

## **Book of Reports and Memorials available online**

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**T**he 2021 *Book of Reports and Memorials* is now available online. This book summarizes the activities of each area of ministry over the last year and contains the proposed ministry financial plan for the next biennium. The information in the *Book of Reports and Memorials* will help guide the delegates of WELS' 66th biennial convention, which is being conducted in an altered format this year.

The in-person convention is being held at Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis., July 26–28. Only the chairman, secretary, and two laymen from each floor committee will be present. Floor committees will conduct their business and adopt their reports and resolutions via virtual meetings in advance of the convention. Elections will also be held electronically in advance. Delegates who are not attending in person will be able to vote on convention resolutions remotely.

The entire convention will focus on the theme “Here we stand.” This theme reminds us of Martin Luther’s willingness to risk his life with his bold stand on the Word of God 500 years ago at the Diet of Worms. Our convention will focus on this theme to remind us that for the Christian church today to carry out its mission faithfully, the same bold stand on the Word of God is necessary.

Major items for consideration at this convention include:

- the proposed ministry financial plan (budget) for 2021–23,
- increasing opportunities that God is giving our synod to proclaim the gospel to a growing number of people around the world, and
- a recommended change in the WELS Pension Plan.

More details on the proposed changes to the WELS Pension Plan are available at [welsbpo.net](http://welsbpo.net).

Six memorials are also included in the *Book of Reports and Memorials*. A memorial is a formal request to the synod convention for specific action.

One printed copy of the *Book of Reports and Memorials* is being mailed to each delegate, congregation, and male called worker. These printed copies should arrive by the first week of June.

To view the online version of the *Book of Reports and Memorials*, visit [wels.net/2021synodconvention](http://wels.net/2021synodconvention).

You can also see details of the proposed change to the pension plan at [welsbpo.net/proposed-changes-to-wels-retirement-program-2021](http://welsbpo.net/proposed-changes-to-wels-retirement-program-2021).

Serving together with you in Christ,  
WELS President Mark Schroeder 

## Observing MLC Day and statue dedication

Wednesday, May 5, is MLC Day, a time to support WELS' College of Ministry and its students and graduates. To commemorate Martin Luther College's 25th anniversary this year, MLC Day will celebrate all MLC graduates—from this year and from the past.


As part of the day's activities, Fisher of Men, a new statue on MLC's campus, will be dedicated live at 11:30 a.m. CT. The statue depicts Jesus at the Sea of Galilee calling Andrew and Simon Peter to become fishers of people (based on Mark 1:17). The MLC Alumni Association chose and funded this project to celebrate the school's 25th anniversary. "MLC is a great place to have a statue like this because it's where we're training fishers for gospel ministry," says Prof. Jon Schaefer, director of new teacher induction at MLC and former alumni association president. "We saw it as a way to inspire people while they are on campus as well as provide something that they can carry with them into ministry."

The statue is positioned in the center of campus, with Jesus' gaze directed to the cross at the top of the Chapel of the Christ. Its base is inscribed with Bible passages suggested by alumni that underscore Jesus' directive to make disciples. "It's a beautiful addition to highlight the gospel preparation we are doing at MLC to train a core of witnesses who are ready to meet the ministerial needs of the synod," says Schaefer.

Throughout the day on its social media, MLC also will share messages,

photos, and videos that WELS members sent to congratulate 2021 graduating class members and thank past graduates for their kingdom work. Messages still can be submitted online at [mlcday.com](http://mlcday.com).

WELS members also can offer prayers and monetary support for MLC's ministry at [mlcday.com](http://mlcday.com). All gifts go toward the Congregational Partner Grant Matching Fund, which directly matches gifts up to \$1,000 from churches for their students.

Learn more at [mlcday.com](http://mlcday.com). Watch the statue dedication live at [livestream.com/mlc-streams](http://livestream.com/mlc-streams). 

## Celebrating WELS National Hymnal Week

In order to provide an opportunity to think about the blessings of worship as well as get a sneak peek at what the new hymnal has to offer, WELS is celebrating WELS National Hymnal Week, Sept. 19–26.

"It's good for us to reflect on why we're doing what we're doing because we want worship to be all about Jesus, proclaiming what he has done for us and the life we have in him," says Rev. Jon Zabell, chairman of the Commission on Worship and pastor at St. Paul, Green Bay, Wis.

Many of the components of National Hymnal Week will mirror what participants could experience at the WELS worship conference, an event that had to be canceled this year due to the pandemic. Yet, since congregations and members will be able to participate locally—even virtually—more people will be able to be involved. "Worship is something

God's people will be doing into eternity, so for us to spend time on that is worthwhile," says Zabell.


WELS Commission on Worship will provide resources for National Hymnal Week events:

- **A worship service for Sunday, Sept. 19.** This service will be based on the new lectionary readings of the day and include hymns and music from *Christian Worship: Hymnal*. Recorded music tracks will allow congregations who don't have many musicians to participate. "We'll provide congregations with what they need for their own local setting so they can involve their people in the best way they can," says Zabell.
- **A hymn sing.** Meant to be used during Bible class, the hymn sing gives members an opportunity to get acquainted with more new hymns from the upcoming hymnal. Video and audio recordings of various choirs will lead members through hymns from different seasons of the church year.
- **Presentations.** Throughout WELS National Hymnal Week, WELS members can watch video presentations on new hymnal resources as well as on broader worship topics. Members can meet in small groups to view and discuss the presentations or watch them at home for their own edification.
- **Concert.** A pre-recorded online concert featuring a children's

choir, chamber choir, college choir, and liturgical ensemble will be streamed Sunday afternoon, Sept. 26 (exact time to be determined). These WELS musicians will present arrangements of new hymns as well as cherished favorites.

Resources will be available at [christianworship.com](http://christianworship.com) in upcoming months. More information and a planning timeline are available now as well as an opportunity to sign up for updates.

Northwestern Publishing House, in partnership with WELS Commission on Worship, is sending two copies of *Christian Worship: Hymnal* and one copy of *Christian Worship: Psalter* to every congregation. It is planned that these free display copies should arrive in September in time for National Hymnal Week so members can page through these new resources in conjunction with the activities.

Congregations and individuals can pre-order *Christian Worship: Hymnal* and *Christian Worship: Psalter* at [nph.net](http://nph.net). 



To sign up for the e-mail version, visit [wels.net/together](http://wels.net/together).