

**2020 District Convention –**

***“To Every Town and Village!”***

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**District President's Report  
June 15, 2020**

Brothers in Christ,

It's been said that hindsight's 20/20. But, the year 2020 will require plenty of hindsight to access all we've been through. Still struggling for normalcy coming out of a pandemic, some wonder if we'll just have to accept that everything's changed and we're entering a new normal.

Has everything changed? Not everything. Certainly not the most important things. “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.” Because He hasn't changed, His love, mercy, forgiveness, protection, eternity, etc. haven't changed either.

Is there a “new normal?” To paraphrase one of our pastors on Easter: While everyone's talking about the new normal, we've been living in the new normal Jesus has brought about by His death and resurrection. The old normal was sin, guilt, fear, death and eternal death. The new normal Christ has ushered in is forgiveness, acceptance, peace, purpose and eternal life.

Yes, despite society's changes and challenges, the most important things haven't changed. In fact, the need for Christ is seen more clearly in the changes and challenges. Brothers, the unchanging mission to bring Christ to a confused and dying world still lies before us. His unchanging love and His new eternal normal is needed by all. Despite whatever challenges, may the Spirit bless your congregations, schools and ministries with confident, energetic proclamation of the world's Savior!

**District Convention 2020**

Due to the Covid-19 health crisis, in April the Conference of President determined and communicated that it wouldn't be possible to hold our normal conventions. It was also determined that divine calls would still be placed for the praesidium offices so what we couldn't do constitutionally we would still do biblically in keeping with the doctrine of the divine call. (Together: <https://wels.net/decision-on-district-conventions/>).

Other vacant positions were then to be filled by appointment in keeping with the constitutions. It was determined that incumbents, still eligible for another term and willing to service, would be re-appointed to their present service. This seeks to honor the district's and circuit's last word on these divine calls in 2016 or 2018. For positions where there was no incumbent eligible for another term, the work and considerations of our elected district nominations committee served as the basis for those appointments.

**2020 District Reports, Boards, Committees**

The election/appointment report and all other reports are being posted as available in our Convention 2020 folder on our district website. <https://welswwd.weebly.com/2020-district-convention---in-person-is-cancelled-reports-are-posted-as-they-become-available.html>

We again thank all, who in addition to their fulltime vocations and fulltime Calls, offer their faithful service to Christ and our district through these various positions, boards and committees.

## **The Blessing of Our Fellowship**

One of the blessings seen in this health crisis has been the way our congregations, schools, and gospel ministers have communicated, supported each other and assisted each other. That support has been in prayers, conversations, encouragement, sharing of resources, etc. and it's all been in an effort to proclaim Christ. Join me in thanking God for this evident gospel partnership, a true blessing that shines brightly in an otherwise difficult time.

## **Premium Holidays**

Understanding that the protentional for financial challenges during this time, WELS VEBA and WELS Benefits have each announced Premium Holidays. We thank them for their ongoing service and this special blessing to our congregations.

- Pension Payment Holiday – October 2020  
<https://wels.net/wels-pension-plan-contribution-holiday-in-october-2020/>
- WELS VEBA Holiday Premium – August 2020  
<https://welsbpo.net/wels-veba-premium-holiday-august-2020/#:~:text=The%20WELS%20VEBA%20Commission%20is,the%20month%20of%20August%202020.>

## ***Male & Female in God's World***

A draft document entitled Male & Female in God's World, along with additional resources, has been available since late 2019. The document & resources can be found at <https://synodadmin.welsrc.net/download-synodadmin/en-cristo/>

Continue encouragement is offered for all to review and study these valuable resources. A Comment Box for Feedback can be found at <https://gf.wels.net/roles/> The collective comments of circuits are considered especially helpful. When the question of timetable arises, the encouragement is given that time for good study and healthy discussion is more important than any timetable, especially in light of the Covid-19 health crisis.

## **Proposed Changes to WELS Retirement Plan**

The Synodical Council was hoping to receive significant feedback from district conventions this summer regarding the proposed changes in our WELS Retirement Plan. That has obviously changed. Please watch for further updates and review the proposed changes at <https://welsbpo.net/proposed-changes-to-wels-retirement-program/>

Brothers, as we face the challenges before us, may we do so with the optimism that comes from Christ's victory over sin and the grave. May the Spirit's words through Paul encourage us:

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Christ's servant to you,

Pastor Jensen