

## CALLED TO PREPARE

WELS supports four schools that equip students to serve as pastors, teachers, or staff ministers. **Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.**, is dedicated to preparing men to serve as pastors. In 2009-10, the student body totals 160.

Seminary students learn through a combination of classroom studies and real-world ministry experiences. In addition to a vicar year when third-year students work in a congregation full time, seminary students also volunteer in local congregations, participate in mission trips, and find opportunities to hone their ministry skills in a variety of other ways.

The seminary continues to expand opportunities for continuing education and distance education through on- and off-campus courses and online distance learning. Traveling professors also teach at sister seminaries around the world in places like Germany, Hong Kong, Malawi, and India.

With an enrollment of 712 students during the 2009-10 school year, **Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.**, offers bachelor degrees for early childhood, elementary school, and high school educators; staff ministers; and men training to be pastors. The college also offers a master's degree in education.

In summer 2009, 75 Martin Luther College students traveled across North America to offer ministry assistance to WELS congregations, allowing the students to put their faith and education into action on a volunteer basis. Another 33 students participated in the 10-week Member Ministry Assistance program, which is a paid opportunity for students to help congregations.

**Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.**, and **Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.**, prepare high school students to attend Martin Luther College. The curriculum emphasizes subjects such as foreign languages, theology, and music. Teens are offered "Taste of Ministry" opportunities, which include shadowing called workers to learn more about their work. Students also are given firsthand gospel ministry experiences on campus and during mission trips.

## CALLED TO PROCLAIM

**WELS Home Missions** is called to proclaim God's Word to those living in the United States and English-speaking North America. Home Missions currently supports four mission counselors, an Asian ministry coordinator, and a Spanish language coordinator.

In 2009, mission dollars helped subsidize

- 8 campus ministries, plus various small campus ministries with minimal financial assistance;
- 16 multicultural ministries, including Antigua and St. Lucia as well as Spanish language, Hmong, Vietnamese, Laotian, and multi-ethnic efforts in the U.S. and Canada;
- 8 establishment phase efforts;
- 21 development phase efforts; and
- 9 enhancement efforts.

**WELS World Missions** is called to proclaim God's Word around the world. World Missions

- sponsors 35 missionaries and 13 teachers;
- saw 1,941 souls added to the membership of national churches in the 23 countries where it assists, bringing total membership of our World Missions fellowship to 80,917 souls;
- fields 128 national pastors, 38 student pastors, 19 vicars, and 183 evangelists who serve the spiritual needs of 490 congregations and 146 preaching stations;
- is reaching 30,000 souls with the gospel through alternate strategies such as literature programs, Bible story workshops, and English as a second language programs;
- includes Multi-Language Publications, which coordinates the publishing of Christian literature, evangelism and Bible study materials, and theological courses for all fields; and
- helped distribute more than \$350,000 of humanitarian aid in 10 mission fields either as disaster relief or as a bridge to gospel outreach.

## CALLED TO SERVE

### **Ministry of Christian Giving**

- Christian giving counselors: In fiscal year 2008-09, giving counselors helped facilitate \$6.6 million in gifts received and \$33.1 million in gifts expected for WELS.
- Mailed appeals: WELS mailings coordinated through the Ministry of Christian Giving helped facilitate \$1.7 million in immediate support for WELS.
- Year of Jubilee: This debt elimination effort concluded with a total of 63 percent of congregations participating and \$4.2 million in offerings received.

### **Technology**

- Web hosting: More than 400 congregations and schools use this template-driven tool, which makes it easy to get a professional-looking Web site up quickly for a low monthly cost of \$21.
- Connect: The new synodwide Intranet Web site allows online information collection and sharing, as well as an easy way to update called worker data.

### **Communication Services**

“Together”: This bi-weekly e-newsletter features a message from President Mark Schroeder plus articles on key synodical developments. More than 10,000 WELS members receive “Together” by e-mail.

### **Congregation and Ministry Support**

The Congregation and Ministry Support Group, formerly Parish Services, experienced changes in its leadership, organization, and personnel this year. Yet the following areas continue to deliver excellent resources and support.

### ***Worship***

- *Christian Worship: Supplement*: A majority of WELS churches use the Supplement, which was released in July 2008.
- Schools of Worship Enrichment: Since 2002, the Schools of Worship Enrichment have served 226 churches with a soul membership of 106,149—more than one-fourth of WELS.

### ***Adult Discipleship***

- “Heart in Focus”: Each session of this popular personal finance course is built around an aspect of our identity and relationship with God in Christ.
- Women’s Ministry Committee: This committee assists congregations in nurturing, encouraging, and equipping women to use their God-given gifts to glorify God. The second National WELS Women’s Leadership Conference will be held July 16-18, 2010, at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.

### ***Youth Discipleship***

International Youth Rally: The 2009 youth rally brought together more than 1,000 WELS teens from across the United States and seven foreign countries. Held July 8-11 at Iowa State University, the rally included time for worship, education, fellowship, recreation, and service projects.

### ***Special Ministries***

- Special Ministries currently focuses on eight areas: Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Mission for the Visually Impaired; Military Services; Special Education Services; Mental Health Needs; Care for Called Workers; and Prison Ministry.
- Special Needs Support Network: This group provides practical and spiritual support for families with developmentally disabled children. For help, contact [specialneeds@wels.net](mailto:specialneeds@wels.net) or call 1-866-550-9357.

### ***Lutheran Schools***

- WELS School Accreditation: Ten schools were accredited in 2009, bringing the number of accredited schools to 60. An additional 32 schools are working toward accreditation.

### ***Evangelism***

- Reaching Out in a Digital World: This evangelism seminar debuted in 2009 to help congregations and members use technology as an outreach tool.
- WhatAboutJesus.com: More than a thousand visitors a day access articles that point to Jesus as the world’s Savior and answer questions about the Christian faith. More than 11,300 subscribers receive the daily e-devotion, and hundreds of people listen to the devotions via podcast.

## Our financial picture

By all indicators, 2009 was a difficult year for both domestic and global economies. The synod budget was not immune. Market depreciation resulted in an investment loss of \$7 million for the 2008-09 fiscal year. The economic downturn also meant a key individual donor was unable to fulfill a \$3 million gift commitment to the synod.

As a result, expenses of \$80.9 million for the 2008-09 fiscal year outpaced support of \$74.4 million by \$6.5 million. The difference was offset through available reserves from the operating surplus in fiscal year 2007-08 and through other resources on hand within individual areas of ministry.

A bright spot in the support picture was Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO), those gifts given by congregations for the collective work of the synod. Despite the ongoing recession in the United States, CMO for calendar year 2009 remained remarkably stable. As of the end of November 2009, Congregation Mission Offerings for the year were almost 100 percent of the level committed by congregations back in January—despite historically high unemployment rates. For that, we thank congregations all across our church body.

Those gifts from congregations, along with individual gifts and memorials, are the two most significant sources of support for all of the ministries described in this brochure. Without these gifts, it's fair to say little of our ministry could continue.

