

TOGETHER

September 19, 2023


Board for Home Missions approves tenth new mission start for 2023

Last week the Board for Home Missions met for its fall meetings and approved one new start and four enhancement requests. This brings the total new mission starts this year to 10 (not to mention the approved enhancements), which is on pace with our synod's goal of starting 100 new mission churches and enhancing 75 existing ministries from 2023-2033.

- **Buffalo, Wyo. (new start):** A group of 27 WELS members living in the Buffalo area have been worshipping weekly in the local civic center since March 2020, led by the pastor from Lord of Lords in Casper, Wyo.
- **Mount Calvary, Redding/Anderson, Calif. (enhancement):** Home Missions is providing financial support for Mount Calvary, a multi-site ministry, to call a staff minister to assist with evangelism and youth/family ministry at the Anderson site.
- **Christ the King, Palm Coast, Fla. (enhancement):** Christ the King will receive short-term Home Missions support to call a campus pastor to reach out to the 125 students with no church home at their growing Christ the King Academy.
- **Hope, Deerfield, Wis. (unsubsidized):** Hope in Deerfield began outreach and worship in fall 2021. Unsubsidized mission status gives them access to grants from Home Missions and WELS Church Extension Fund (WELS CEF) as well as support from their district mission board and mission counselor.
- **Cross of Christ, Las Cruces, N.M. (unsubsidized):** Cross of Christ started in a member's home 11 years ago. The congregation has 73 members and owns land along a major access road where most of the city's new development is taking place and where hundreds of young families are moving.

As district mission boards and mission counselors are looking for new places to start churches and enhance ministries, WELS members have responded to help support this gospel outreach goal with their offerings. Since starting this initiative, more than 1,500 members have contributed more than \$1.7 million to help launch new home missions. Thanks be to God! Thank you to all those who have contributed toward this effort of boldly taking the gospel to people in new locations throughout the country.

Learn more about these new starts and enhancements and read updates from home missions that were approved in spring at wels100in10.net.

Serving with you in Christ,
WELS President Mark Schroeder 

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Using *The Foundation* to reach the unchurched

The Foundation, a free worship planning resource developed and offered by WELS Congregational Services, is designed to assist congregations with outreach in their communities.

By using the pre-planned worship resources, busy pastors will have more time to spend visiting prospective members and interacting with their communities.

The worship plans have also been carefully constructed to be accessible to first-time guests. The orders of service and hymns, while feeding the faithful, will also bless those new to Lutheran worship.

“Perhaps most importantly, it is hoped *The Foundation* resources will encourage members to invite their unchurched friends, neighbors, and co-workers to join them for worship. The use of themes for worship series might mean a member brings someone who is struggling with a particular issue in their life or who may have expressed interest in a topic that will be discussed in an upcoming series,” says Rev. Eric Roecker, administrator for WELS Commission on Evangelism, part of WELS Congregational Services.

To assist with this outreach, a promotional video is produced for each series. The videos are specifically produced with the unchurched in mind, using language, images, music, etc., that unchurched people could understand

and relate to. Roecker suggests some ways the videos might be used:

- Show the video for an upcoming series after worship for two to three weeks prior to the start of the series. Not only will it prepare your people, but it might also make them think of someone they could invite to join them.
- In certain settings, the video could be shown as an introduction to the sermon each week. This repetition would help tie the series together in the minds of worshippers.
- Post the videos on all of your congregation’s social media pages. You never know who might see it and be intrigued enough to join you.
- Share the videos with your members in the weeks leading up to each series so they can share them with unchurched acquaintances. It’s an easy way for them to make the invite.

Access all *The Foundation* resources at welscongregationalservices.net/foundation-yr-a.

Also, don’t forget to get Christmas outreach materials! Christmas outreach postcards and other materials are available from Echt Printing to help congregations reach their neighbors, inviting them to Christmas worship. The materials feature *The Foundation* Christmas theme for 2023. The deadline to order is Oct. 24.

Praise and Proclaim is also offering assistance to congregations with digital evangelism efforts. The deadline to sign up is Oct. 27. ☪

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