

with Jesus in the Heartland” was the theme for the 56th annual LWMS convention, held in Des Moines, Iowa, June 27-30.

During the convention, attendees learned about the expanding outreach efforts by missionary teams in Latin America and Africa and about the continuing growth of the mission field in East Asia. “My wife and I have known over the 12 years we’ve served in a mission field that the ladies of LWMS were praying for us and sending us letters, but to be here and meet them face to face and receive their hugs is something we definitely miss when we are serving overseas,” says Rev. Joel Sutton, missionary to Latin America. “It is very encouraging for us to see these wonderful people who are passionate and have a big heart for missions.”

In addition, home missionaries shared their experiences with outreach in Wisconsin and Minnesota. Workshops included topics of new mission opportunities in Vietnam, the WELS Mission Journeys program for short-term mission trips, and a panel discussion by missionary wives who shared their experiences.

Each year the individual LWMS circuits gather offerings for several Home and World Mission projects. This year \$41,204 was given to both the East Asia Outreach and Campus Ministry projects. LWMS also raised \$49,938 for kids

c.a.r.e.—kids’ summer Bible camps. “The support LWMS provides Home and World Missions is a huge boost and extremely important for our outreach efforts. The people behind those gifts praying for us and the knowledge they take back home and share with their congregations is vital to our ministry,” says Rev. Larry Schlomer, administrator of WELS World Missions.

Betty Schwede was one of 138 first-time attendees to the convention and was impressed with the missionary presentations. “It was so exciting to see all of the amazing things happening at home and around the world. The fellowship and support are so encouraging—I can’t wait to go back to my home congregation to share what our synod is doing around the world and hopefully encourage even more outreach into our community.”

Next year’s convention will be held June 25-28, 2020, in Athens, Ga., under the theme “2020 Vision for Missions.”

Learn more about LWMS at lwms.org. 

TOGETHER



July 2, 2019

WELS Christian Aid and Relief approves humanitarian aid grants

The administrative committee for WELS Christian Aid and Relief approved \$466,212 for humanitarian aid work in fiscal year 2019-20. These are projects developed by WELS home and world missionaries to reflect Christ’s love to the people of their community and open doors to share the gospel.

Christian Aid and Relief Chairman Rev. Robert Hein, says, “Humanitarian aid projects help our missions put Christ’s love into action by meeting community needs. As missionaries develop relationships with the people they serve, they also find opportunities to tell people about Jesus. In some world mission fields, hostile to Christianity, humanitarian aid is essential to keep the doors open to share the gospel.”

All projects originate in the mission fields as the missionaries discover opportunities to help. Then the projects are brought to the Christian Aid and Relief administrative committee as well as to the WELS Missions administrators for approval.

Some of the approved projects are:

- New or repaired water wells in Zambia and Malawi.
- Medical clinic renovation in Zambia.
- Rural medical clinic and medical care in Nigeria.
- Food assistance for the poor in Indonesia.
- Medical, vacation Bible school, and English training in Thailand.
- Outreach programs in Bulgaria and Russia.
- Assistance for war refugees, orphans, and the poor in Ukraine.
- Food and transportation programs in Mexico.
- Water projects and medical equipment in India.
- Medical clinics, sewing classes, clothing for poor, and flood assistance in Nepal.
- Medical assistance and skill training program in Pakistan.
- African immigrant assistance in Las Vegas.
- Welcome programs for immigrants in Toronto.
- Various outreach and assistance programs in Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio, College Station in Texas and Denver, Colo.

To view a complete list of humanitarian aid projects, visit wels.net/relief.

Serving in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder 



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

Work in Vietnam continues

WELS leaders traveled to Vietnam in June to continue the training of Hmong church leaders as well as to further plans for the theological education center being built in Hanoi.

Rev. Bounkeo Lor, Hmong Asia ministry coordinator, and Rev. E. Allen Sorum, director of the Pastoral Studies Institute, taught 60 men from the Hmong Fellowship Church courses on the book of Isaiah, pastoral counseling and family ministry for missionaries, and dogmatics (teaching Bible truths).

“Our training session on Isaiah has helped the students in many ways,” says Lor. “I think especially important is that our instruction has helped our students learn how to interpret the Bible. We are talking about the law and the gospel in Isaiah. This approach to studying Isaiah is totally new to them. The law and the gospel are so clear in Isaiah. They are enjoying it very much.”

Mr. Sean Young, director of Missions Operations, arrived later in the trip to work through details regarding the building of the theological education center. Land has been purchased and cleared, and bids are being gathered for the construction project. Construction should begin later this year.


“There is a growing sense of excitement among the Hmong Fellowship Church about having an educational center of their own,” says Young. Classes currently are being held in a rented

church owned by the Vietnamese Fellowship Church.

Lor, as Hmong Asia ministry coordinator, teaches many of the classes and oversees the education program, working closely with WELS Missions and the Pastoral Studies Institute. He also directs Hmong outreach in other parts of Southeast Asia. His original call was for two years, but it has just been made permanent as training continues for these Vietnam Hmong leaders and as new opportunities emerge. He will be formally commissioned at the Taste of Missions event, July 13.

Gifts for the building project have been received from hundreds of congregations and individuals, totaling more than 65 percent of what is needed to support the building project and ministry education costs for a two-year period.

“Please continue to keep this opportunity in your prayers as we look to bring the truths of the gospel to the 100,000-plus members of the Hmong Fellowship Church,” says Young.

Learn more about this opportunity at wels.net/vietnamhmongoutreach. 

WELS EdTechLead Summit connects leaders across disciplines

Held in Wisconsin Dells, Wis., June 25-27, the WELS Education, Technology, and Leadership Conference (EdTechLead) brought more than 400 teachers,

pastors, and other synod leaders together to explore ministry tools, techniques, and best practices.

The conference opened the morning of June 25 with worship and a formal welcome. Dr. Daniel W. Johnson, president of Wisconsin Lutheran College (WLC), Milwaukee, Wis., shared the first keynote message under the theme “Press On!”

“We’re all coming here with our own experiences and states of mind to reflect on our vocational callings and journeys,” Johnson said. “God does not need us. We simply get to serve.”

John McHugh, director of Corporate Communications, Leadership, Development, and Training at Kwik Trip, Inc., La Crosse, Wis., provided the morning keynote presentation—called “Purpose and Compassion at Work”—on June 26. He encouraged attendees to promote and participate in a mission-driven culture at their organization.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday featured dozens of workshops on numerous topics, including student motivation, teacher evaluation, school safety, website design, social media, data management, leadership health, organizational communication, gospel outreach, and more. Additionally, a special event called an IGNITE session allowed seven presenters to share quick, practical, and inspiring ideas for ministry.


“I think at times you can work within your little bubble, just teaching a certain subject or working at a certain school,” said

Mr. Dan Albrecht, teacher at Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, Jackson, Wis. “Here you can meet others in related fields. By learning from their experiences, you can implement what they’re doing. You can share your own stories as well.”

“I appreciate the fellowship,” added Mr. Jarred Beduze, vice principal at Northland Lutheran High School, Kronenwetter, Wis. “I appreciate knowing we all share that common goal of sharing Jesus with everyone we can.”

WELS EdTechLead was formed as a combination of the School Leadership Conference and the WELSTech Conference. It was created to be more sensitive to the time and funds of those who may have been interested in attending both conferences.

“It seemed that the thirst to learn and improve for the sake of the gospel was at the heart of everybody who was there,” said Mr. Martin Spriggs, WELS chief technology officer.

Visit welsedtechlead.com for more details about the events of the summit. 

LWMS convention highlights mission projects

The Wild Rose Circuit of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary Society (LWMS) welcomed nearly 950 attendees from 821 WELS congregations to praise God and show their support for WELS mission work. “Let Us Ever Walk