

having answers or not knowing how to do it. The two things I'd like to encourage the members of WELS to do are, first of all, just start reaching out. As you do it, you'll learn how to do it better through experience. And second, prepare yourselves to do it. That's where we hope we can help by providing resources to help people prepare to evangelize," says Roecker.

Roecker will continue to reside in Menomonee Falls with his wife and two children. ☩

WELS Multi-Language Publications offers free product giveaway

WELS Multi-Language Publications (MLP) and Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) is offering a one-day free inventory giveaway of MLP products in July.

The giveaway will take place at Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113 St., Milwaukee, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on July 14. Congregations or individuals who want materials but can't be there in person can order them between July 9–13 by calling Northwestern Publishing House at 1-800-662-6022. Cost for shipping will apply.

Included in the giveaway, according to Rev. Nathan Seiltz, MLP director, are Bible studies, evangelism

booklets, and doctrinal materials in more than 52 languages, along with select English versions. More than 800 titles are available.

"Perhaps you have hesitated to reach out to those who speak other languages because of a lack of materials. Or maybe you have members who can share resources with their families in their native countries. We want to help you reach culturally diverse groups in your community and around the world," says Seiltz.

Seiltz says MLP is working to digitize all these materials and make them available for download through NPH's website. Only about 85 titles still will be available as printed materials.

"Offering these resources digitally will not only allow people from around the world to access our materials quickly and easily but also will allow individuals and congregations in the U.S. a free, easy way to get materials that will help them share the gospel with people in their neighborhood, no matter what culture or language," says Seiltz.

See what materials are available at nph.net/mlp. ☩

Pastoral assignments at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

A senior at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary was talking to a coworker at his part-time job. The student mentioned that he was about to graduate and would soon learn where he would be serving as a pastor. "What do you mean when you say that you 'will learn' where you will be serving?" The student replied, "In our synod, you are assigned to your first congregation; I don't get to decide where I will go." Needless to say, the coworker found that incredible.

What a blessing it is, and what an expression of faith, that our pastor and teacher candidates for ministry don't insist on deciding where they will go. They put themselves into God's hands, and the Lord of the church, working through his church, calls them to serve in the very place where he wants them to serve.

We experienced this gracious working of the Holy Spirit on May 24, when 34 men were assigned (or reassigned) as pastors and 26 men were assigned as vicars. All available pastoral candidates were assigned. In fact, after the assignments were made more than 40 requests for graduates could not be filled.

Anyone who has ever attended a call service at Martin Luther College or Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is moved by the way that God provides workers for his harvest field. And even if you were not able to attend, you joined with our entire synod in thanking God for his gift of called workers.

With the many pastoral vacancies that remain, we are reminded of the important role that each of us plays in encouraging young men to consider preparing for the pastoral ministry and in praying for more ministers of the gospel. The harvest is still plenty, and the workers are still few.

A complete list of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary assignments can be viewed at wls.wels.net.

Serving in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder ☩

Review of Scouting completed

The Conference of Presidents was asked to review the current Scouting organization to determine whether Scouting has changed in a way that would remove the objectionable features.

Our synod has consistently voiced its objections to Scouting for several reasons:

1. Scouting promotes a religion that contradicts the Scriptures. A Scout is to “do his duty to God” without the means or motivation that faith in Christ provides.
2. Scouting urges each Scout to “do his duty to God” without naming who this God is or urging that honor be given alone to the triune God of the Scriptures.
3. Scouting promotes prayers, devotions, and worship that refuse to insist that Christ is the only way to salvation and that without him there is no salvation.
4. Scouting promotes a religious unionism that does not distinguish between Christian denominations nor between Christian and non-Christian churches.


In a 12-lesson study on Scouting prepared under the auspices of the Conference of Presidents for use in our congregations, Scripture and quotations taken directly from Scouting resources point out that essentially nothing in Scouting has changed. In fact, some changes in the organization have added new concerns. Scouting has

taken the step to open its doors to participants and leaders who espouse a view of sexuality that contradicts the Scriptures.

While public documents and manuals of the Scouting organization have been scrubbed and sanitized to remove many references to Scouting’s religious nature and practices, it is evident that in substance nothing has changed. Scouting still contains religious elements and espouses a religious philosophy that runs counter to the Scriptures and promotes the worship of a deity that is not the God who has revealed himself to us in his Word.

The Bible study can be found online at welscongregationalservices.net.

Parents and congregations that are looking to provide their children with an experience similar to Scouting (but based on biblical principles that are consistent with our beliefs), should consider Lutheran Pioneers or Lutheran Girl Pioneers. These are WELS organizations that provide materials and resources to enable congregations to conduct a ministry that features activities, skills training, leadership development, and devotional opportunities to boys and girls within our fellowship. Your congregation may already have a chapter; if not, anyone interested in starting a chapter can learn more at lutheranpioneers.org or lgp.org.

Submitted by President Mark Schroeder and the WELS Conference of Presidents 


Changes at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Rev. Paul O. Wendland, president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., has announced that he will transition from the position of president into a purely teaching role at the end of the 2018–19 school year.

“I am grateful to the Lord Jesus for the privilege of serving him as president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary for the past 15 years, and I look forward, as he wills, to go on serving him by teaching full time. I pray the next year will allow for an orderly transition,” says Wendland.

Wendland has served on the seminary faculty since 2001 and was called to serve as president in 2004. He has served congregations in Mwembezhi, Zambia; Hopkins, Michigan; and Salt Lake City, Utah. From 1994 to 2001 he taught at Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis., and Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

“A grateful synod gives thanks to the Lord for Paul Wendland’s leadership as president,” says Rev. Paul Prange, administrator for WELS Ministerial Education. “Please join me in praying for God’s blessing as seminary students continue to benefit from his insight and encouragement as a full-time professor for many years to come.”

A call for nominations to fill the seminary president position will be sent out soon. 

New director for the Commission on Evangelism

Rev. Eric Roecker has accepted the call to serve as the director for the WELS Commission on Evangelism, a ministry of WELS Congregational Services. He will transition to this new role in August, replacing Rev. Mike Hintz who has retired.

Roecker has been serving as pastor at Pilgrim, Menomonee Falls, Wis., for five years. Prior to serving at Pilgrim, he served Resurrection, Chesapeake, Va., for 15 years.

Roecker says, “One of the things that affected my decision to accept the call was that I had the opportunity to serve in an outlying district as well as the opportunity to serve here in the Midwest in a congregation with a grade school. I thought that’s probably a good thing for this position, to have experienced both, because I’ve discovered there’s some major differences in the area of outreach between those two ministry settings.”

He says he’s looking forward to working with a broader segment of WELS members and energizing and helping them share the good news of Jesus.

“Every WELS member wants to evangelize, and we know that because Christ lives in them and Christ wants us to evangelize. All of us want to tell others about Jesus, but there are things that get in the way of that, whether it’s our own sinful natures or our fear of not