faith that the Holy Spirit will continue
to bless the gospel-sharing work of
the national church body, and if it is his
will, that one day we will, once again,
be able to serve this mission field in
person,” says Mr. Sean Young, director
of Missions Operations.

The Lutheran Church of Cameroon
(LCC) serves more than 650 baptized
members in 32 congregations and
two preaching stations. Due to various
reasons, the LCC has not trained any
new pastors since 1999. With the
Lord's blessing, 13 students are now
enrolled in pre-seminary studies. Both
Kroll and Heitsch worked with the
LCC to further develop this worker
training program. Currently, the LCC
is served by eight national pastors and
12 evangelists.

Deadline approaching for
hymns feedback

May 1 is the final deadline to
submit feedback about the
WELS Hymnal Project's initial decision
about which of the 700 currently
published hymns in Christian
Worship (CW) and Christian Worship:
Supplement (CWS) will be included
in the next hymnal. These
selections will account for about
two-thirds of the approximately 650
total hymns, with the remaining one-
third consisting of hymns or hymn
settings new to WELS. According
to Rev. Jon Bauer, a member of the
Hymnal Project's communication
committee, members of the WELS
Hymnal Project reviewed words and
music from all existing CW and CWS
hymns, sought usage data from
all congregations, and conducted
a "favorite hymns" survey before
putting together the initial list.

“This feedback will be one last
important piece of information for
helping us determine the final hymn
list,” says Bauer.

He continues, “The results of these
feedback forms will be shared
with the members of the executive
committee for their review. We will
evaluate which hymns garnered the
most interest in being kept as part of
our final decision on the hymns list.”

The targeted release date for the
pew edition of the new hymnal is
Advent 2021.

Submit your feedback on the initial
list of hymns at welshymnal.com.

To sign up for the e-mail version, visit
wels.net/together.

Called to eternal glory

Retired pastor Rev. William Bernhardt was recently called home to heaven
by our risen Savior.
Bernhardt had served as the host of the WELS Connection for more than 25 years—from its beginning in 1987 until four years ago.

“As the host of WELS Connection, Rev. Bernhardt provided a consistency that helped the program become one of the most widely used communication tools in our synod,” says Mr. Steve Boettcher, who produces and directs WELS Connection. “Every month Rev. Bernhardt had the ability to bring the sights and sounds of our synod to life for our members. Rev. Bernhardt’s steady presence reminded viewers that all the various WELS efforts worked together—serving our Lord under the banner of WELS and ultimately for his kingdom.”

Others have since stepped in to host the WELS Connection, but for many, Bernhardt will be the face that they always remember. We thank God for his service and for bringing another faithful warrior to his heavenly goal.

Serving in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder

Home Missions approves new mission starts

On April 13, the Board for Home Missions approved support for seven new mission congregations as well as support to enhance mission-minded ministry at seven other congregations.

“Being a part of the process that determines which new starts and enhancements to support is challenging but rewarding,” says Rev. Wayne Uhlhorn, chairman of the Board for Home Missions. “Our Home Missions Executive Committee takes a thorough look at each request to prayerfully determine which requests give us the best opportunity to reach more souls with the saving gospel of Jesus. We also try to determine which requests are ready and which ones might need a few more months of preparation. That is the challenging part. The rewarding part of the process is when we leave our meeting and know we’ve been blessed to start 14 new ministries that give us ways to spread God’s life-giving Word.”

The ministries receiving financial support for a new mission include:

- **Reno, Nev.**—Two area congregations are partnering to start this congregation in the Northern Valleys area of greater Reno. On March 25, the first worship service was held; 63 people attended.
- **Phoenix, Ariz.**—Crosswalk, Phoenix, is opening a second site to reach out into downtown Phoenix.
- **Joplin, Mo.**—A strong core of WELS and Evangelical Lutheran Synod members from the two nearest churches are helping support this mission.
- **Brandon, S.D.**—Near Sioux Falls, this new congregation includes core members from two WELS churches and an Evangelical Lutheran Synod congregation.
- **Milwaukee, Wis.**—Grace in downtown Milwaukee, one of WELS’ original congregations, is establishing a new location in the area known as the Third Ward.

Two new multi-site starts are being subsidized by their original congregations. Home Missions will provide assistance through its district mission boards, mission counselors, and synodical support staff but not provide direct funding. These include:

- **Hobart, Wis.**—Mount Olive, Suamico, Wis., is starting a second site in Hobart. The congregation is calling a second pastor to begin this new ministry.
- **Horicon, Wis.**—Members of St. John’s, Juneau, Wis., see an opportunity to reach out in nearby Horicon, where 90 members of St. John’s live. Saturday worship services are scheduled to begin in Horicon in June.

Home Missions is also financially supporting mission-minded enhancements to these existing congregations:

- **Crown of Life, Corona, Calif.**
- **Faith, Anchorage, Alaska**
- **Grace, Seattle, Wash.**
- **Ascension, Harrisburg, Penn.**
- **Shepherd of the Hills, Knoxville, Tenn.**
- **Trinity, Waukesha, Wis.**
- **Epiphany and First, Racine, Wis.**

“It is our prayer that through these new starts and enhancements more souls will be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ and be brought to faith in Jesus as their Savior from sin,” says Rev. Keith Free, administrator of WELS Home Missions.

For more information on WELS Missions, visit wels.net/missions.

Cameroon mission update

Cameroon Missionary Jeff Heitsch and his wife, Stephanie, will be leaving Cameroon and be temporarily relocated to the United States due to internal political unrest in the country. They arrived in Cameroon in October 2017.

Conflict between the English-speaking and French-speaking parts of Cameroon began to intensify about the time of the Heitsches’ arrival, and the security situation has deteriorated significantly since then. By mutual decision of the Heitsches and the WELS World Mission Board, the Heitsches will remain in the United States for the time being.

Missionary Dan Kroll and his wife, Karen, who also serve in Cameroon, were already planning on being back in the United States on furlough until mid-July.

The decision when and if to have a missionary return to Cameroon will be determined as the security and safety situation is monitored.

“It’s always a difficult decision to remove missionaries from their field, but it is also important that we keep them safe as well as pray for our brothers and sisters in Cameroon who live in the midst of the strife. We have