

**TOGETHER**



February 21, 2023

## Reflecting on the WELS National Conference on Lutheran Leadership

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Last month more than 1,300 men and women attended the second WELS National Conference on Lutheran Leadership in Chicago. Fifty-two percent of those who attended were laypeople. More than 100 attendees were high school and college students.


The conference featured a worship service with communion, as well as devotions. Five keynote presentations addressed a variety of timely issues facing the church today. Keynote topics were “Our Lutheran Moment: Why Now Is a Good Time for Us to Be Doing What We Do Best,” “Lutheran Leadership—What It Is and Why It’s Important,” “Shaping a God-Pleasing Congregational Culture,” “A Courageous Conversation on Modeling Gospel-Centered Unity,” and “Thinking Differently: On How the Next Generation Thinks, and On How to Help Them Think.”

Attendees could also choose to attend five breakout sessions (from 47 that were offered). The breakout sessions dealt with a wide range of issues, including congregational planning, dealing with current cultural issues, outreach and evangelism strategies, Lutheran worship, carrying out our Christian vocation in a secular workplace, and much more. A number of these were geared specifically for the young people in attendance.

It was very encouraging to see so many called workers and laypeople take time away from busy schedules to become better equipped to carry out the work that they do in their congregations. The information presented was practical, timely, encouraging, and spiritually edifying. I know that I benefited greatly from the presentations, and I can’t tell you how many people commented on how much they enjoyed the conference and were blessed to be a part of it. Called workers, laymen and women, and young people left the conference spiritually uplifted and full of ideas on how they and their congregations can better serve their Savior.

If you did not have the opportunity to attend, you can view video recordings of some of the presentations by visiting [lutheranleadership.com](http://lutheranleadership.com). Select presentation videos will be released throughout the year.

We can pray that God will use this conference as a way to strengthen WELS members, called workers, and congregations as they carry out the mission God has given to us. The next National Conference on Lutheran Leadership is tentatively scheduled for January 2026.

Serving with you in Christ,  
WELS President Mark Schroeder 

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## Seminary holds annual Mission and Ministry for students


Students at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., participated in Mission and Ministry, an annual three-day event organized by a student committee, Feb. 7-9. Under the theme "Go!" based on Matthew 28:19, this event highlighted the worldwide work of WELS.

Each day featured a worship service, an overview of ministry highlights by WELS leaders, an encouraging keynote address by a worker in the field, and the opportunity to attend three breakout sessions of interest. Presenters encouraged students with the Lord's promise to be with his people always, no matter where they serve, whom they serve, or in what role they serve, giving them the strength to carry out his Great Commission.

The student committee arranged for 24 breakout sessions on different topics. These sessions included presentations on world missions building bridges across cultures, leveraging the internet to reach people around the world through TELL, starting a new home mission, urban ministry in the United States, renewing expectations of church membership since the pandemic, and how our churches support people with disabilities and their families. All presenters shared how their work carries out the Savior's commission with the help of the Savior's promise. WELS organizations also set up

displays to share information about their work in God's kingdom.

The seminary family was blessed to have visitors each day: the pastor-track juniors from Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., participated on the first day, and students from Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Mankato, Minn., participated on days two and three. Another special guest was Rev. Holger Weiss, president of the seminary for our sister synod in Germany, the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church. Weiss served as preacher in the opening service and shared blessings and challenges of mission work in Germany during a breakout session.

For photos of the event, visit Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's Facebook page. 

### Did you know...

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**WELS has Instagram?**  
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**Forward in Christ magazine has a Facebook page?**  
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