

WELS NEWS **September, 2016**

WELS Foundation Distributions Support Ministry

In July, WELS Foundation distributed more than \$2.3 million to various WELS ministries from the more than 300 separate endowment funds it manages. These distributions went to support local congregations and schools as well as WELS missions and ministerial education schools.

Although Congregation Mission Offerings are the backbone of the synod's ministry financial plan and provide much of the support for the ministry we carry out together, our synod is also blessed with other sources of support, including this annual distribution from WELS Foundation.

Martin Luther College was named number five on the list of most affordable private colleges in the United States by *Money* magazine in its August 2016 issue. This is possible thanks to the generosity that God has inspired in donors who love the gospel of Jesus and value the training of the called workers who preach and teach it. The annual endowment distributions from WELS Foundation are helping our schools provide greater financial assistance so that the cost of becoming a full-time gospel worker is more affordable.

These endowment distributions are also helping the Joint Mission Council take advantage of the opportunities the Lord is laying at our feet to serve those from many different cultures. Recently the Joint Mission Council started funding ministries that are letting immigrants reach back to their country of origin through WELS churches in Vancouver (Chinese), Boise (Vietnamese), Denver (Hispanic), and Las Vegas (Liberians).

We thank God for those who are able to support WELS ministries by establishing endowment funds and pray that he bless our efforts in his name. If you want to learn more about establishing an endowment fund or have questions about your estate plan, contact your local Christian giving counselor.

Serving in Christ,
President Mark Schroeder

WELS Night A Tremendous Success

Nearly 2,700 WELS members gathered at Miller Park in Milwaukee on July 29 for the third annual WELS night at Miller Park to watch the Brewers defeat the Pirates 3-1. WELS President Mark Schroeder, along with representatives from the WELS Center for Mission and Ministry; Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.; Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, Wis.; and Northwestern Publishing House, welcomed WELS members from congregations throughout the Midwest before the game. It was a picture-perfect evening.

The pregame activities included Wisconsin Lutheran College (WLC) President Dr. Daniel Johnson throwing out the ceremonial first pitch. “It was a great opportunity to represent Wisconsin Lutheran College not only to the thousands of WELS members in the crowd but also the tens of thousands of Brewers fans from across the greater Milwaukee region and the state. WLC is grateful to serve the WELS and our community by preparing men and women for lives of Christian leadership within 21st-century careers,” says Johnson.

After Johnson’s fast ball was thrown to catcher Joe Crawford, WELS member Brian Davison, lead vocal for Koiné, led 30,000 baseball fans in singing our National Anthem.

The Brewers junior announcer duties were assigned to nine-year-old Joel Goede, a third grader from St. John’s Lutheran School, Wauwatosa, Wis. It was a performance that would make even legendary Brewers announcer Bob Uecker proud.

“The third annual WELS Night at Miller Park was a wonderful evening to spend time with fellow believers in Christ. To see our members enjoying the game and strengthening the bond of fellowship with each other is a special blessing,” says Mr. Lee Hitter, WELS director of communications. “I talked with our Brewers representative, Jason Fry, Sunday morning at church, and we are already discussing plans for WELS Night at Miller Park in 2017.”

“Equipping Women To Mentor

“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” This was the theme for the recent Women’s Ministry Conference held in July. Approximately 350 women from around the country met at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., to get encouraged by and equipped with God’s Word.

The conference explored how Christian women serve as mentors to those around them. Marilyn Miller, chairwoman of WELS Women’s Ministry, says, “Women are natural mentors and do it without even thinking about it. This conference helped Christian women realize how their words and actions reflect Christ wherever they might find themselves. It is our prayer that women will intentionalize their mentoring, letting God use them to shape the character and transform the thinking of everyone with whom they come into contact. God is in the business of changing hearts, and I know he will do just that through some of the women who joined us last week.”

Su Hansen attended the conference from Redeemer, Tomahawk, Wis. She summed up the conference with one main word: “Encouragement.” She says, “It’s a very godly way to gather together sisters in Christ and grow together and encourage one another in our various callings.”

Attendee Ahnsharee Klusmeyer, Peace, Wautoma, Wis., finds it

important for Christian women to gather around God's Word. She says, "It's good for women to have fellowship with each other, especially knowing we're all coming from the same Christian background based on the Bible."

Presenters led Bible study sessions examining how Christ is the ultimate mentor and how to model one's mentoring after his.

Kathie Wendland, a member of the Women's Ministry Committee, led a study titled "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ," which focused on the apostle Paul's letters to the Corinthians. She says, "Time after time Paul in all of his epistles clearly points all Christian eyes to Jesus Christ himself as the only one who as true God understood perfectly the humble servant attitude necessary to demonstrate that humble servant attitude in word and action in a hostile world."

Dawn Schulz, a member of the Women's Ministry Committee, led a study titled "Jesus—A mentor for me." "As a mentor my identity, purpose, priorities, words, and actions are all determined by the fact that I am God's child because of Jesus. Jesus not only shows me how to live in this grace, he teaches me how to mentor it to others by understanding their individual and diverse needs, giving them time to grow, and living transparently in order to set before them a living picture of a life patterned after Jesus," she says.

WELS Women's Ministry, part of the WELS Commission on Adult Discipleship, holds a conference every three years; the next conference will be held in 2019. Learn more about [WELS Women's Ministry](#).

WELS Hmong Conference Uplifts Members

More than 165 attendees and their children gathered around the Word at the WELS Hmong National Conference, held July 8-10 at Immanuel Hmong, St. Paul, Minn. Hmong pastors and laymembers from congregations in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Kansas, Alaska, California, and even the WELS mission in Thailand strengthened their faith through worship and Bible study and learned more about each other's ministries.

"The encouraging moment is when I see members who live in places where we do not have a church or the church is very small come and see that we have many people worshipping and praising the Lord," says Rev. Pheng Moua, pastor at Immanuel Hmong and conference planner. "The gathering is uplifting to the members and will encourage their walk with Jesus Christ."

Moua started this conference about ten years ago at his church. It usually is held every other year, sponsored by the larger WELS Hmong congregations.

“We do not want our members to hunger and envy what other church bodies can cater to their members,” says Moua. “When we are surrounded with our own people, we teach our members that we can be united to nurture and teach our people to become a strong church body.”

Worldwide in WELS, 25 Hmong pastors serve eight ministries in the United States and 15 congregations and preaching stations in Thailand and the surrounding area.

“It is a blessing to gather with fellow Christians to receive their support, since the Hmong culture and many Hmong are anti-Christian,” says Rev. Keith Free, Home Mission administrator and conference attendee. “I believe it helps to re-energize their desire and commitment to sharing the Word.”

The next Hmong National Conference will be held in 2018. Home Missions and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary also are sponsoring an Asian Conference for pastors and spiritual leaders in October at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.