



*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) Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities; 7) Health and Wellness and Ministry to the Aging; 8) Care Committee for Called Workers*

#### **Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

- Consider a hearing loop for your facility. Learn more at [www.hearingloop.org](http://www.hearingloop.org).
- A course in American Sign Language is being developed for Martin Luther College.
- Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) offers interpreters via iPad technology for far less.

#### **Prison Ministry**

- Dave Nack, who served as full-time administrator for 14 years, had his “life-on-earth sentence” commuted by the Heavenly Judge on March 28, 2014. Dave’s passion for souls and gift of encouragement were great blessings and will be sorely missed.
- “Enough Is Enough” is the newest Bible correspondence course, addressing the issue of contentment. There are now 20 Level 1 courses (15 are in Spanish also) and 11 Level 2 courses.
- “Congregational Guidelines for Dealing with Sexual Offenders” is available at [www.connect.wels.net](http://www.connect.wels.net).

#### **Committee on Mental Health Needs**

- Conquerors Through Christ aims to help those who are struggling with pornography. Confidential Christian counsel is available at [www.ConquerorsThroughChrist.net](http://www.ConquerorsThroughChrist.net).
- WELS and ELS therapists are now easier to locate for consultation or referral. Just go to [www.ChristianTherapistNetwork.com](http://www.ChristianTherapistNetwork.com). Therapists in fellowship with WELS or ELS are encouraged to apply for membership through the website.
- The Social Media Task Force is designing a website to educate, provide self-help, and offer resources for helping others. Check it out at [www.ChristiansInTheDigitalAge.com](http://www.ChristiansInTheDigitalAge.com).
- Brochures developed by this committee can assist members in finding a therapist, interviewing a therapist, and understanding therapist terminology and approaches.

#### **Mission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

- Christian Worship Supplement *is now available in Braille*.
- All materials – in Braille, large print, or cassette tape – are free, including postage.

#### **Military Services Committee**

- Pastor Paul Horn of Hiram, GA is the new chairman of this committee that focuses on spiritual support to men and women in our armed forces and their families.
- It is “mission-critical” to have accurate name and address information. Submit names of active duty, Guard, and Reserve members through the Online Referral form at [www.wels.net/special-ministries](http://www.wels.net/special-ministries).

### **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

- Pastor Joel Gaertner of Fond du Lac, WI now chairs this committee that addresses spiritual needs of those with special needs.
- "Give Me a Break" webinars offer advice and Biblical encouragement for families and caregivers of people who are intellectually or developmentally disabled. Watch the series at [www.wels.net/special-ministries](http://www.wels.net/special-ministries).

### **Care Committee for Called Workers**

- *Care to Care* DVD/CD set provides an overview of a Care Committee, its purpose, and portrayals of entrance, annual, and exit interviews with called workers. Order from Special Ministries office or download from [connect.wels.net](http://connect.wels.net).

### **Health and Wellness Committee**

- A new chairman is being sought to guide this committee that highlights health care issues and ministry to the aging.
- WELS Nurses Association offers support, education, resources, and opportunities to volunteer. See [www.welsnurses.net](http://www.welsnurses.net).

### **Chaplain Certification**

- The Chaplain Certification Program offers training for called or lay workers who are working with institutions and agencies outside the congregation.
- The following foundational courses are available through Martin Luther College:
  - Communicating Forgiveness\*
  - A Scriptural Approach to Addiction Counseling\*
  - Chaplaincy Issues and Fieldwork
  - Chaplaincy Seminar

*\*Offered in the 2014-2015 academic year*

### **Ways You Can Be Involved...**

- o Go to the Special Ministries page on the WELS Connect website for more materials and information about Special Ministries.
- o Alert nurses in your congregations to the new WELS Nurses Association. Direct them to their Web site: [www.welsnurses.net](http://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.
- o Refer members serving in the U.S. Military by using the online referral form found at [www.wels.net/special-ministries/online-referrals](http://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.
- o 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](http://www.wels.net/special-ministries/online-referrals)
- o 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.
- o 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](mailto:rzehms@wels.net)
- o Consider establishing a "Congregational Special Ministries Committee" in your congregation to meet the needs of people with special needs and circumstances. You can find "Congregational Special Ministries Committee Guidelines" on the Special Ministries website.

- 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](mailto: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. You can also subscribe at [www.wels.net/wels-subscriptions](http://www.wels.net/wels-subscriptions), or click on [CHANGE EMAIL SETTINGS] at the bottom of any email from WELS
- Have a good idea? Share it with Director Jim Behringer by calling (414) 256-3240 or email [jim.behringer@wels.net](mailto:jim.behringer@wels.net)
- Go to the Special Ministries site on the WELS Connect website for many more materials that we provide for people with special needs. To order materials, contact Jacki Schleicher by calling (414) 256-3241 or email [jacki.schleicher@wels.net](mailto:jacki.schleicher@wels.net)

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