

Reference: Synodical Council RTD, pp. 25-29
Report No. 1

The committee notes with thanks that

- The previous “unfunded priorities” list is being replaced with a new Ministry Opportunity Fund, created by transferring \$5 million from the Financial Stabilization Fund. The first supported priority is the 100 missions in 10 years initiative with \$3 million over 4 years.
- The WELS, NPH, and our synodical schools received a combined \$7.4 million in Paycheck Protection Program loans. All the loans have been forgiven, and the assets placed into special funds.
- The transition from a pension plan to a defined contributions plan for called workers has gone smoothly, taking effect January 1, 2022.

Reference: WELS Long-Range Plan 2017-2025 RTD, pp. 29-32
Report No. 2

The committee notes with prayerful hope the following things planned for WELS for 2025 with God’s help:

- The WELS will be more widely known as a confessional Lutheran church body firmly founded on the Holy Scriptures and joyfully partnering to proclaim the saving love of Jesus Christ in Word and sacrament to as many people as possible around the globe.
- The Board for World Missions will be working with all of the other areas of the synod to serve more than 1,000,000 souls worldwide.
- The Board for Home Missions will continue to seek every opportunity to plant new ministries and to enhance gospel outreach in existing congregations to serve more than 300,000 communicant members and more than 400,000 baptized members in the US.
- The Joint Mission Council will coordinate the networking of confessional Lutherans from at least a dozen people groups with which WELS members come into contact.
- The Board for Ministerial Education will be working with all other areas of synod to provide the right number of pastors, teachers, staff ministers, and missionaries so that annual vacancy levels remain under 10 percent.

- Under the direction of the Conference of Presidents, Congregational Services will serve congregations and their leaders by providing resources, training, and personal assistance so that they might carry out gospel ministry in the most faithful way on the local level.

Reference: 2021 WELS convention compliance RTD, p. 33
Report No. 3

The committee is thankful that so many of the resolutions from the 2021 convention have been completed or begun, and we are confident that they will be carried out.

Reference: Accounting Oversight Committee RTD, pp. 34-35
Report No. 4

The committee notes with thanks that:

- The WELS Accounting Oversight Committee successfully implemented the accounting guidance changes issued by the Financial Accounting Standards Board for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2021.
- The external auditors, Baker Tilly, audited the consolidated financial statements of WELS, its schools, and its Support Services subsidiaries, as well as the WELS VEBA Group Health Plan and WELS Pension Plan for the calendar year 2021. Baker Tilly did not identify any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls.

Reference: WELS Archives RTD, pp. 35-36
Report No. 5

The committee notes that the WELS Archives makes available to researchers and visitors a growing body of materials that document the work of the synod, congregations, and notable personalities, including synodical publications in digital form and the Early Presidential Collection of over 4000 items.

Reference: WELS Christian Aid and Relief RTD, pp. 36-40
Report No. 6

The committee notes with thanks that:

- From Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2021, WELS Christian Aid and Relief utilized \$650,102 of the gifts entrusted to us for foreign and domestic disaster relief. (Haiti earthquake, Hurricane Ida, Waukesha parade tragedy, Kentucky tornadoes, Colorado fires, war in Ukraine)
- In October 2021, WELS Christian Aid and Relief formed a Disaster Relief Task Force made up of both called workers and laypeople whose task is to expand and improve Christian Aid and Relief's disaster relief capabilities.
- WELS Christian Aid and Relief approved \$470,882 to fund humanitarian aid grants for fiscal year 2021–22. However, mostly due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, not all approved projects were completed.
- WELS Christian Aid and Relief continues to provide grants to WELS members and prospects who are dealing with serious financial or medical crises. Our goal is to encourage and assist the efforts of the local congregations.

Reference: Support Services: Technology RTD, pp. 40-42
Report No. 7

The committee notes that:

- For WELS Technology, security and privacy demand much of their attention. More and more time and budget are spent in securing the data entrusted to the synod by churches, schools, called workers, volunteers, and donors.
- A growing majority of all visits to wels.net are from mobile devices. This shift away from traditional desktop or even laptop computers requires a more thoughtful approach to responsive design with simplified navigation and improved search. A redesign and relaunch of a more mobile-friendly wels.net is a priority.

Reference: Support Services: Financial Services RTD, pp. 42-44
Report No. 8

Financial Services' duty is to design, implement, and maintain internal control systems to safeguard the assets God has provided, while staying in compliance with policies and regulations. This is done while simultaneously looking for ways to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and strengthen internal controls within the department. They also provide these and many other duties for the four ministerial schools and Northwestern Publishing House (NPH). We thank the Financial Services team for their work and continual improvement.

Reference: Support Services: Human Resources RTD, pp. 44-45
Report No. 9

The committee notes with thanks the work of the Human Resources department in

- Staffing ten key lay worker positions during the past year.
- Implementing Paycom as a new vendor for payroll and HR services.
- Working with the Compensation Review Committee to develop Called Worker Compensation guidelines.

Reference: Financial results and ministry financial plan RTD, pp. 47-57
Report No. 10

The committee notes that:

- We have so much to thank the Lord for! We thank him for the gifts from congregations, members, and others. We pray he will continue to bless WELS with gifts used to reach the lost at home and abroad, train and nurture called workers, and provide services that facilitate and support congregation and school ministry.
- A Financial Stabilization Fund was created so that ministry plans might be maintained when financial adjustments are made in the middle of a year should funding sources become less than planned.
- WELS ministerial education schools and Support Services subsidiaries are incorporated into the ministry financial plan (budget) to ensure stewardship of funds entrusted to WELS. The plan is considered and prioritized by the synod in convention.

Reference: WELS Historical Institute RTD, pp. 95-97
Report No. 11

The committee notes with thanks that the WELS Historical Institute has an intense plan over the next 12 months to celebrate the anniversary of forming the Synodical Council, which is building toward the 175th anniversary of the founding of the WELS in 2025.

Reference: WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. RTD, pp. 97-98
Report No. 12

The committee notes with thanks that:

- The primary purpose of WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. (CEF) is to provide loans and grants for mission congregations and for self-supporting congregations that are mission-minded.
- The loan program presently funds about 200 loans totaling \$179.5 million, and the grant program has benefited 7 congregations so far this fiscal year totaling \$1.8 million. What a blessing!

The committee encourages all individual members, congregations, and affiliates of WELS to continue to invest in CEF certificates and savings accounts in order that CEF may continue to enhance our outreach efforts as a church body.

Reference: WELS Foundation, Inc. RTD, pp. 98-100
Report No. 13

The committee notes with thanks that

- The WELS Foundation continues its work aiding WELS congregations and ministries in planned giving and administrative support for gifts.
- In fiscal year 2021, they provided these services to the amount of multiple millions of dollars.

Reference: WELS Investment Funds, Inc. RTD, pp. 101-102
Report No. 14

The committee notes with thanks that:

- WELS Investment Funds (WIF) continues to offer different options for investment portfolios for WELS agencies, so that the agencies that need them can find the option that best fits their situation.

- WIF and their partners in Vanguard have been monitoring volatile financial conditions in connection with the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and have been working to reduce any losses associated with this ongoing event.
- WIF plans on making more videos available so that even more in our circles can use its services.

Reference: WELS Benefit Plans RTD, pp. 102-105
Report No. 15

The committee notes

- Per the 2021 synod convention and subsequent Synodical Council approval, the WELS Pension Plan was frozen as of December 31, 2021, and a defined contribution program was created through the WELS Shepherd Plan as of January 1, 2022. Multiple groups have facilitated and communicated this transition.
- Rates/fees of the WELS VEBA Plan, WELS Pension Plan, and WELS Shepherd Plan have remained the same or been reduced in the last one to three plan years.
- The WELS Pension Plan has achieved a funded status of 112% as of January 1, 2022. This may allow for either increased defined contributions provided to workers, a decreased contribution rate, or both, in the future.

Reference: Northwestern Publishing House RTD, pp. 105-109
Report No. 16

The committee gives thanks to God who has enabled Northwestern Publishing House to provide biblically sound, Christ-centered resources for over 131 years.

We are grateful for the many new NPH publications of this past year that provide spiritual growth and support for Christian homes, schools, and congregations, such as:

- Timely and relevant Bible studies
- *The Christian Worship Hymnal Suite*
- *Christian Worship: Service Builder*
- *Christian Worship: Musicians Resource*
- *Hymns for Life* curriculum

We also pray for God's blessings on these upcoming NPH projects:

- A new Lutheran school and Sunday school curriculum
- The *Prepared to Answer* Series
- The *People's Bible Devotions*

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