

KNOWING WHY WE ARE HERE

Are you a member of the “hereafter” club? As age increases, we can find that we go into a room looking for something and forget what it was. “What am I *here after*?” becomes the question.

Some churches seem to have joined the *hereafter* club. They seem to have forgotten what they are supposed to be after—what their mission really is. The head of the church outlined that mission very clearly: “Go and make disciples of all nations,” he commanded, “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19,20). Using the gospel in Word and sacraments, we are to win the lost for Christ and nurture believers for lives of Christian service.

Today there seems to be more confusion than ever about what the mission of the church really is. Nurturing the saved and reaching the lost with God’s gospel message takes a backseat to other concerns. Clearing up social injustice, some think, is more important than proclaiming how God’s holy justice has been satisfied by his love in Christ Jesus. Dispensing food and water, some think, is more important than passing on slices from the loaf called Christ. Bringing the light of education to backward peoples, some think, is more important than bringing the light of salvation in Christ. These are all important concerns, but they are not the central mission of the church.

In a day when scientists split atoms and launch satellites, we need to remember that the soft voice of the gospel is still God’s power to split the old Adam and launch the new man. In an age when people bore deeply into the earth for precious oil and soar miles into space for science, we need to remember that every human needs to go to Calvary more than to the moon, that forgiveness of sins bought with Christ’s blood is more precious than oil’s black gold. To put it simply, we need to remember what is the central and most important mission Jesus gave to his church.

So I look for a church that knows what it is *here*

after and pursues it vigorously. I want a church that will nourish me with the life-giving Word and that will help me reach out with it to win the lost for their only Savior.

Taken from the devotional series, *For Living Saints*, published by Northwestern Publishing House

SUPPORT REPORT

Hello all,

It was a slower month for the support position. I would like to give a big thanks to everyone who showed up to the work day. We had a good turn out, and that always helps on getting things done. The day was dedicated to pruning and trimming the many bushes and trees around the property, with a few smaller projects completed.

One project that we planned on completing, but ended up changing at the last minute was the large cross refinishing. You might remember from last month we planned on removing, sanding and then repainting the cross, but instead we decided to consider a metal alternative that can be powder coated and would last much longer. We are currently in the information gathering stage, but keep an ear out for this exciting project.

As always we need people for lawn care. If you feel like this is something you would like to help out with please don’t hesitate to get a hold of me. Thanks to everyone who volunteers.

God Bless
Tim A

IN THIS ISSUE...

PASTOR’S MESSAGE.....1

SUPPORT REPORT..... 1

READING BETWEEN THE WINES..... 2

CARING AND SHARING..... 2

THANK YOU, THANK YOU 2

L W M S NOTES..... 2

L W M S NEWS 2

TOGETHER 3

READING BETWEEN THE WINES

The new season for Reading Between the Wines will begin with the timely historical accounting of a family fleeing from Ukraine during WWII. ***The Last Green Valley*** by Mark Sullivan is a gripping, true story mirroring in many ways what we are hearing on the news right now. We invite all Hope members and guests to join us as we kick off this new season on Monday, September 19th from 10:00 AM – Noon in Fellowship Hall.

CARING AND SHARING

Save your June "Forward In Christ" forever. I eagerly await our copy of the Synod's monthly *magazine*. "Confessions of Faith" is always the first article I read. The one in the June issue was especially touching to share, as they all are each month. Pages 5, 6, 10, 11, and 12 are good study guides for witnessing or copy to give away.

Betty N

THANK YOU, THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone who helped with Betty’s Birthday Ice Cream Social.

Jan D



Thanks for your prayers as I continue the treatments for hopefully curing the cancer I have. I know that if God wills, I will be back to worship with you my brothers and sisters in Christ.

Donald T



I am overwhelmed with thanks to God that he has blessed me with a Christian family overflowing with caring love for one of its own. You have helped me have the strength, with your prayers and concerns, your calls, cards and gifts. This all leaves me lacking the words to show my appreciation, As we all continue to grow together in His word we are continually blessed. Again Thanks.

Betty N

L W M S NOTES

In May the Women of Hope had ballots to vote for the 2022-2023 National Officers. They are as follows: Vice President: Pat Miragliuolo, Amherst, New Hampshire - Freedom Circuit; Secretary: Mary Jo Barnes, Torrance, CA -Golden West Circuit; Communications Coordinator: Wendy Wright, Joplin, Missouri - Mid America Circuit; Pastor Advisor: Pastor Meier, Neenah, Wisconsin - Paperland Circuit.

Each year the individual LWMS circuits collect offerings for one Home and one World Mission project to support through the international office. Over the course of 2021-2022 LWMS has raised \$55,115. for each Mission (Native American Missions - World Missions) and WELS Campus Ministry Support (Home Missions) LWMS also raised \$50,405.03 for Kids c.a.r.e..

L W M S NEWS

IMPACTFUL RELATIONSHIPS

Depending on how you count, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs make up about 10-20% of the population of the Greater Toronto area. That's almost two million people! That percentage is even higher in Mississauga, which has a particularly high population of Muslims. As you can imagine, they are a very difficult population to reach with the good news of Jesus. They don't respond to typical evangelism programs, law/gospel presentations, etc. They are conditioned to be polite but skeptical of Christians, expecting them to "just try to convert them."

That is because, much like many Christians in the West, our affluent and entertainment-saturated culture has caused many austere believers in Islam or Hinduism to soften their beliefs into simply "cultural" faith. That means they don't believe much of what their religions teach, but they also don't want to convert to Christianity because to them Christianity is a culture, not a religion. Becoming a Christian doesn't mean believing in Jesus as much as it means to stop being Saudi, Iranian, Pakistani, Indian, etc., and become Western/Canadian. Therefore, we cannot bring them to Jesus with simple presentations of the gospel. They see that as close to racism against their culture. Our only chance is long-term relationship investment.

That's what is happening with Priyanka. Her name is changed, and she isn't pictured to hide her identity. She is an immigrant from Bangladesh whose husband cheated on her, left her, but because of their culture and religious background, still "owns" her in a sense. Her fear of him is why her identity is hidden. And yet, despite all that, her culture makes it very hard for her to accept that Christianity may have something to offer her.

My wife has been regularly meeting her to take her to the doctor, have her over to make Biryani (a Bangladeshi staple) together, take her grocery shopping, or just keep her company. She is naturally resistant to Christianity, but after almost two years of meeting with her, she agreed to receive a Bible in Bangla, her native tongue, and has come to our house once for a Bible study. She is not a Christian yet, but this is the kind of long-term work that allows people from these cultures and religions to even listen to the gospel.

But this is not limited to people of Middle Eastern or South Asian background. This is becoming more and

more true of the non-immigrant population as well. Those who grew up in a Christian culture are also increasingly seeing the church as a social/culture club where people try to get you to behave differently. This has moved our congregation to a model of relationally expensive outreach. Investing in people over time, not to convert them, but just because Jesus loves them. That means expecting that it will take years in some cases for people to know Jesus. But in the end, those people will know a Jesus who didn't just give them a set of beliefs or culture, but brought them into his life through his body, the Church.

You can do this too. Many white people are intimidated to engage immigrant populations (I was too!), but they really ought not to be. Invite them over for dinner. Ask them about their culture or homeland. Be the type of person they want to call first when something goes wrong in their life, because inevitably something will, and you will have an answer (Jesus!) that is far better than any other.

Pray for this woman and us as we try to reach the many people groups of our city.

Written by Rev. Caleb Schultz, home missionary at, Cross of Life, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

YOUR GIFTS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN UKRAINE

"As Russia continues to wage war against Ukraine, the effort to support WELS' brothers and sisters in Ukraine has been blessed by our Lord Jesus. WELS has received more than \$1.4 million from individuals and groups to support the Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC), WELS' sister church body in the Ukraine, and its efforts to help members and others affected by the conflict."

We thank God for the generous donors and grants so that we can reach out in love to those in need.

FROM THE PULPIT

It's not only foolish to ignore God's word, it is also sinful. PDW 7-26-20

TOGETHER

News from the WELS



July 19, 2022

HUMANITARIAN AID GRANTS ANNOUNCED

Rev. Dan Sims, administrator for WELS Christian Aid and Relief, announced its annual grants for

humanitarian aid. In contrast to disaster relief, which is given in response to various kinds of disasters when they occur, WELS Christian Aid and Relief also invites Home and World Missions to submit grant requests for various types of humanitarian aid projects as one way to show Christian love and compassion in a variety of ways. Here is his report:

At their May 17, 2022, meeting, members of WELS Christian Aid and Relief approved humanitarian aid grants totaling \$628,480 for FY 22-23. This is the highest amount ever approved. These grants support projects developed by WELS home and world missionaries to reflect Christ's love to the people of their communities. These acts of mercy and compassion regularly lead to opportunities to share the gospel.

Some examples of the compassion ministry being carried out in home and world mission settings include support for legal immigrants; Bibles for foster children and support for their families; books, backpacks, and other school supplies for underprivileged students; horseback riding for disadvantaged and differently abled children; food and personal items for struggling individuals and families; medical clinics; access to clean drinking water; mosquito netting; support for persecuted Christians; education for refugee children; vocational, technological, and agricultural training; scholarships for poor students; smokeless stoves for safer heating and cooking; and warm clothing for widows and orphans.

These Home Missions congregations received grants:

- African Chapel of Improvement, Las Vegas, Nev.
- Hope, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- Christ the Rock, Farmington, N.M.
- Christ, Denver, Colo.
- Carbon Valley, Firestone, Colo.
- Risen Savior, Lakewood Ranch, Fla.
- Amazing Grace, Amarillo, Texas
- Hope, Houston, Texas
- Christ the Rock, Hutto, Texas

- Abiding Savior, Killeen, Texas
- Living Faith, Midlothian Texas
- Our Savior, West San Antonio, Texas

These World Missions fields received grants this year:

- Africa—Malawi, Zambia, Nigeria, and the Central African Medical Mission
- Asia—India, Indonesia, and Thailand
- Europe—Albania and Bulgaria

AID DISTRIBUTION IN UKRAINE

As Russia continues to wage war against Ukraine, the effort to support WELS' brothers and sisters in Ukraine has been blessed by our Lord Jesus. WELS has received more than \$1.4 million from individuals and groups to support the Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC), WELS' sister church body in the Ukraine, and its efforts to help members and others affected by the conflict.

WELS has sent more than \$300,000 in aid to Ukraine. Approximately \$200,000 has been sent to the ULC (as it has requested it) for clothing, food, medicine, and other supplies. About \$100,000 has been sent to Direct Relief, an organization equipped to provide emergency medical supplies to those remaining in Ukraine or who are refugees in Poland. As the conflict continues, and as needs arise, additional funding will be sent. WELS also is anticipating significant rebuilding costs when, Lord willing, the war ends.

Rev. Roger Neumann serves the Board for World Missions as the WELS liaison to Ukraine. He maintains regular contact with ULC leaders and provides updates about how the aid is being used and how doors are opening to share the gospel, even in trying circumstances. These are just a few examples of the many ways people are hearing about the love of Jesus through your gifts.

- ULC Pastor Taras Kokovsky and his wife were asked to visit Latvia by Latvian Lutheran pastors to reach out to Ukrainian refugees who settled there. The goal of the trip is to determine how to best serve them and their spiritual needs, invite them to worship, and tell them about the ULC, so when they return they might find a church to attend.
- A member of Resurrection Lutheran in Kiev was able to get an additional package of food for a 72-year-old neighbor who is struggling to buy food.

- Liudmyla, a retired member of the ULC church in Kyiv, was having a difficult time getting her medications, and the church was able to supply them for her.
- Food and medical supplies are regularly being distributed to people in need in the communities around ULC congregations.
- After an outpatient hospital in the small town of Berezhneuvate was destroyed, a ULC church member who is a dentist there was provided with funds to purchase tools and medicine so that she can help those who need it.
- Bishop Horpynchuk, the head of the ULC, delivered soap, shampoo, toothpaste, detergents, etc., to members and visitors in Kyiv.
- Iryna from Bachmut and Valentyna from Brianka heard about the ULC church and attended worship. They told their stories of how they left home with only a few things and found shelter in Kyiv. Horpynchuk and his congregation shared with them food and drink, detergents and soap, and Christian love.

We thank our heavenly Father for the generous gifts that we've received, for Rev. Neumann's faithful contacts, and for WELS World Missions' partnership with the ULC.

To learn more or to support the relief efforts in Ukraine, visit wels.net/ukraine.

LOVED BY OUR FATHER

By Pastor Mike Novotny
July 22, 2022

Years ago Ernest Hemingway wrote a story about a Spanish father and his son Paco who had a falling out, causing the boy to run away from his home to Madrid. Eventually, the father went to look for his son, wanting to reconcile and be with him again. So he took out an ad in a local newspaper. It read, "Paco, meet me at Hotel Montaña at noon Tuesday. All is forgiven. Papa." When that Tuesday arrived, Paco's father went to the hotel to see if his son still wanted his love. There gathered at the hotel were eight hundred young men, all named Paco! What those Pacos all wanted, Jesus is giving away. He came as the perfect Son who was willing to die in our place so that everyone who trusts in him would have a forgiving and gracious Father. The words spoken at Jesus' baptism are true for us too: "And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I

love; with him I am well pleased'" (Matthew 3:17). Our Father, due to the death of his Son, calls us his sons and daughters. He is no longer angry or indifferent but, rather, "well pleased." His face is shining upon us and smiling with grace toward us.

Life gives us few guarantees. We don't know if our neighbors will be nice, our families will be functional, or our bodies will avoid breaking down. But we can rely on this single glorious truth—All is forgiven. We are eternally loved by our Father in heaven.

WHERE IS GOD?

When I fall, He lifts me up!
When I fail, He forgives!
When I am weak, He is strong!
When I am lost, He is the way!
When I am afraid, He is my courage!
When I stumble, He steadies me!
When I am hurt, He heals me!
When I am broken, He mends me!
When I am blind, He leads me!
When I am hungry, He feeds me!
When I face trials, He is with me!
When I face persecution, He shields me!
When I face problems, He comforts me!
When I face loss, He provides for me!
When I face Death, He carries me Home!

He is everything for everybody everywhere, every time, and every way.

He is God, He is faithful. I am His, and He is mine!
My Father in heaven can whip the father of this world.

So, if you're wondering why I feel so secure, understand this...

He said it and that settles it.

God is in control, I am on His side,
and that means all is well with my soul.

Everyday is a blessing for GOD Is!

FROM THE PULPIT

God uses his word to heal, lift up, and comfort.
PDW 8-23-20