

## **Floor Committee #8: Home Missions**

### **Subject: General report**

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 105-112,182,183

Report No. 01

It's not difficult to see Satan intended to bring the spread of the gospel over the past two years to a standstill. Given the nature of a pandemic, the difficulty of the varietal national, state, and local government directives, not to mention increased personal phobias, the sober question the reporter asks weighs heavy, "Yet, not many would have faulted Home Missions had there been a sabbatical from [Jesus'] directive in 2020, would they?"

We praise God for the faithful and even fruitful work of the Board for Home Missions (BHM). Instead of standing still, it stood firm in sound doctrine *and practice*. Static plans became dynamic, adjusting to meet ministry needs using online technology. In this way ongoing ministry programs were maintained and supported, such as the Mission Program Support Agreements and the Vicars in Mission Settings Program.

Even when timing wasn't appropriate to act on starting missions, extensive planning took place so that the BHM could act when needed. We thank God for opening a door for five missions to begin in 2020, another in Oregon, and in 2021 four additional missions, as well as the ongoing work with 124 other mission situations. Organizing the COVID-19 community outreach grants was a creative way for missions to rise to the occasion and strive to meet neighbor needs.

We also saw the fruit of these meetings in the memorial on pages 182 and 183. Starting 100 new missions and 75 new or enhanced ministries [over ten years] beginning in 2023 is a remarkable goal. It is clearly something that will involve all areas of WELS, not just the BHM. Questions of management, available pastors, finances, and recruiting at schools and congregations come to mind. We are confident these are questions our synodical leaders take seriously and are working diligently to address. We are also confident that because the goal is in line with Scripture, it is an effort the Lord of the Church will bless. We are in agreement with the spirit of the memorial and if approved, pray we reach and exceed it.

In addition to the general report and memorial, our committee was asked to give input on the proposed pension plan. We sifted the documents and videos put out by synod officials. After several meetings, members of the committee came to view the pension plan as a benefit for WELS workers and hoped to see it implemented.

Pastor Aaron Mueller, chairman  
Teacher Steven Bremer, secretary