advisory members attend committee and plenary sessions of the Synodical Council upon the request of the Synodical Council and/or the president.**

Section 5.00 Synodical Council Duties and Responsibilities

(a) There shall be a Synodical Council as described in the constitution, composed of 21 members. They shall be elected for a term of four years and may succeed themselves twice. The council shall consist of 12 lay members, one each elected by the districts; three district presidents elected by the Conference of Presidents; six at large members, elected by the synod convention: a pastor, a male teacher, and the four area of ministry chairmen. The president of the synod shall serve as chairman of the Synodical Council and shall vote in case of a tie. In the president's absence, the first vice president of the synod shall serve as chairman. The chairman shall serve as a non-voting ex-officio member of the Synodical Council but shall vote, when acting as chairman, in the case of a tie.

(c) The advisory members of the council shall include the first vice president, second vice president, chief financial officer, an administrator each for home missions, world missions, ministerial education, parish services, and the Ministry of Christian Giving, the director of communications, and the treasurer. Additional advisory members may be appointed by the chairman as necessary.

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(c) The advisory members of the council shall include the first vice president, second vice president, chief financial officer, the chairmen and administrators of World Missions, Home Missions, and Ministerial Education, the Coordinator of the Parish Services Commissions, ~~an administrator each for home missions, world missions, ministerial education, parish services, and the director of~~ the Ministry of Christian Giving, the director of communications, the chief technology officer, and the treasurer. Additional advisory members may be appointed by the chairman as necessary. Advisors attend the committee and plenary meetings of the Synodical Council upon the invitation of the Synodical Council or the president.

Please note that these bylaw changes have been announced to the constituency of the synod at least sixty days prior to the convention. With such notification, bylaw changes can be acted upon by a convention. A two-thirds majority vote is necessary for approval.

Bylaw changes made during the convention go into effect immediately or as soon as they can be practicably implemented.

Memorial (2009-06) assigned to Floor Committee #22

Subject: *Ad Hoc Commission redistricting proposal*

Reference: Ad Hoc Commission report, p. 178 (Recommendation 3.1)

WHEREAS 1) the synod is facing significant financial pressures, with all areas of ministry having to reduce and eliminate programs and/or people starting with the 2009-11 biennium; and

WHEREAS 2) in light of these financial pressures, each area of ministry and the synod as a whole have been reviewing possible ways to reduce administrative expenses; and

WHEREAS 3) the appointment and operation of a group that will spend two years studying redistricting will involve additional administrative expenses; and

WHEREAS 4) the Ad Hoc Commission report contemplates that the largest three to five districts would need to be reduced in size through the creation of additional districts; and

WHEREAS 5) the creation of new districts (additions to the 12 we have) would add ongoing annual administrative expense, taking away money from other ministry; and

WHEREAS 6) synod conventions in recent years have been searching for ways to reduce administrative expenses, not increase them; and

WHEREAS 7) the synod has many higher priorities at this time than studying redistricting; therefore be it

Resolved, That the 2009 convention reject the recommendation to appoint a group to bring a comprehensive redistricting recommendation to the 2011 convention.

Synodical Council

Memorial (2009-07) assigned to Floor Committee #24

Subject: *Chairmen of the areas of ministry continuing to serve as voting members of the Synodical Council*

References: Ad Hoc Commission report, p. 191 (Recommendation 6.5)

WHEREAS 1) the chairmen of the areas of ministry (Home Missions, World Missions, Parish Services, Ministerial Education) are elected by the synod in convention from the grassroots, frontlines of the parishes; and

WHEREAS 2) these grassroots representatives have historically provided valuable input and balance to our work together; and

WHEREAS 3) they practice a “whole church mindset” with their respective boards and bring the same insights to the Synodical Council; and

WHEREAS 4) the area of ministry chairmen have a knowledge base that would be difficult to reproduce in at-large representatives; and

WHEREAS 5) viable and effective church councils generally have the areas of ministry represented in authoritative roles with the common understanding that one vote does not override all others; therefore be it

Resolved, that the chairmen of the areas of ministry (Home Missions, World Missions, Parish Services, Ministerial Education) continue to serve as voting members of the Synodical Council.

Synodical Council

