



# Western Wisconsin District Mission Board

*"Go and make disciples of all nations"*

## WWDMB Members

**John Deglow**

Treasurer  
jddeglow@hotmail.com  
920.285.2880

**Scott Krause**

Secretary  
BHM Representative  
Communications Liaison  
skrause4644@gmail.com  
920.248.2177

**Pastor Jeff Mahnke**

Chairman  
BHM Representative  
pastorm@mysaintpeter.org  
715.297.0132

**Pastor Ben Schudlach**

Campus Ministry  
pastorsch@firstlacrosse.org  
608.799.5023

**Pastor Paul Schupmann**

pschupmann@stjohnsjuneau.org  
920.344.9839

**David Schwantz**

mnhemi@live.com  
507.796.5325

## Western Wisconsin District Mission Board Report to Western Wisconsin District | June 2022

### Board for Home Missions Updates:

- 1. Spring BHM Meeting:** We met in Pewaukee on March 31 & April 1 for our spring meeting. We approved twelve (12) new home mission requests. Five (5) are new home mission locations in Windsor, CO; Wichita, KS; Canton, GA; Conroe, TX, and Lodi, WI (unsubsidized). Three (3) existing congregations received enhancements: St John's in St Paul, MN; Cross of Glory in Baton Rouge, LA; and Divine Savior in Delray Beach, FL. Two (2) mission restarts were granted: Abiding Savior in Killeen, TX and Our Savior in Burlington, IA. Unsubsidized mission status was granted to Mt Calvary in Redding / Anderson, CA and to Living Faith in Midlothian, TX. We also approved sixteen (16) vicar assignments to mission (or mission minded) churches through the Vicar in Mission Setting program of Home Missions and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.
- 2. 100 New Missions in 10 Years:** The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod will celebrate its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025, and as part of our celebration of God's grace our church body has resolved to open 100 new missions 10 years. During that same time, we also would like to support 75 enhancement grants to help existing congregations reach more souls with the gospel. The Task Force that was established in 2021 did its job, and now the Home Missions office is getting ready to begin promoting this effort at all twelve District Conventions. A full congregational awareness campaign is scheduled to begin in September.
- 3. Home Missions' Administrator:** Pastor Stephen Helwig is holding the Divine Call to serve as the administrator of WELS Home Missions. He presently is serving at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Omaha, NE. Pastor Keith Free, who has served as the administrator since December 2010, accepted a Divine Call to St John's in Mukwonago earlier this year. His last official day was April 30<sup>th</sup>. We thank Pastor Free for his faithful service and strong leadership, and we wish him God's blessings in his new ministry.

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## Western Wisconsin District Mission Board Updates:

1. *Our Missions:* Our district currently has seven missions. Here are some brief updates:
  - Good News in Mount Horeb (subsidized): The members of Good News broke ground in January for construction on a new facility for worship and ministry. Pastor Jonathan Bauer will have the assistance of another vicar in 2022-2023.
  - Bethlehem in Richland Center, WI (subsidized): We congratulate Bethlehem for being recognized in January as Richland County's non-profit organization of the year! In addition to our district thank offering, Pastor Dan Lewig was able to secure a number of other grants and gifts to assist with the remodeling plan for the mission's new building. The leaders are now working out the details on a loan from Church Extension Fund. Bethlehem Lutheran Academy, an early childhood center, is scheduled to open its doors this fall.
  - Our Savior's in Burlington, IA (subsidized): At this spring's Board for Home Missions meeting, Our Savior's was granted subsidized mission status as restart. Orrie Thomford received the Divine Call to serve this mission through the WELS Assignment Committee. May the Lord bless his ministry as this new shepherd and his flock serve together and reach out to their community of 20,000.
  - St John's in Horicon (unsubsidized): Weekly worship is held on Saturdays at 5 pm in a funeral home, and attendance is ticking upwards. Armed with a bold outreach plan for their multi-site ministry, the leaders of St John's continue exploring options for the purchase of land in Horicon for building a permanent facility for worship and ministry.
  - Amazing Grace in Roscoe, IL (unsubsidized): A special grand opening / dedication service was held last fall for their new facility, and Pastor Burrow and the members continue to enjoy this blessing from the Lord after many years of worshiping in a school gymnasium. Amazing Grace will officially no longer be considered a WELS mission as of July 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - Good Shepherd in Beloit, WI (unsubsidized): With a new director and a harvest strategy in place, Good Shepherd will be opening an early childhood center this fall in what was formerly the congregation's Lutheran Elementary School.
  - Lodi, WI (unsubsidized): This is the newest mission in our district! Zion in Leeds is starting this as a second site in Lodi, a town of 3,000 located about 20 miles north of Madison. A building in downtown Lodi is being renovated and worship will begin, God willing, this summer.
2. *Thank Offering Recap:* Last fall our District Mission Board invited churches in the Western Wisconsin District to give a special thank offering to help the Bethlehem mission in Richland Center renovate its new facility for ministry. God moved his people to give approximately \$45,000. This fall we will encourage a special thank offering to help our mission in Beloit. Our goal is to raise \$40,00 to help them with their early childcare center plans.
3. *Future New Missions:* All 14 District Mission Board have a pipeline of places for new missions, mission restarts, and enhancements. Our pipeline currently includes: Abbotsford, Deerfield, Dekalb (IL), Eau Claire, Holmen, Johnson Creek, Kronenwetter, Ladysmith, and Lake Delton / Wisconsin Dells; and Moline (IL). As "100 in 10" becomes a reality, please look for opportunities near you to help plant and support new missions in our district!