

Committee No. 10
CONGREGATION AND DISTRICT MINISTRY

Reference: RTD, pp. 2-7, 9-15
Report No. 1

We give thanks to God for our Conference of Presidents and their leadership, especially in maintaining doctrinal integrity. We encourage the COP to share guidelines for congregation constitutions as soon as these become available. We thank Pastor Degner for his years of service as our District President.

Report No. 2

We encourage the CICR to continue interacting with established and emerging church bodies to carry out discussions aimed at doctrinal unity.

Report No. 3 – Ministry of Christian Giving

We give thanks for the Ministry of Christian Giving and their work with the COP to help us excel in the grace of giving. We thank God for the work our planned giving counselors have done, and especially for the faithful service of Carl Leibner and Steve Staude. We also encourage our congregations to participate in the WELS Mission and Ministry Sunday, October 21, 2018.

Report No. 4 – Commission on Lutheran Schools

We are thankful for the plans to train principals and early childhood directors and pray that the Lord will bless us with many new leaders for our schools. We also encourage congregations to make use of the “Telling the Next Generation” seminar to learn effective outreach practices for our schools.

Report No. 5 – Commission on Worship

We encourage the Commission on Worship to continue to pursue synod wide excellence in worship in partnership with WELS congregations.

Report No. 6 – Commission on Evangelism

We encourage the Commission on Evangelism to continue the schools of outreach. We look forward to the release of the new movie *To the Ends of the Earth* and encourage congregations to use it in their ministry. We are thankful for the many opportunities to enhance our evangelism efforts with materials including “Telling the Next Generation,” whataboutjesus.com, Evangelism Day at Martin Luther College and its online evangelism courses. We offer a special thank you for the years of service of Michael Hintz and Donn Dobberstein and pray God’s blessings upon Douglas Tomhave as he begins his work as chairman of the Commission on Evangelism.

Report No. 7 – Reformation 500 Committee

We thank the Reformation 500 Committee for preparing a variety of materials for our congregations to use in celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, especially the new Luther film.

Report No. 8 – Special Ministries

Special ministries consists of Prison Ministry, Military Services, Care Committee for Called Workers, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ministry, Committee on Mental Health Needs, Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Mission for the Visually Impaired, and the Health and Wellness Committee. We thank Special Ministries for their fine work and encourage them to continue in it. We appreciate the resources they have created to help educate and encourage congregations in compassionate ministry, including new abuse prevention training resources. We acknowledge and thank Julie Luetke for her many years of service to Jesus Cares Ministries in the Minnesota District.

Report No. 9 – Continuing Education for Called Workers Committee

We applaud the efforts and foresight of the CECW as we help our synod's teachers and pastors grow professionally in their respective callings. We support having the 1st Vice President of the Synod chair this committee because that shows the high priority of this committee's work. We thank the CECW and pray that the Lord of the harvest continue to bless their service to our synod's called workers.

Report No. 10 – Hymnal Project

We commend the work of the Hymnal Project and are thankful for their organized approach and regular communication with the Synod at large.

Report No. 11 – Support Committee

We thank the Support Committee for helping meet the needs of retired called workers and their families when they have special financial needs.

Report No. 12 – Communication Services

We commend Communication Services for their coordination of all communication platforms which keep our congregations informed. We encourage them to create materials that will more widely identify WELS in the world by 2025 as a confessional Lutheran church body, firmly founded on the Holy Scriptures and joyfully proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament.

Report No. 13 – Commission on Discipleship

We give thanks to the Commission on Discipleship for both planning activities and providing resources for our congregations and leaders to meet the needs of members of different ages and roles.

Committee No. 10
CONGREGATION AND DISTRICT MINISTRY

Reference: RTD, pp. 12-15
Subject: Use of Congregational Services

- WHEREAS 1) WELS membership has dropped significantly in recent years; and
- WHEREAS 2) the Minnesota District has experienced a 10% loss of membership over ten years; and
- WHEREAS 3) the report has projected continued losses to membership in the range of 73,000 members synod wide over two decades should present trends continue; and
- WHEREAS 4) Congregational Services has recently developed new tools and is developing additional resources to help congregations; therefore, be it

Resolved, that the District Presidium develop and implement a plan to help district congregations reduce backdoor losses and increase front door gains using the resources already produced and currently being produced by Congregational Services.

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Eugene DeVries, Secretary
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