

*** SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT SECTION***

Called Worker Call Activity:
Visit www.wels.net

Congregation mission offering update 2006

- Sent in by our District (6 months) - \$1,410,464 (99%).
- Sent in from the 12 Districts - \$9,056,107 (104%).

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

A Stewardship Message From The Heart of John P.

The Cheerful Giver. *What is pleasing to our Savior when it comes to giving back a portion of what he has given to us? Let us examine our Corinthian Christians and what our Lord tells us in His word and review some of the thoughts in 2 Corinthians Ch 8 and 9. As the Apostle Paul writes speaking of the Macedonian Christians, ‘Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.’ For as Paul testifies, ‘they gave as much as they were able and even beyond their ability.’ Entirely on their own, ...they pleaded for the privilege of sharing. In order that their hearts were right before God, they gave themselves first to the Lord. Paul continues to describe these Christians with phrases like:*

...Sincerity of your love ...

...Eagerness ...

...Willingness...

*All with hearts of love and joy for the privilege to serve their Lord.
2 Corinthians 9:7 – Each person should give what he/she has decided in their heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

Our God’s Examples to us mortal sinners:

- *Even though God knew in advance we would sin – He created us.*
- *His plan was already in place before the foundations of the world to Redeem us*
- *The Holy Spirit to Sanctify us*

All of this our Triune God has done for each and every one of us out of his divine Love, Grace and Mercy – which has been given to us now in time and also hereafter in eternity. What an awesome God that we have!

Also, out of His great love, so that we may share in His joy, He has given us as believing Christians the privilege of participating in His Great Work of nurturing fellow Christians with and bringing the true Gospel Message to others.

How can a Christian do this without experiencing true joy in his heart – ever remembering – Christ is Risen – He is risen indeed Alleluia, Amen.

WELS NEWS - AUGUST 2006

WWW.WELS.NET

EVERY SOUL IS A TREASURE

DISTRICTS WEIGH IN ON SYNOD ISSUES AT SUMMER CONVENTIONS

In June, delegates representing pastors, teachers, and lay members met in convention in each of the synod’s 12 districts. These district conventions, held in even numbered years, allow discussion on pertinent synod-wide matters prior to the 2007 synod convention. Two of the biggest issues considered at conventions were a proposal to restructure synod administration with the intention of improving operational efficiency and another to allow the Commission on Parish Schools to support their consultation work by charging a fee.

In general, the Parish Schools proposal was met with approval while restructuring was not received as well. “I think it was objectively presented and it had a fair hearing,” said WELS President Karl Gurgel. He expected many of the concerns to be addressed by further details. “It was [the Ministry Operations Team] choice to have some basic concepts brought to the people first to see if the concepts were worth pursuing any further. If they were, then for the [2007 synod] convention, we would have details clearly spelled out.” Going forward, synod administration will consider the input from the district conventions as they decide what will be presented to the 2007 synod convention.

For more information on the district conventions, see www.wels.net/convention. The site includes minutes from each of the conventions, links to the district’s Web sites, details of the restructuring proposal, and synod administration’s *Report to the Twelve Districts*.

MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN GIVING PROMOTING ENDOWMENT FUNDS

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving, which encourages and assists members in Christian giving, has begun an effort to promote the benefits of endowment funds among churches. “Endowment funds can be an advantage to both the synod and churches,” said Dave Liggett, Director of Christian Giving. “I hope churches will work

with us in developing and funding endowments, and also in encouraging members to consider endowment funds in their estate plans.”

The Web site, www.wels.net/jump/endowment, is available to explain endowments in general, introduce the synod’s two new endowment funds and their sub funds to support missions and ministerial education, and inform churches on how they can set up a planned giving committee that in part would start and/or coordinate a church endowment fund. Pastors and church leaders are encouraged to review the site and, if interested, request free print materials through the synod and arrange for a Christian giving counselor to provide further assistance. Christian Giving will follow up with every church in the fall to ensure that all those interested receive attention.

An endowment fund is a good way to provide financial stability during fluctuations in the economy and inflation to ministry programs depending on continuous and predictable financial support. It is built up over time and the historic dollar value preserved. Interest gained on the historical dollar value is used to provide regular income. The endowment initiative was approved at the 2005 synod convention.

ALL PASTORS VISITED WITH REAL TREASURE BIBLE STUDY

“The Real Treasure of Every Treasured Soul” synod-wide Bible study has been shared by President Gurgel with the synod’s 12 district presidents. These 12 presidents have held the Bible study with certain pastors in each circuit of the districts, who have shared the Bible study with fellow pastors so that at this point nearly every WELS pastor has shared in the Real Treasure Bible study. What remains is for churches to arrange for every member to receive a visit to take part in the Bible study.

“The encouragement I received from the Real Treasure Bible Study, I believe, would be valuable for every WELS member,” commented WELS President Karl Gurgel. “I urge all WELS pastors to incorporate the study into your congregation’s program this fall or next spring. Your people will be the richer for it.”

The study focuses on Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount where he assures us that God will provide for our needs. Rather than worry, we should “store up for [ourselves] treasures in heaven” (Mt 6:20).

Resources to help pastors and church leaders implement this study among members are available at www.wels.net/jump/realtreasure.

NEW COURSE GUIDES FRIENDSHIP EVANGELISM

WELS Commission on Evangelism in May released a course called “Sharing Jesus with Friends: Practicing Friendship Evangelism.”

There are four parts:

1. Getting to Know People Who Need Jesus
2. Starting a Spiritual Conversation
3. Sharing the Savior
4. Follow-up with Our Friends

The workbook with CD-ROM offers personal evangelism resources that churches can use to educate members on friendship witnessing. “It is my prayer that this material will help to encourage and equip members of our congregations to share the good news of Jesus with people that they know,” said Mike Hintz, Administrator of the Commission on Evangelism. There is also a step-by-step guide for conducting a Festival of Friendship Sunday, a service planned around members inviting un-churched friends to worship with them.

Visit www.wels.net/evangelism for information on ordering “Sharing Jesus with Friends.” The Web site also includes other helpful evangelism resources including the four-part series on confidently sharing Jesus with friends (click on “Personal Evangelism Tools”) that is wrapping up this month in *Forward in Christ* magazine.



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