



The Special Ministries Commission continues to work to meet the ministry needs of our congregations in the following eight areas: 1) Deaf and Hard of Hearing; 2) Prison/Institutional Ministries; 3) Mental Health Needs; 4) Blind and Visually Impaired; 5) Ministry to Military members and their families; 6) Special education; 7) Health and Wellness and Ministry to the Aging; 8) Care Committee for Called Workers

Director

Pastor Carl Ziemer will be retiring as WELS Director of Special Ministries in the fall of 2012. We thank him for his years of dedicated service. A call will be extended to replace him.

Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Several of our churches have installed **hearing loop** systems to aid people with hearing loss. The hearing loop enables the connection between a church's PA system and hearing aids by means of a wireless signal. Talk to me if you are interested in more information. One of our goals is to set up a database of WELS members who are skilled in sign-language abilities. If you have anyone in your congregation who has such a skill, let me know so we can put their names in our database.

Prison Ministry

Prison Ministry continues to be one of the greatly blessed outreach ministries of the WELS. The committee continues to add to the list of **Bible study booklets**, with the 18th booklet called, "God is my Anger Manager" and have added a higher level of materials with a study of John, "Believe and Live," and the book of Romans. **Jail Ministry Training Team (JMTT)** continues to provide workshops to prepare members of WELS congregations to get the Gospel to local jails.

Committee on Mental Health Needs

The Committee on Mental Health Needs is providing a three course program for pastors and lay-people to enhance their skills for serving in institutional settings (healthcare facilities, jails and prisons, military bases). The three courses are (1) Communicating Forgiveness, (2) A Scriptural Approach to Addiction Counseling (3) Chaplaincy and Ethical Issues. Contact Roger Zehms if you are interested: rzehms@wels.net

Mission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

The Mission for the Blind and Visually Impaired continues to provide materials for the blind and visually impaired. They serve about 400 people with braille, large print, and cassettes.

Military Services Committee

WELS now provides at no cost to all of our deployed military personnel, a packet of devotional materials including **mp3 players** that have 112 devotions on them (and room to download music and future devotions). Congregations can purchase these from NPH to give to their own members as they deploy.

Special Education Services

Special Education Services continues to provide **simplified Bible materials**, the newest being “Romans: Chapters 1-8: Jesus, My Savior from Sin,” and the final set of “Dear Christian Friend,” the expanded Bible history course – which will eventually parallel the Christ Light curriculum. There is a **WELS Support Network for families** of people with developmental disabilities.

Care Committee for Called Workers

The **CCCW** has the focus of helping called workers and their families by improving communication, enhancing their quality of living and encouraging them as they service. They offer an instructional DVD to help congregations set up a CCCW committee in their own congregations. The DVD is called “Care to Care.” CCCW is also preparing materials to help called workers **prepare for retirement**. Some of these materials should be available soon.

Health and Wellness Committee

The Association of WELS Nurses has organized under the leadership of Rebekah Carey, a member of WELS Nurses Taskforce and Director of Nursing at WLC. The mission of the WELS Nurses Association (WELSNA) is to educate and support nurses to serve others with Christ-centered care. They publish a newsletter to inform, educate and motivate nurses concerning spiritual issues encountered in nursing and opportunities for service. Check out the website: www.welsnurses.net. All WELS members who are nurses are encouraged to join. If you have questions contact them at welsnurses@wels.net.

Ways you can help....

- Alert nurses in your congregations to the new WELS Nurses Association. Direct them to their Web site: www.welsnurses.net. They invite all WELS nurses to register with them online so that they might alert them to medical mission, service and educational opportunities.
- Refer members serving in the U.S. Military by using the online referral form found at www.wels.net/special-ministries/online-referrals. Without your cooperation, neither our military contact pastors nor our chaplain in Europe nor our Special Ministries Office can provide spiritual services.
- Refer your members serving time in jail or prison to WELS Prison Ministry by using the convenient online referral form: www.wels.net/special-ministries/online-referrals
- Consider a focus on Special Ministries at a Mission festival and/or to hold a Special Ministries Sunday. Every unit of Special ministries is able to provide you with someone either to present or to preach. For example, the Jail Ministry Team, the Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, etc. would be eager to come to speak about their area of ministry and to offer their assistance to congregations in carrying out local ministry.
- Consider enrolling in the WELS Chaplain Certification Program. Interested pastors should contact Pastor Roger Zehms or visit the MLC website to learn more about the WELS Chaplain Certification Program: rzehms@wels.net
- Invite your members to receive free copies of “His Hands,” the Special Ministries quarterly newsletter. They may subscribe to hard copy delivery contacting the SM Office at specialministries@wels.net or view online copies on the public side of the Special Ministries page on Connect. You can also download them for printing and distribution in your own congregation.

- Go to the Special Ministries sight on the WELS Connect website for many more materials that we provide for people with special needs.

Serving Him with you,
Pastor Jonathan Kehren, AZ-CA District Special Ministries Coordinator