

TOGETHER



June 6, 2017

Districts hold summer meetings

Summer is here, and that means the convention season in the synod has arrived.

During the next two weeks most of the synod's 12 districts will be holding either district conventions or district pastor/teacher conferences. In addition to hearing doctrinal essays and presentations, these meetings will feature discussion of some of the issues and proposals that will come before the synod convention at the end of July.

The convention business is summarized in the *Book of Reports and Memorials*. This book contains reports from all areas of the synod's ministry, not only describing what has been done in the past two years but also outlining future plans. A printed copy of the *Book of Reports and Memorials* has been distributed to all pastors, male teachers, congregations, and convention delegates. If you are interested in reviewing this material yourself, it is available online at wels.net/2017synodconvention.

Along with the regular reports from areas of ministry, the 2017 convention will be dealing with several special issues. A special committee tasked with conducting a thorough review and analysis of the Ministry of Christian Giving will present its report and recommendations. The Compensation Review Committee will be recommending changes to the synod's compensation guidelines. Our synod will formally declare fellowship with three Lutheran church bodies (South Asian Lutheran Evangelical Mission, East Asia Lutheran Synod, and the Lutheran Church of Ethiopia). A new long-range plan providing guidance for the synod's ministry until the year 2025 will be adopted. The convention will approve a ministry financial plan (budget) based on the plans that have been made and the resources available. In addition to all of those things, the Conference of Presidents and Synodical Council have submitted recommendations for a number of bylaw changes.

We pray that God would guide the discussions and decisions at these meetings for the good of his church.

Serving in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder 

Outreach Sunday resources available

The Commission on Evangelism, Board for Home Missions, and Northwestern Publishing House have prepared materials for congregations to host four different outreach Sundays in late 2017 and early 2018. These worship resources will focus on the three *solas*, the “alones” of the Reformation, plus the one on which we are all founded: Christ alone.

Nov. 5—Reformation and a focus on Scripture alone


Nov. 26—Christ the King Sunday and a focus on Christ alone

Dec. 17—Third Sunday in Advent and a focus on grace alone

Jan. 7, 2018—Epiphany and a focus on faith alone

Rev. Michael Hintz, director of the Commission on Evangelism, says these services are wonderful ways to review the history of the Reformation but also a great opportunity to share its message with unchurched family and friends. “It’s important to learn more about what the Lutheran Reformation is all about,” he says, “but most important is what God is revealing to us about himself in the Bible.”

Materials will include text studies, suggested sermon outlines, children’s message ideas, music suggestions, worship service outlines, and tips for visitor follow-up.

Download these free resources at wels.net/reformation500/resources. 

Campus ministry representatives meet for conference


On May 15 and 16, 60 campus ministry pastors, committee members, and lay members involved in their local ministries met in Waukesha, Wis., to share ideas for campus work, provide support and encouragement to one another, and discuss new ministries and ideas.

Rev. Tim Patoka attended the conference for the first time. He is serving in his first pastoral assignment, which includes campus ministry work at Grace, Tucson, Ariz. “For someone who’s been in ministry for less than a year at this point, it’s really good to see other models that are happening successfully and then to get a better understanding and to actually talk to other campus pastors to get an idea of what happens on a day-to-day basis and to learn from their wealth of experience,” he says.

The conference is meant for both new and seasoned campus pastors. “It’s cool to think outside my own experience and hear what other guys are doing in their campus ministries,” says Rev. Brian Wrobel, pastor at Zion, Gainesville, Fla., and campus pastor for the University of Florida in Gainesville. “We’re in a transitional period; we’re growing and trying to be more outreach oriented with the world at our doorstep at the University of Florida.”

The first presentation was by Rev. Tom Trapp, who has served the campus ministry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison since 1979 and

is retiring this year. He shares his tips and methods for successful campus ministry work. Other topics presented and discussed included mentoring young people, exploring campus ministry activity ideas, and writing Bible studies for college students.

To learn more about campus ministry, find a campus pastor, and sign up a college student for free spiritual materials, visit wels.net/campus-ministry. 

Updated tool to find WELS churches

The WELS Locator tool has received a makeover. The trusted online tool that helps WELS members find churches when they travel the country or recommend churches to friends and acquaintances has new and updated functions.

The previous WELS Locator application was rewritten and enveloped into the existing WELS Online Yearbook. Now, with the Locator integrated into the Online Yearbook, you can now find a church or school by proximity or criteria you enter. You can enter an address, city, state, or zip code and find all organizations within a radius of miles you determine.


Also available within the Locator is a function to filter your search results by special criteria, including church, pre-school, elementary school, high school, counseling center, and care

facility. Other filters—like signed services, hearing loop, personal sound equipment, livestreaming, and languages offered—relate specifically to worship.

In the Online Yearbook you can search for a called worker’s name or city and receive a listing of those that match. Clicking on a called worker will reveal a profile that shows contact information, year graduated, and what organization they work for.

There are a number of ways to find the Yearbook/Locator. You can simply visit the synod’s website at wels.net and click on the “Find a Church/School” (formerly “WELS Locator”) at the top of the page. This will take the visitor directly to the “Organization” tab of the Online Yearbook. You may also visit the Yearbook site directly at yearbook.wels.net, or the Locator portion at locator.wels.net. Finally, if you use the WELS Mobile app, you can find a link to the Locator in the side menu or the Yearbook itself under the Synod Reports area. Download WELS Mobile at m.wels.net.

To learn more about the new Locator and Yearbook or to view a video demonstration, view the WELS Technology blog at wels.net/blogs.

A printed version of the Yearbook is available for purchase from Northwestern Publishing House. Order online at nph.net. 



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