

June 2021 District Report

Welcome and Thanks!

While we certainly would have preferred face-to-face conference and continuing education, we also certainly thank all who have made our June 2021 online learning conference possible. Christ's blessing on your online time together! And, as we thank the Lord for this opportunity we petition His throne of mercy, asking for a return to normal face-to-face gatherings and ministry from this point forward.

Please do be sure to check out all the customary conference reports on our district website.

<https://welswwd.weebly.com/2021-district-conference.html>

Updating of Personal Biographical Information – WELS CLOUD

While ministerial gift assessments usually take place in consult with your circuit pastor or principal & school board, you can easily update your biographical information anytime. Periodic updates are greatly appreciated. They are especially beneficial for the calling process.

If you have not updated your biographical information in the last year, please take the opportunity to do so. Here is the link: <https://cloud.wels.net/my-wels-cloud/>

New BIO Information Options

If it's been a while since you checked out your biography options in your WELS Cloud you'll notice a few new ones when you go to update. You now have the option of adding...

- Your Top Five Strengths from *Clifton StrengthsFinder*

Information on *Clifton StrengthsFinder* may be found at

<https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/252137/home.aspx>

- A Personal Ministry Philosophy Paragraph – *an opportunity for you to share your ministerial heart*

Striving for an equity of personal biographical information for each candidate on a Call List, to date our district has not included these and a few other items on Call Lists. Beginning in October, when provided these and a few additional items will appear on both pastor and teacher Call Lists. ***So, again, please take the time to update your personal biographical profile so that it includes the information you would like.***

God is Faithful

In every aspect of life God is faithful, perfectly faithful. Our response is...faithfulness, albeit imperfect. No matter what additional personal biographical information we may or may not provide in our faithful efforts, our ultimate reliance is upon the perfectly faithful work of the Spirit as our congregations and schools call for faithful servants. ***May He bless these efforts of providing calling bodies with some additional information.***

Ministry Scams – Fake Emails

Hopefully, all of you have received an email from Lee Hitter regarding a recent scam. For reference below you will find a copy of that email which has now gone out to all district/synod called workers both active and retired.

This scam hit our district already in the beginning of April. It did use a variation of my synod email address and even included my picture. I again thank those who immediately contacted me. I also thank the circuit pastors and principals for immediately forwarding my email alerting all to the problem.

June 4, 2021

Hello,

WELS Technology was made aware that cybercriminals created malicious e-mails that appeared to come from at least four of our WELS District Presidents. These fraudulent e-mails are considered social engineering e-mails, which attempt to get gift cards and/or other information. Thank you to those who suspected the e-mails were fake, asked questions, and brought it to our attention. [Here is a PDF](#) that further explains how to identify a malicious social engineering e-mail.

WELS Technology Services cannot stop these e-mails from coming to your inboxes because we do not control the e-mail systems they are coming from. If you come across these types of e-mails, please forward them to security@wels.net.

Thank you for your vigilance in monitoring your e-mails and keeping the communication systems of WELS and its organizations safe.

[Open PDF](#)

Sent on behalf of **WELS Technology**

2021 Synod Convention & New Proposed WELS Retirement Plan

As you likely already heard, proposed changes to the WELS retirement program will be considered during the 2021 synod convention. The proposed changes are recommended and endorsed by the Conference of Presidents and Synodical Council. We believe that providing future retirement benefits to workers through a defined contribution plan (403b) will better support our workers and our ministry efforts than the current pension plan.

Given the importance of this topic, I encourage you to consider the proposed changes and submit any questions or feedback to WELS using the [feedback form](#). Your input in advance of the synod convention would be greatly appreciated.

Resources to help you become familiar with the proposed changes are provided below.

WELS has prepared this [12-minute presentation](#) to provide you with detailed information about the change, why the change is being proposed, and how the new program will work.

In addition to the presentation, a comprehensive “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQ) page is available at welsbpo.net/retirement-changes-faq.

You are encouraged to visit the [online calculator](#) developed by WELS, which will help you to compare your potential benefits at retirement under the current and proposed programs.

Ministry Assignments, Vacancies and Call Report

We thank our gracious Savior for the candidates from Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary who were assigned into our district. Each one is a precious gift from Christ, as are all of you.

Synod-wide we still have roughly 100 teaching and 100 pastoral vacancies. Please keep all schools who are short-staffed and congregations which are vacant in your prayers. Please also join me in continuing to petition our gracious God to send forth workers. Let us all together consider how *each of us* in our own ministerial settings may encourage young people to consider fulltime service in Christ’s harvest field.

2021-2022 Teacher Call Window

After a two-year trial period it has been decided to retain the mid-October to mid-April Teacher Call Window. The 2021-22 school year dates are October 10 to April 14.

District Call Report

The District Call Activity is posted on the home page of our district website: <https://welswwd.weebly.com/>
(This report is updated on Tuesdays.)

Ministry Materials

STEWARDSHIP

A God-Lived Life 2021 Stewardship Initiative will be available on the WELS Congregational Services website by the end of this April. It is recommended that congregations do the “10 for 10” initiative before enjoying a “God Lived Life.” Both stewardship programs can be found at: <https://welscongregationalservices.net/gods-people-gather/>

RETURN TO WORSHIP

God’s People Gather is the encouragement to return to worship and is available. It includes a white paper study for circuits and a roundtable talk-piece for church leaders.

<https://welscongregationalservices.net/gods-people-gather/>

MATERIALS for NEW HYMNAL

On our Christianworship.com website you will find all the information and materials available. Watch for ***The Foundation***, a massive effort to launch our new hymnal. It will include worship planning resources, evangelism resources, discipleship resources, and school resources, for every single weekend of the year.

<https://www.christianworship.com/>

Congregational Mission Offerings

2021 Subscriptions – Submissions rates were the same as last year, about 98%.

Submitted CMO Currently Exceeding Subscriptions

From April from our brother Kurt Lueneburg, director of our WELS Ministry of Christian Giving:

- *By God’s favor and empowered by his Spirit, our churches offered 2021 Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) of almost \$1.89 million during March for Christ’s gospel work through our synod. This monthly total is 21.7 percent (\$337,000) higher than gifts received in March 2020.*
- *On a calendar year-to-date basis, through March 2021, total CMO are \$4.77 million, 8.4 percent (\$369,000) more than 2020 CMO for the same period and 9.0 percent (\$393,000) higher than 2021 projected receipts.*
- *On a fiscal year-to-date basis through March 2021 (9 months), total CMO is \$17.0 million, up 4.2% (\$684,000) over the prior fiscal year through March 2020.*
- *To God be the glory! We thank our Savior and his people for these generous offerings! Thank you for your faithful efforts to encourage generous Congregation Mission Offerings. To learn more about the impact of our prayers and CMO, please review the WELS Annual Report and urge others to do the same.*

Male and Female in God's World

All the feedback that has been received has been greatly appreciated. Based on that feedback revision continues. The goal is to put a revision in your hands for further study. The earliest any final statement would come to the synod in convention is 2023. *Thank you again for your study and suggestions!*

2023 National Conference on Lutheran Leadership – Chicago, January 2023 (tentative)

Brothers and sisters, thank you for your faithful gospel service! It's a joy to serve with you. This summer may Christ grant you some moments of refreshment for your body through rest and recreation...and for your soul through His gospel's comfort and strength.

Christ's servant to you,

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