

WELS Ministry of Christian Giving (MCG) Director's Report
For WELS Spring Pastoral Conferences
April, 2006
Dave Liggett

1, Congregational Mission Offerings (CMO)

First quarter 2006: \$ 4,067,313
2005: \$ 3,631,308

Through March, CMO is up 12%. About 8% of the increase is due to a greater than normal amount of 2005 CMO gifts that were received after the mid-January cutoff. The remaining 4% is higher than the 2.6% increase reported by congregation subscriptions. I pray the Lord will continue to lead congregations to exceed their subscriptions.

One hundred fifty congregations did not submit subscriptions for 2006. This is an improvement from last year when it was 192 congregations. Ninety congregations did not submit their statistical report. The district MCG chairmen will spend a portion of their fall meeting addressing these reporting issues and the planning challenges created by these issues.

2. Individual Mission Offerings (IMO: operating and special funds gifts, unsolicited gifts, and gifts gathered by Christian giving counselors)

First Quarter Current Gifts 2005: \$ 2,197,721
2006: \$ 3,673,072

Praise the Lord for the many generous individuals the Lord has placed in our midst.

3. Walking Together Thank Offering

All of us reading this report need to make sure we take personal ownership of the Walking Together emphasis in the area we live and serve. It is not good enough to say it is someone else's responsibility. It belongs to each one of us.

4. First Quarter Deferred Expectancies:

2006 Deferred Irrevocable Gifts: \$ 1,626,917	Revocable Gifts: \$ 6,821,777
2005 Deferred Irrevocable Gifts: \$ 2,768,897	Revocable Gifts: \$ 3,291,943

5. WELS Endowment Fund Emphasis

- Rollout at June district conventions
- All Christian giving counselors (CGCs) will be involved
- Late summer will feature training for congregation visitors
- Annually in October, the endowments will be promoted through WELS media

The WELS endowment emphasis would benefit WELS and its congregations in the following ways:

- More congregations will establish their own endowment funds that should strengthen their local ministries. WELS MCG has all the tools they need to organize this type of effort.
- More members of the WELS will develop an estate plan that will benefit all areas of WELS work (synodical, local and for affiliates).
- WELS ministerial education schools/students and WELS Home Missions and World Missions will begin to enjoy additional funds in fiscal year 07-08.

6. Mission Partners

Gifts & Pledges: First quarter 2005: \$ 582,812
 First quarter 2006: \$ 418,026

We hope more congregations will consider this collaborative effort with a specific WELS site. We hope more individuals would look upon this as a place to direct their over and above offerings. This is a great way for both those being supported by WELS offerings and those giving the support to be actively engaged with one another.

7. Real Treasure Visits for every member

WELS' Real Treasure Visits Bible study has been shared by President Gurgel with the Conference of Presidents, and by the COP with circuit pastors. Most circuit pastors have also completed their pastoral visitations with fellow pastors. These next months will feature the visits being undertaken in each congregation. This is a special opportunity for one-on-one Bible study.

The Lord has placed in our laps (thanks to a convention resolution) a well organized, well prepared Bible study that address the challenges our people face with the "Baal of this age," namely materialism. The prayer is that every pastor and his congregation will see this project through to the end. The one-on-one study of God's word in our midst will bear a myriad of blessings to our congregations and synod. May all of us pray this will be completed in the coming months.

8. *WELS Connection*

We are striving to present only projects that are funded by the WELS operating fund. We hope to share with our fellow believers information about how their offerings to WELS are spent. I appreciate the words of encouragement and also criticism that come our way for *WELS Connection*. We will be working closely with *Forward in Christ* staff to make sure there is not confusing duplication of stories. MCG is doing its best to collaborate with all those funded by CMO as far as their stories are concerned. We are here to serve you, if you see something on *WELS Connection* that concerns you, please contact me at Dave.Liggett@sab.wels.net.

9. Ministerial Education Schools Development Program

This is a work in progress. The willingness to collaborate is evident. CGCs Kurt Lueneburg (Martin Luther College), Dave Dolan (Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Luther Preparatory School) and John Graf (Michigan Lutheran Seminary) are the liaison counselors with specific schools.

10. Collaborative agreements with our department.

MCG is getting serious about collaborative development work with para-synodical agencies like Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services, Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School, and Lutheran Institutional Ministries Association.

11. MCG Staff

Field Staff

The deferred gift counselor call to serve the Michigan and North Atlantic Districts has been returned.

The calling of a current counselor for Michigan has been discontinued, CGC John Graf returns to serving Michigan and North Atlantic Districts along with being the MLS liaison. We pray the Lord will abundantly bless his efforts.

We welcome to our staff three additional counselors: Pastor Dave Dolan serving the Southeastern Wisconsin District, WLS and LPS as a current counselor; Mr. Harold Mears serving the Arizona/California and Pacific Northwest Districts as a deferred counselor and Mr. Neil Scriver serving the Southeastern Wisconsin District as a deferred counselor. All three of these men spent the last full week of March in training. We look forward to their ministries being a tremendous blessing to WELS, our congregations, and our para-synodical organizations.

Office Staff

- We are up to full speed again, thanks to Jan Lampe (specialty in finance) returning to full time work. We can all thank the Lord for giving Jan renewed health and stamina.
- We hope to add an intern to assist with WELS mission advancement efforts.
- We may see other changes in our office staff as a result of the Raiser's Edge implementation.

The Lord has brought into our midst dedicated Christian men and women who serve our department both in the SAB and on the road. May all of us remember all of them in our prayers.