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## Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) Report - Minnesota District FALL 2023

### Current ministry and blessings from the Lord:

- **Congregation Mission Offerings** - July 2023 CMO were 3.8 percent (\$69,000) more than July 2022 CMO. On a calendar year-to-date basis through July 2023 (seven months), total CMO is \$12.68 million, which is 1.1 percent (\$132,000) higher than we received during the first seven months of 2022 and 3.6 percent (\$436,000) higher than projected receipts. To God be the glory!
- **100 Missions in 10 Years** – Ministry of Christian Giving is working with WELS Home Missions on this campaign. WELS mailed materials to congregations in August and sent e-appeals and a mailed appeal to individuals in September. Please encourage pastors in your circuits and conferences to review these materials with their congregations. The campaign runs through June 2024. Praise God!
- **WELS Endowments** – For assistance in encouraging gifts/bequests, request a “Different Ways to Make Planned Gifts” presentation or a seminar on congregational planned giving by calling 414-256-3209.
- **100 Missions in 10 Years** – Ministry of Christian Giving is working with WELS Home Missions on this campaign to plant 100 mission in 10 years and enhance 75 current ministries. The campaign runs through June 2024. WELS has received 1,971 gifts/commitments from 1,480 individuals/groups totaling \$1.69 million. Praise God!
- **IRA Charitable Distribution Opportunity** – These provide a unique giving opportunity for anyone 70.5 or older to direct qualified distributions to WELS ministries from their IRA accounts. These count as the donors’ required minimum distributions and are tax-free. Encourage members to see their tax planner or visit [wels.net/christian-giving](https://wels.net/christian-giving) and click *IRA charitable distributions* to learn more.

### Congregation Mission Offerings and Statistics:

- **2023 CMO Deadline** – The deadline for sending in offerings that will be credited to 2023 is Friday, January 5. Please notify your financial officers of this deadline.
- **2024 CMO Subscriptions** – The deadline for submitting subscriptions for 2024 Congregation Mission Offerings is Friday, February 2, 2024 at noon. The synod will send paper instructions for submitting CMO. This process only takes a few minutes. Go to <https://mcg.welsrc.net/cmo/> and click “Begin CMO Subscription”. If your congregation(s) is on a fiscal year budget, you may simply submit the CMO amount that your congregation approved this past June.

Those who have not submitted by the later part of January will be contacted personally. Vacant congregations and any 2023 seminary graduates will be contacted to see if there is any assistance needed in submitting CMO.

- **2023 Congregation Statistics Submissions** – The deadline for submitting congregation statistics from 2023 is also Friday, February 2, 2024 at noon. The statistics form tab will be open in January of 2024 at this web address <https://welscongregationalservices.net/stats/>.

If you have any questions regarding CMO subscriptions and stat submissions or you are having technical issues, please contact Karen Martinez by e-mailing [karen.martinez@wels.net](mailto:karen.martinez@wels.net) or calling 414-256-3209.

## Useful tools provided by the Ministry of Christian Giving:

- **“A God-Lived Life” Challenge** – This stewardship program produced by Congregational Services will give pastors and God’s people an opportunity to put into practice what God’s Word teaches – to help us live a more “God-lived” life. This challenge is focused on digging into God’s Word at church and home. Find the program at [A God-Lived Life](#).
- **Joyful Generosity: Creating a culture of generosity in our congregations** – This is a comprehensive school of stewardship with many beneficial resources which a council or stewardship committee/team can use to develop a stewardship culture and plan. [Previous Stewardship Programs](#)
- **Grace of Giving Newsletter** - MCG works with WELS Communication Services, WELS Foundation, and Sharpe Group to produce a newsletter that shares ministry updates and opportunities for supporting WELS ministry through planned gifts. The April 2022 issue was mailed to all active pastors as well as WELS donors. An online version of the newsletter is found at [wels.net/christian-giving](http://wels.net/christian-giving).
- **An Encouraging Word E-newsletter** – A bi-monthly e-newsletter intended to help you promote joyful giving in your congregation. Click subscribe at [Stewardship Resources](#).
- **Other Stewardship Programs** – Find stewardship programs and resources (i.e. 10 for 10, 364 days of Thanksgiving, Faith Focused Finances) at congregational services or click this link - [Previous Stewardship Programs](#)
- **Congregational Planned Giving Program Manual** – Help your congregation jump-start a program of promoting planned giving opportunities to members. [Congregational Planned Giving Program](#)

## Christian Giving Counselors:

Three Christian giving counselors serve our district. Rev. Michael Hatzung (612-280-4491 – michael.hatzung@wels.net) serves as a deferred counselor (estate planning and deferred gifts to WELS). Rev. Steve Schmeling (612-222-2050 – steve.schmeling@wels.net) and Rev. Phil Spaude (612-720-1323 – philip.spaude@wels.net) serve as current gift counselors (immediate offerings and gifts to WELS mission and ministry). Your counselors provide services to your congregation and the constituents of WELS with no expectations of an honorarium: preaching and presentation for a Stewardship Sunday, Mission Festival, or WELS Mission and Ministry Sunday, Bible studies on various aspects of Christian stewardship, Christian estate planning seminars, and information on tax-wise offerings/gift planning.

***Please contact me if you would like any assistance or guidance in stewardship planning, personal finance courses, wills and estate planning, endowment funds, setting CMO, or budgeting for ministry. If I don't have the advice or answers you are seeking, I will connect you with someone who does.***

In Christ’s Service,  
Rev. Peter Sulzle  
Ministry of Christian Giving District Chairman  
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