

TOGETHER



February 18, 2020

Full-time director for WELS Christian Aid and Relief


Last fall, the Synodical Council made the decision to call a full-time director for WELS Christian Aid and Relief.

WELS Christian Aid and Relief has been the vehicle by which WELS members have generously supported relief efforts in times of natural disaster and in other situations where our Christian love moves us to provide some type of financial assistance. Until now, the work of WELS Christian Aid and Relief has been faithfully overseen by a commission with a chairman who also serves as a full-time pastor. But experience has shown that the scope of the work requires more than what part-time commission members and their chairman can provide. That led to the establishment of a full-time position.

One of the benefits of a full-time director will be the development of a program to prepare and train congregations and their leaders in disaster response before a disaster hits. The new director will spend much of his time developing resources for congregations and providing the training needed to prepare for relief efforts. One part of the plan is to position lay coordinators in all 12 districts who can provide local expertise and advice to congregations when disasters occur.

Why call a pastor for this work? The primary reason is that disaster relief efforts often provide opportunities for gospel outreach efforts in the communities affected by disasters. The Synodical Council recognized that in addition to providing aid as an expression of our Christian love, this work is also a ministry in which the sharing of the gospel can and should play a vital role. As a pastor, the new director will also have many opportunities to preach in congregations throughout the synod as he represents the mission of WELS Christian Aid and Relief.

Learn more about WELS Christian Aid and Relief at wels.net/relief.

Serving with you in Christ,
WELS President Mark Schroeder 

Youth rally registration opening soon

It's time for congregations to round up their teens and start planning for the 2020 WELS International Youth Rally. The theme for this year's rally is "Vision 2020."

"We want thousands of teens to see Christ clearly, and seeing Christ clearly will be the motivation to serve Christ boldly," says Rev. Donn Dobberstein, director of WELS Commission on Discipleship. "This rally will position Christ and the cross in front of teenagers for clarity of faith and motivation to boldly serve."

The 2020 youth rally will be held June 23-26 at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Registration opens March 2 and is \$375 per attendee through April 30. Registration from May 1–May 29 is \$395 per attendee.


In addition to a wide variety of workshops and fellowship opportunities with more than 2,000 fellow Christians, the rally features two keynote speakers. Rev. Joel Russow, Faith, Tallahassee, Fla., will present "Focused Living" based on Colossians 3:12-14. His address will focus on the characteristics with which Christians should clothe themselves: "Instead of stressing over concerns like 'What will I do with my life?' or 'How can I make a difference?' what if we put on the outfit God has given us to wear and then serve? God has already given you the perfect outfit for a heroic life of faith and for a difference-making life of service. Wear it!"

Rev. Jon Bare, Pastoral Studies Institute, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, will present a keynote on

a Christian's "Clear Purpose," based on 1 Peter 2:8,9. His presentation will discuss: "As God's children, we live with a clear purpose—to praise God! . . . But what about when we face the realities of living in a broken world? What about when all we can see is very real persecution for who we are? What about when our own failures or lacking blur our sight?"

Contact Youth Leaders—the main point of contact between your church's group and the youth rally office—can preregister their group members starting March 2. After preregistration, members of the group will receive personalized links to complete their registration and payment.

Detailed registration and rally information is available in the youth rally registration book.

Learn more, download the registration booklet, and view videos about the 2020 WELS International Youth Rally at wels.net/youthrally. 

2020 Mission and Ministry held at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

From Feb. 4-6, students at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., participated in Mission and Ministry, an annual three-day event organized by the students.

Under the theme "Share the Feast," this event highlighted the worldwide work of WELS. Each day featured a worship service, keynote address, and an update from WELS administration. In addition, to give these future pastors a cross-section of experiences they may face in ministry, 24 breakout sessions were offered in specific topics.

These sessions included discussions on mission trips for congregation members, how to use social media and the internet to reach out, world mission updates, how small groups are a blessing to congregations, planting churches in rural areas, reaching out to military members, a member's perspective on starting a mission congregation, and cross-cultural urban ministry.

In addition, WELS organizations set up displays to share information about their work in God's kingdom. This introduces future pastors to all the synodical resources available to support ministries.

"As I worked with the organizers for the displays, I was able to appreciate the different services that WELS has to offer to its members," says senior Daniel Schmidt, one of the event organizers. Hearing from the presenters "helped me to solidify my interest in missions."

Seminary students are not the only ones who benefit from the event. On Feb. 4, the junior class of pastor-track students at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., attended presentations. On Feb. 5 and 6, students from Bethany Lutheran Seminary, Mankato, Minn., attended. In all, almost 200 students, professors, and guests participated.

For photos of the event, visit the seminary's Facebook page at facebook.com/WLS.WELS. 



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