

## District Special Ministries Report to the 2016 Minnesota District Convention

Commission on Special Ministries report can be found on page 41-47 in the RTTD.

**DO YOU KNOW . . . someone . . .**  
*... in the military?      ... losing their vision?*  
*... deaf or hard of hearing?      ... in prison?*  
*... who is a nurse or counselor?*  
*... in a nursing home?      ... with a intellectual*  
*or developmental disability?*  
*... fighting addiction or pornography?*  
 ... then you may find resources and help from WELS Special Ministries!! Pick up a resource directory at our booth, download the directory (<https://goo.gl/POZHPX>), read the Special Ministries pages 41-47 in the RTTD or check out [www.wels.net/special-ministries](http://www.wels.net/special-ministries).



**WELS Special Ministries** currently serves people and congregations in 8 areas of special need: Mental health, visual impairment and blindness, deaf and hard of hearing, military services, care of called workers, health and wellness (hospital, nursing home, ministry to aging, Parish Nursing, etc.), prison and jail ministry, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Our Minnesota District is blessed to have the Mission for the Visually Impaired Workshop and Prison Ministry both operated in Minnesota. The Lutheran Home and Jesus Cares Ministries, also here in Minnesota, work closely together with us in the area of special ministries.

### *Areas of Activity to Highlight*

#### **Lutheran Military Support Group – (LMSG) – [www.lutheranmilitary.org](http://www.lutheranmilitary.org)**

- ❖ This is a new group under WELS Military Services of veterans and active duty military members that will work to support active duty service members, veterans and their families. They would like a liaison in each congregation. To support their ministry, they plan to have a “fill the ammo can” free-will offering twice a year in congregations around Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Check out the website above to learn more.

#### **New Referral Form – [wels.net/refer](http://wels.net/refer)**

- ❖ Special Ministries invites members of the military or members otherwise living overseas, people impacted by incarceration, and families and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to share their contact information so they can receive gospel-oriented materials and encouragement catered to their specific circumstances. More information about this helpful tool can be found at <http://wels.net/new-special-ministries-referral-forms/>. Please help us connect people to these resources.

**Prison Ministry**

- ❖ **Administrator Brad Price** has been serving for a year as the new administrator.
- ❖ **Meditations & Time of Grace Booklets** - Used Meditations (1 year old or less) are still being collected and sent to prisons, along with Time of Grace devotion booklets.
- ❖ **Volunteering in Jails and Prisons Continues in our District** with many, both pastors and lay people, serving. Thank you. Pastor Rick Tuttle serves as chairman of the Jail Ministry Training Team and is willing to assist training people for serving in their local jail or prison. LIMA (Lutheran Institutional Ministry Association), the Prison Ministry Committee and WLIM (Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries) met and continue to work to strengthen and help serve our district.

**Mental Health & Counseling**

- ❖ **Freedomforcaptives.com** is a new website. Freedom for the Captives seeks to empower the Christian community to respond with excellence to the sin of child abuse. To this end, we provide resources to pastors, teachers, and lay Christians that will deepen their understanding of child abuse and improve the Christian response to the physical, emotional and spiritual impact of maltreatment. We also have resources for survivors including recommended readings and guidance in selecting counseling or other services. In addition to the resources on our website, we also offer direct assistance to individual survivors who may have a spiritual question not addressed on our website or who need assistance in finding a counselor.
- ❖ **ConquerorsThroughChrist.net** – is a website setup to help people fighting the addiction to porn. Pornography is a very serious problem in our country and congregations. Sad to say, it is only growing and is effecting our children. This site has helpful videos and information for a person fighting the addiction and their families, along with links to counselors to help.
- ❖ **WELS/ELS Christian Therapist Network** is a website for WELS counselors to sign up and also for members to find WELS counselors. Link – [Christiantherapistnetwork.com](http://Christiantherapistnetwork.com).
- ❖ **“Congregational Guidelines for Dealing with Sexual Offenders”** is complete and available on connect.wels.net under special ministries or at <http://goo.gl/A7Xigm>. It has quite a few helpful forms and guidelines to use for dealing with sex offenders and for guidelines to use for leaders working with youth. Great resource for examples to use.

**IDDM & JCM** – *Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities and Jesus Cares Ministries*

- ❖ **Joy In Jesus Bible Camps** — Our district offers two camps for intellectually and developmentally disabled adults. The camps are 3 days and 2 nights with Bible lessons, devotions, crafts and activities. Dates this year for Camp Omega near Waterville, MN - Sept. 16-18 and Green Lake, Spicer, MN - Oct. 9-11. Information has been distributed to Jesus Cares groups at this time, if you are interested in getting info, please contact Julie Luetke or myself. We strive for a ratio of volunteer counselors to campers of 1:1 to 1:2.

Many of the campers come from our Jesus Cares classes. For more information, please contact: Julie Luetke, 507 S. 11th Street, Olivia, MN 56277, [jluetke@tlha.org](mailto:jluetke@tlha.org).

- ❖ **Camp Board** - We are in the process of forming a camp board to oversee and keep our camps operating into the future. As Julie Luetke will be retiring within two year, the board will oversee direction and coordinating the camps and volunteers. It will also serve to assess legal needs and decisions.
- ❖ **Jesus Cares Bible Classes** continue in many congregations in our district serving those with developmental disabilities in their congregation and community. Julie Luetke has been instrumental in helping train and give continued encouragement to Jesus Cares Bible Study groups in our district. At this time we have between 27 to 30 groups in our district with new classes starting in Sauk Rapids and Coon Rapids, MN.

I especially want to thank all the faithful volunteers that help serve Special Ministries in the Minnesota District. Special Ministries depends completely on the service and support of volunteers. None of these ministries, except Military Service, is financed through the WELS budget, and depend on special gifts. Through Special Ministries, we have opportunities for outreach as many people served and touched by Special Ministries are not members of WELS.

If you have any questions, suggestions or ideas that you have used, please share them with us. Check out our Special Ministry display for more information and to look through materials. Thank you.

In service to our Loving Savior Jesus Christ,

Pastor Darren Green, District Special Ministry Coordinator

**Committee members:** Dallas Miller, Steve Smith, Julie Luetke, Darren Green, coordinator.