

*** SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT ***

Called Worker Call Activity:
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Congregation mission offering

Update

	<u>2005 Commitment</u>	<u>Rec'd To Date</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
District	\$ 3,628,981	\$ 2,380,797	
WELS	\$19,427,922	\$15,967,129	\$15,606,321

*“Use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves,
so that when it is gone,
you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings”
Luke 16:9.*

SPRING SEMINAR

Those who would like to attend our annual “Ministry of Christian Giving” Seminar are asked to RSVP

- > by email to jkolander@bethlehem-wels.org or
- > phone 262-251-3353 or
- > write to Bethlehem Lutheran
N84W15252 Menomonee Avenue
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051.

Please indicate your name and the congregation you are representing. The seminar is scheduled for Saturday, March 4th in 2006 at St. John’s Howell Avenue in Oak Creek, WI. It will begin at 9:00 am and conclude at 1:00 pm. More details will be coming in future months.

*We are the WELS...Proclaiming Peace Through Jesus
For Every Soul Is A Treasure!*

NEWS FROM THE WELS
JANUARY 2006
WWW.WELS.NET

SEVERAL SYNOD EVENTS PLANNED IN EARLY 2006

“Real Treasure” Bible Study

As directed by the Synod Convention, a Bible study called “The Real Treasure of Every Treasured Soul” has been prepared for presentation to every member of the synod. “The Bible study asks me to value what my heart’s greatest delight really is,” said Pastor Richard Gurgel, a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary who produced the study. The study focuses on parts of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus assures us that God will provide for our needs. We should not worry, but should rather “store up for [ourselves] treasures in heaven” (Mt 6:20).

The study is unique in that it is intended to be used for one on one encouragement with every member of the synod. President Karl Gurgel is meeting individually with each member of WELS Conference of Presidents, along with wives, in December and January. These pastors are asked to meet with one pastor and spouse from each WELS circuit. Each pastor from the circuits is encouraged to have the study with other pastors/spouses in his circuit. Finally, pastors at the local level can share the study with leaders in their churches, who can then assist in discussing it with fellow members. The hope is to have the process completed in the first half of 2006.

“I think the ultimate goal is to help God’s people in our country, who have so many of the resources of this life, not to get caught up in living as if that’s what it’s all about . . . the real danger is not budgets that don’t get met, but hearts that get focused on that which cannot satisfy,” said Professor Gurgel.

EVANGELISM SUNDAY

WELS Commission on Evangelism has materials available to assist congregations with holding an Evangelism Sunday during the Epiphany season. The theme will follow the North American Outreach emphasis for 2006, "Every Member a Missionary." Materials include a text study on Acts 1:8, sermon, children's message, worship service suggestions and a one-hour Bible study. The service will emphasize motivating and equipping every member for sharing his or her faith. Materials are available online at www.wels.net/evangelism.

WALKING TOGETHER SUNDAY

Walking Together Sunday, an annual event to celebrate what we, by the grace of God, are able to accomplish as a synod, will focus on Martin Luther College (MLC). The school, located in New Ulm, Minn., is WELS' college for preparing men for pastoral training at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and teachers and staff ministers for churches and schools.

MLC has assisted WELS Ministry of Christian Giving in developing some of the materials for this year's service, which will be similar to the one in 2005 with a short video and brochures presenting information to members. A sermon theme based on Ephesians 4:11-16, litany and hymn suggestions will also be provided. Churches are encouraged to participate in the service on May 7 (Good Shepherd Sunday) or another Sunday during the Easter season.

Each church should receive in early 2006 a package of the materials that includes the video, sermon guide, litany master copy, enough brochures for the congregation, an instructional memo and pieces necessary for gathering a freewill offering. Samples of the materials will also be available for download at www.wels.net/jumpword/walkingtogether.

The first \$800,000 in Walking Together offerings will go towards the synod's operating fund. Any gifts above this amount will go directly to Martin Luther College.

MISSION PARTNERS TO TOUR APACHELAND AND MEXICO

WELS Mission Partners, a Ministry of Christian Giving program, is sponsoring a trip to Apacheland and Mexico for interested WELS members. Coordinated by Gift Planning Counselor Dennis Kleist, the tour will visit a number of mission fields during nine days beginning April 29.

Mission Partners is an ongoing way of personally being involved in one of more than 60 WELS mission and ministry projects across the United States and around the world. Its goal is to connect people and congregations to missions that they are specifically interested in and to raise awareness of the missions.

This is just the second trip that the Ministry of Christian Giving has sponsored, but it hopes to do more in the future. Says Kleist, "We use former missionaries as tour guides because they know the culture and can help explain the purpose of the mission."

Most often, those who travel on a Mission Partners trip go back to their districts and do presentations to help seek support for the missions they visited. "Trips like these enable laypeople to see firsthand the missions they are supporting and then take that experience and excitement back to their congregations and community," says Kleist.

The upcoming trip can accommodate 25 to 30 people and will include visits to Arizona missions in San Carlos, Bylas, Peridot, East Fork, Whiteriver, Dove Mountain, and the Mexican mission in Altar/Caborca. Participants will also have time for sightseeing.

If you are interested in supporting the work in Apacheland and Mexico or want more information on the trip (including pricing), contact Dennis Kleist at 920-735-4929. The deadline for reserving a place is February 24th.

PRESIDENT GURGEL'S STATE OF THE SYNOD AT WELS.NET

WELS president, Pastor Karl Gurgel, has taped a video on the state of the synod that focuses especially on finances. The entire message is about five minutes in length and includes helpful visuals. To view the communication piece, visit www.wels.net/jumpword/presreport. The site allows you to download for free any software needed to access the file. Similar updates will likely be released on a quarterly basis.