

Luther: Paradigms of Shepherd-Leaders." Scharf, a professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., outlined a paradigm for shepherd leadership using "I am Jesus' Little Lamb." He shared, "A shepherd-leader first recognizes that he is a sheep. Humility is in order. He is joyfully optimistic. He guides by training and encouraging others for ministry as well as by instructing his people in a gentle way. He loves God and loves people by supplying what people need and is consistent. Finally, a shepherd-leader knows his sheep and calls them by name."

The second paper, presented by 1999 graduate Rev. Jonathan Schroeder, discussed "Shepherd-Leaders Under the Cross: Facing the Challenges." Schroeder, pastor at Faith, Sharpsburg, Ga., addressed the hard idea that suffering and bearing the cross is part of life as a Christian. "Understanding what God is really like is imperative for shepherd-leaders who guide God's people as they face challenges together. To show us what he is really like, God leads his shepherd and his flock to the unlikeliest of places: the cross," he shared. "God puts his pastors and congregations in situations that test their faith, test their joy in ministry, test their trust in him. But he does those things to strengthen us, to mold us into the servants that he wants. That is what makes our congregational crosses so dear. When the potter puts his

hands on you, run to his Word."

For the final paper, Rev. Jonathan Hein, class of 1997, addressed the future. Hein, coordinator for WELS Congregational Services, presented "The Shepherd-Leader at Work: Moving Forward." He reminded those in attendance, "God has called you a shepherd leader. To say, 'I'm not a leader' is more than self-pity. It is a denial of reality. God speaks; reality results. God has spoken; thus, you are a leader." He encouraged the pastors to examine their leadership and ministries. "It seems to me that at times there is an unwillingness to examine how we are proclaiming the Word; to ask, 'Are we proclaiming the Word in ways that makes sense, given our context?' Sometimes, it seems we are hesitant to simply ask, 'Is this the best we can do?'" He also reminded them of the freedom to lead with the gifts God has given them, "The LORD did not give Adam instructions on how to do everything. Instead, he made Adam in his likeness—possessing reason undergirded with purity. Likewise, as we provide leadership in his church, he simply does not provide a lot of detailed direction. We might like him to. He chooses not to, so that we might demonstrate our love for him through careful reasoning."

The archive of the symposium is available at livestream.com/WLSLive. 

TOGETHER



September 18, 2018

Special committee reports progress

Last spring the Conference of Presidents appointed a study committee to review our WELS doctrinal statement on man and woman roles. The committee has been asked to consider ways in which we might clarify how we express the biblical principle in a way that helps us avoid misunderstandings and caricatures as we confess it in a new generation.

Chaired by Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Professor Rich Gurgel, the committee has begun its work in earnest. Over two-and-a-half days in late August, the committee spent time in the study of the Scriptures, reflecting on what God teaches about man and woman in his world. From there the committee worked through the doctrinal statement and essays that addressed portions of the statement. One of the more significant items on the agenda was a discussion of the responses to a survey sent out in early July. The survey, to which more than 600 teachers, pastors, and laypeople responded, asked respondents to identify places where the doctrinal statement seems a bit unclear and where God's unique callings for men and women could be expressed more clearly. The feedback proved to be invaluable, as it generated significant discussion about ways in which to express the truth of the interdependent partnership God designed for men and women in his world.

Based on their study of God's Word and the suggestions offered regarding sections of the doctrinal statement that could be stated more clearly, the committee is currently working on some possible ways to make the statement even better. The committee hopes to present initial suggestions to the Conference of Presidents by December. The long-term plan is to prepare Bible study materials that will be helpful to called workers and congregations for digging into God's Word on this important teaching.

Serving in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder 

Christian Aid and Relief Florence update

WELS Christian Aid and Relief has been monitoring damage to WELS churches, members, and communities in the


Southeastern United States following Hurricane Florence. So far, only Ascension in Jacksonville, N.C., has reported significant damage. The



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congregation's rented worship facility lost shingles in the wind, allowing torrents of rain to destroy the ceiling and fill the worship space. Christian Aid and Relief is still awaiting reports regarding how other area WELS members and communities fared.

Rev. Bob Hein, chairman of Christian Aid and Relief, reported that Christian Aid and Relief approved a \$10,000 gift to Direct Relief, a secular relief organization that is providing immediate relief to people affected by Hurricane Florence. Hein reports, "We are also assessing ways to personalize our relief efforts by working through our churches in the affected areas."

To learn more about or support WELS Christian Aid and Relief, visit wels.net/relief. 

Great news for Home Missions

The WELS Board for Home Missions is celebrating a number of milestones this September. During its fall meeting, the board approved funding for three new missions starts.

"The significance of Home Missions authorizing three new missions is that we now have three more dedicated locations where first and foremost the gospel of Jesus Christ will be proclaimed," says Rev. Keith Free, administrator of the Board for Home Missions. "The mission pastor and mission members will have as their first objective to reach more people with the message that makes all the difference now and in eternity—Christ crucified for the sins of all."

New congregations are being supported in:

- **Bluffton, S.C.**, which has developed through the efforts of Risen Savior, Pooler, Ga. The new mission in Bluffton is likely to be part of a multi-site ministry effort with Risen Savior. This effort is spearheaded by Eric Janke, a 2018 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., who deferred an assignment due to his wife's three-year residency to become a doctor. Janke has worked with Risen Savior's pastor and members to develop a strong ministry plan for this new mission site.
- **Mansfield, Ohio**, where a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) congregation is closing and contacted WELS to see if our synod might be interested in opening a mission in this area. The new mission will be buying the land and building of the former LCMS church. Some of the church's members are planning to join the new WELS mission and are working with WELS members in the area to launch this new WELS congregation.
- **Richland Center, Wis.**, which is part of a multi-site effort being supported by St. John, Hillpoint, and Trinity, Lime Ridge, both in Wisconsin. St. John and Trinity currently share one pastor, who has been exploring the viability of a mission in Richland Center. The area seems well suited for a WELS mission start, and members of St. John and Trinity are excited to support this effort.

These new starts are being supported by a \$1 million special grant from the WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. (CEF). CEF helps provide financing so mission congregations and established congregations with mission-focused initiatives can purchase land and either build or renovate a worship facility. CEF funds its loan program through individual WELS members' and congregations' investments in CEF financial products. CEF's grant program is funded primarily through operating earnings of the CEF portfolio of loans and investments.


"CEF's financials are strong," says Mr. Scott Page, executive director of CEF, "allowing the board to approve this special grant while continuing to provide a sound investment vehicle for WELS members and congregations."

As Free notes, "Over and above its loan and grant program, since August 2015 CEF has given more than \$4.3 million to Home Missions' operations budget. This has helped fund many of our new mission congregations and helped enhance outreach throughout the United States, Canada, and the English-speaking Caribbean."

Free is also excited to announce that many mission congregations launched their first public worship services in September, a milestone for these young churches. Launch services were held by Living Hope, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Intown Lutheran, Atlanta, Ga.; Good News, Lehi, Utah; Huntersville Lutheran, Huntersville, N.C.; and Grace in the Ward, Milwaukee, Wis.

Rev. Doug Van Sice, pastor at Huntersville, says, "As I sat in my office the day before the launch, I

prayed that God would bless our launch regardless of who or how many showed up. At the end of the day, numbers are not what is most important. What is most important is that the changeless message of the gospel is preached in its truth and purity and that God's people are edified by that very truth. Not only did God bless our worship with his Word, but he blessed it with people. He brought 62 people through Huntersville Lutheran's doors. It was incredible! More than I could have asked for or imagined."

For more information on WELS Home or World Missions, visit wels.net/missions. For more information on WELS Church Extension Fund, visit wels.net/cef. 

Seminary holds annual symposium

Almost 400 people attended Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's annual fall symposium from Sept 17-18 in Mequon, Wis. Pastors from across North America heard three papers presented on "The Pastor as Shepherd-Leader." By virtue of his divine call, a pastor is both a loving shepherd and servant leader, yet the challenge can be knowing how and where to lead. Three speakers guided pastors and pastoral students through the thorny issues that surround pastoral leadership and offered clear and wise counsel to those who lead the flock of God.

Professor David Scharf, class of 2005, began the symposium with the paper, "St. Paul and Martin