

EMBRACE THE  
**CROSS** ANTICIPATE THE  
**CROWN**



Rev. Kevin Klug  
Ministry of Christian Giving District Chairman



## **WELS Ministry of Christian Giving mission**

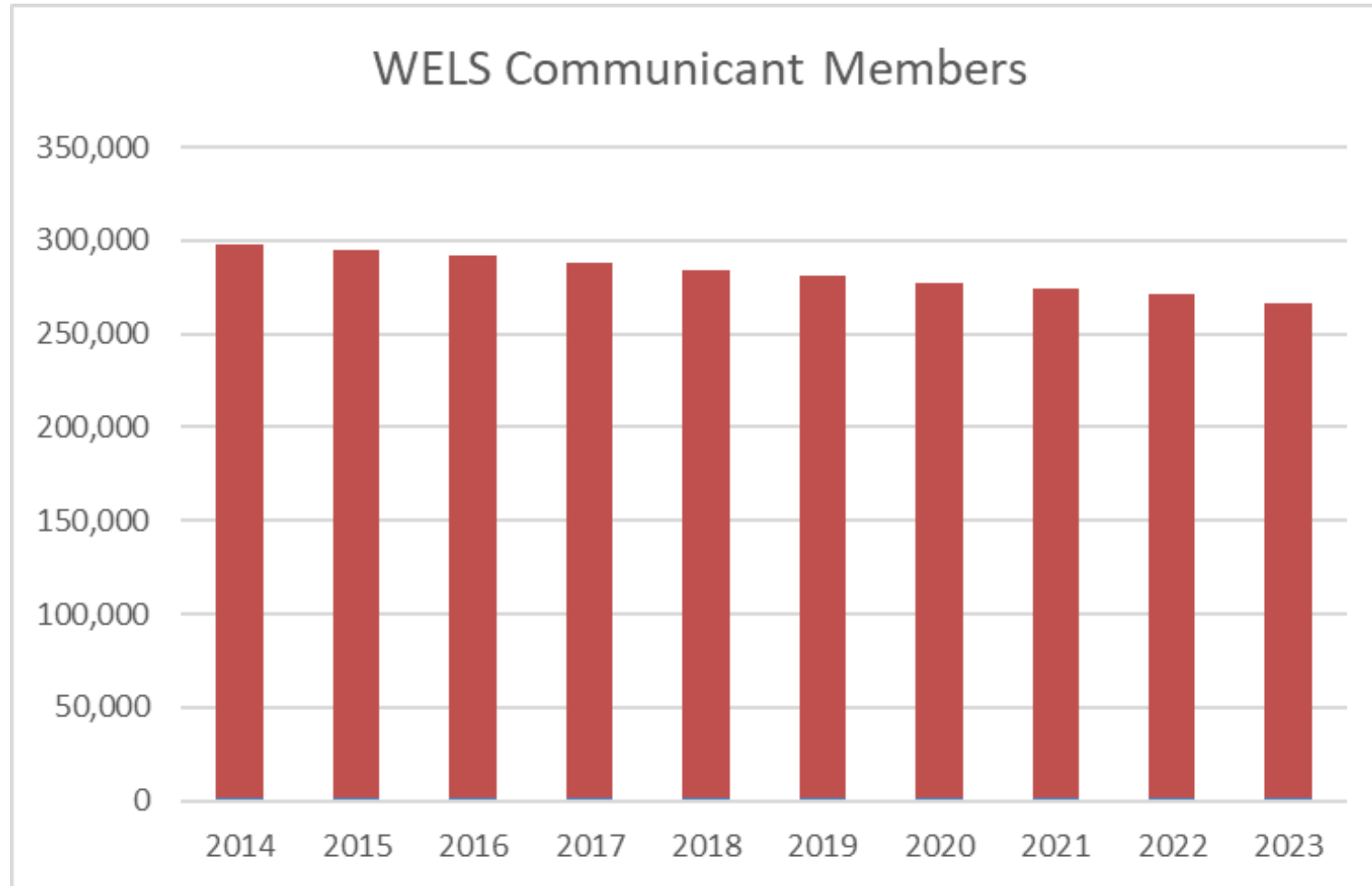
We encourage members to excel in the grace of giving and assist them in making planned gifts to support the gospel ministry of their congregations, synod, and WELS-affiliated ministries.



## Devotional thought

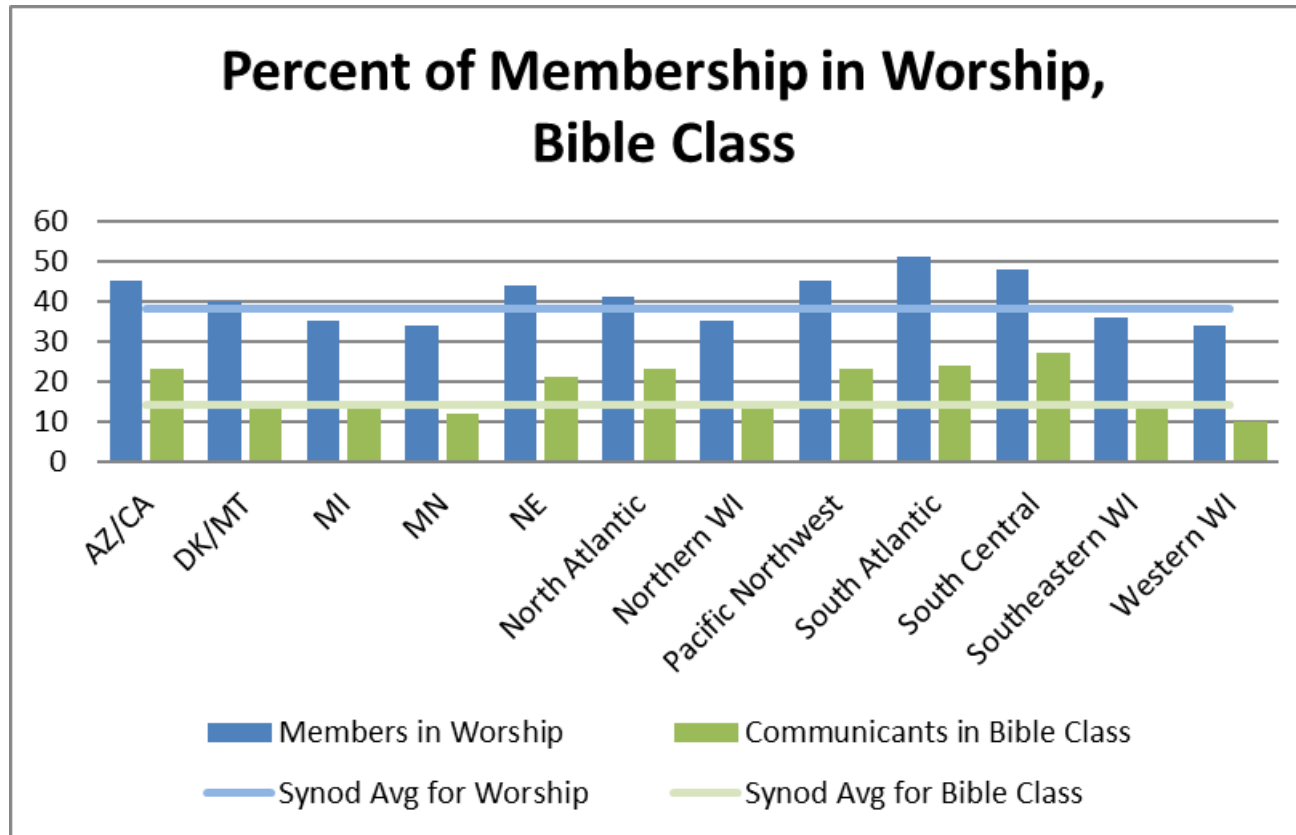
“Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

# Blessings and opportunities





# Blessings and opportunities

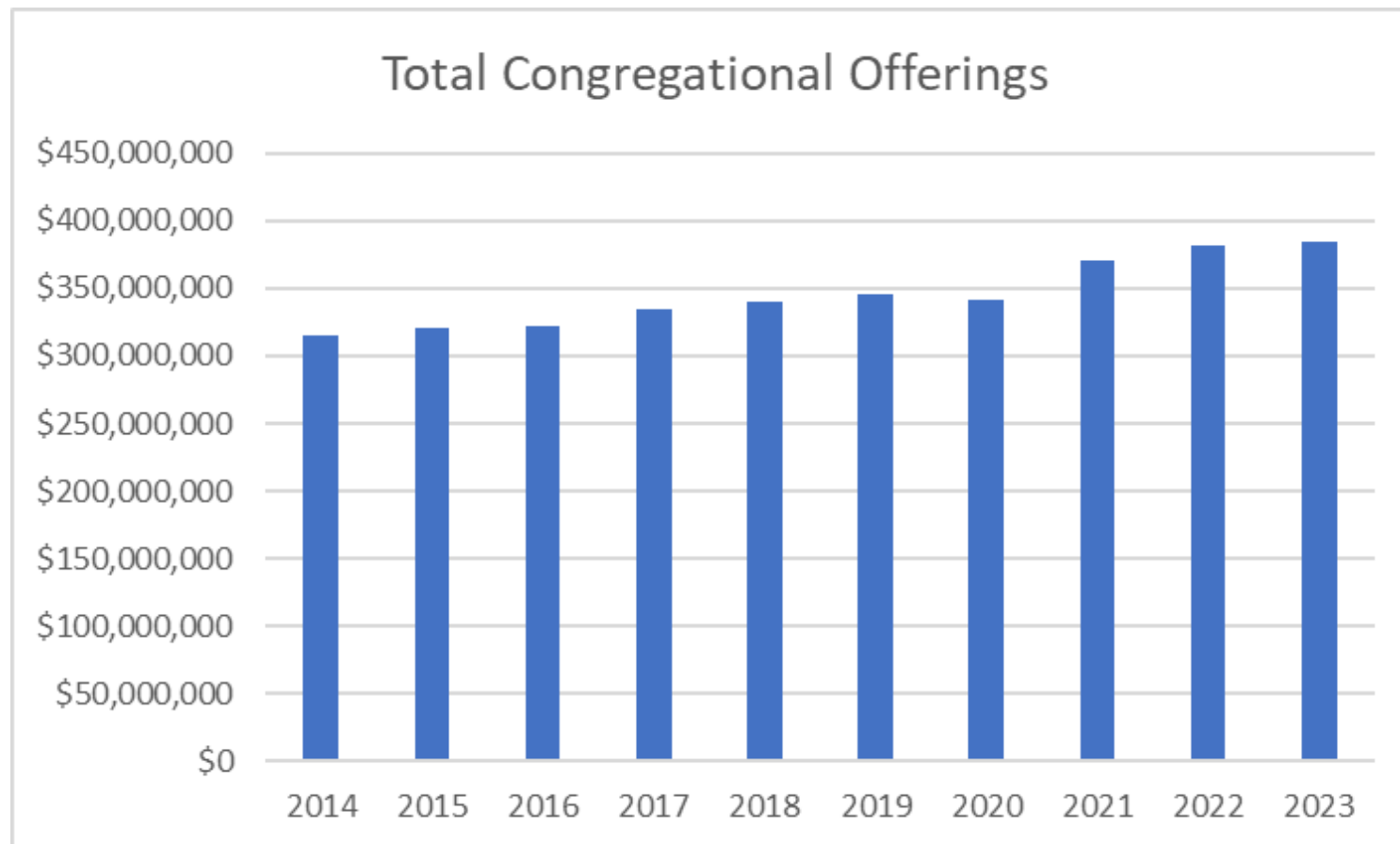


2023 statistics:

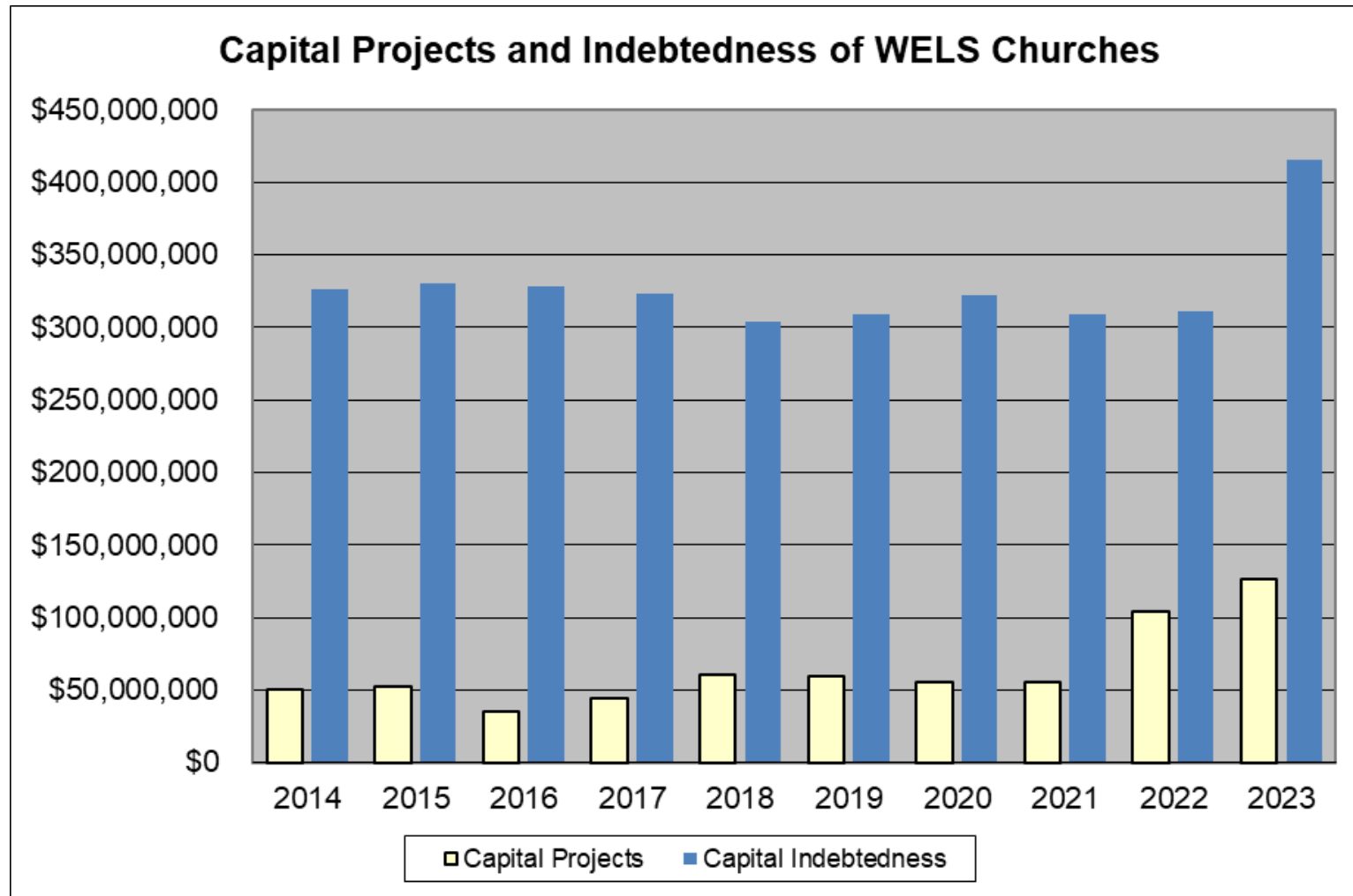
- 38% in worship
- 14% in Bible class

# Blessings and opportunities

2023 total congregational offerings: \$385 million



# Blessings and opportunities





# Blessings and opportunities

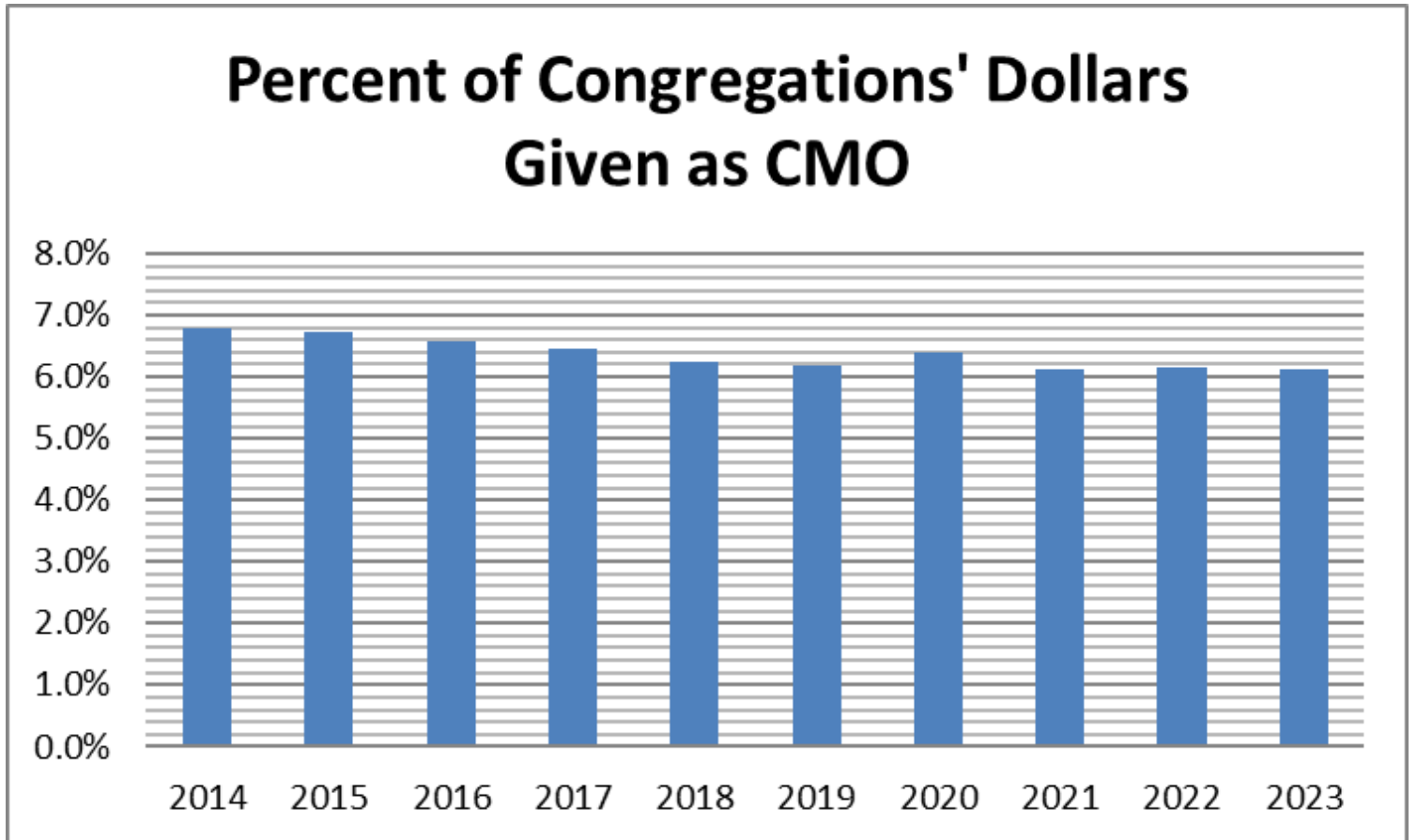
- **Congregation Mission Offerings for 2023 were \$23.39 million**
  - 0.3 percent (\$64,000) more than 2022 CMO
  - 1.9 percent higher (\$436,000) than projected receipts.
- This is the fourth consecutive year in which our congregations have offered a record total of CMO.
- This is the second year in which CMO has surpassed \$23 million.
- Let us thank the Lord for continuing to bless us through his people's generous gifts!





# Blessings and opportunities

- 2.1% of personal income to offerings
- 6.1% of church offerings given as CMO



# Blessings and opportunities

## WELS Endowment Funds

By the grace of Jesus, we have received **\$40.7 million in gifts** since 2005 (with another **\$84.1 million expected** through donors' wills) and **distributed \$1.3 million** in July from the WELS Missions and Ministerial Education Endowment Funds!



# Blessings and opportunities

## Special offerings



100 Missions in 10 Years



Luther Preparatory School Music Center



## Blessings and opportunities

- **CMO subscriptions for 2024** point to a 1.0 percent decrease from 2023 actual offerings.
- **Through April**, offerings total **\$7.45 million**, which is up \$517,000 (7.5 percent) from the CMO that we received during the first four months of 2023 and \$266,000 (3.7 percent) higher than projected receipts.
- We praise the Lord and thank his people for these gifts and commitments!

## Blessings and opportunities

- When setting CMO, aim for ten percent of offerings. If at or above this goal, encourage your congregation to maintain its generous support or consider increasing it as you're able with God's blessing.
- "For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have" (2 Corinthians 8:12).
- "Excel in this grace of giving. . . . For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 8:7,9).





# Congregation Mission Offerings

- *WELS Connection*
- *Together* e-newsletter
- *Forward in Christ*
- Annual Report (includes PowerPoint)
- Annual CMO setting materials





# Individual offerings

## WELS Christian giving counselors

- Offer Christ-centered, relationship-based, free, confidential help
- Connect donors' interests with our areas of ministry
- Assist with major gifts of assets according to donors' interests and abilities
- Nurture donors to consider supporting Christ's work now and through their wills as the Lord has blessed them





# Individual offerings

Your giving counselors:

- **Rev. Steve Schmeling, Current Gifts**

Phone: 612-222-2050

E-mail: [steve.schmeling@wels.net](mailto:steve.schmeling@wels.net)



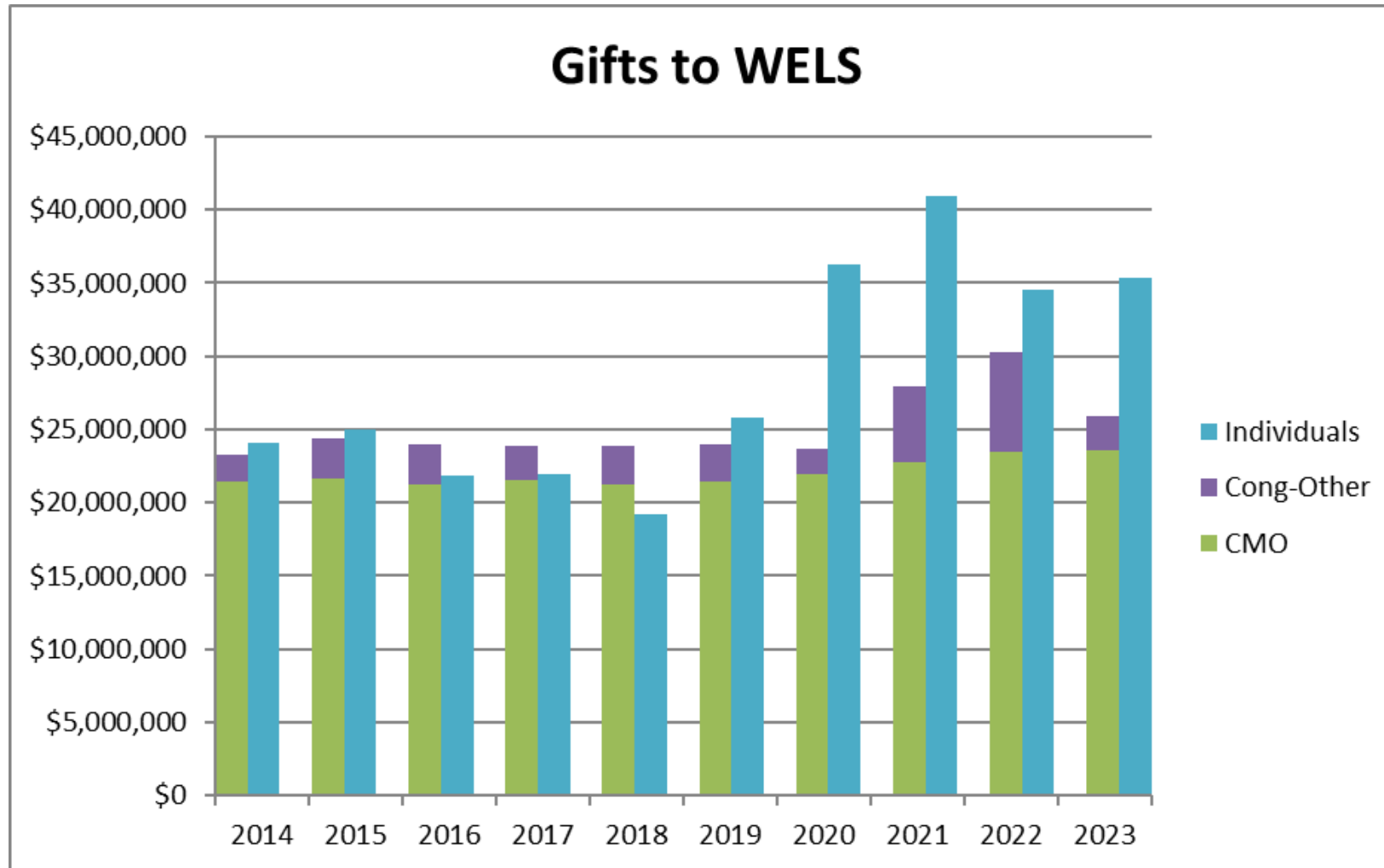
- **Rev. Kurt Lueneburg, Deferred Gifts**

Phone: 612-599-9316

E-mail: [kurt.lueneburg@wels.net](mailto:kurt.lueneburg@wels.net)



# Individual offerings





# Individual offerings

In fiscal year 2023-24, WELS Christian giving counselors (12.1 full-time equivalents)

- conducted 1,300 meaningful visits and 2,697 meaningful contacts with donors.
- nurtured \$11.3 million in immediate gifts and \$31.9 million in deferred expectancies from assigned donors.
- helped donors arrange 184 major gift opportunities (current and deferred) totaling \$42.7 million.

To God be the glory!

# Individual offerings

## IRA charitable distributions

Those 70.5 or older can make tax-free gifts to ministry from their IRAs.

Consider directing required minimum distributions to ministry to save on taxes, then using the cash you would have given to charity for other needs.

[wels.net/qcd](https://wels.net/qcd)





## Grace of Giving

Newsletter from WELS Ministry of Christian Giving and WELS Foundation with ministry updates and planned giving options

[wels.net/graceofgiving](https://wels.net/graceofgiving)



### Planned giving program bears fruit

More than 20 years ago, the members of St. Peter, Schofield, Wis., realized their congregation would benefit from forming a planned giving committee. One of the goals of the committee was to actively promote to members what a blessing planned giving could be in supporting the gospel work of the congregation.

Member Bob Stasney has been part of the congregation's planned giving committee since its inception. He recalls that the new committee benefited from the support of a WELS Christian giving counselor, who supplied startup resources and advice. "[The resources] were key in guiding us to establish policies that are very important to refer to over the years," remembers Stasney.

Since that time, St. Peter's planned giving committee has been encouraging members in their giving by providing regular communication in the bulletin or newsletter about gifting tools. The committee also assists members who have questions about making planned gifts, directing them to their local WELS Christian giving counselor as needed.

Through God's blessing, this targeted, supportive approach has resulted in members setting up

gifts to benefit the church through a variety of methods, like gifts of appreciated stock or gifts through a will or estate plan. Last year the congregation received several large gifts, including \$220,000 to create an endowment and another \$400,000 to further God's ministry in multiple areas. Another \$20,000 gift went to tuition assistance (the church's scholarship program has distributed over \$130,000 to families since its inception). St. Peter's planned giving committee also oversees the congregation's endowment funds and invests with WELS Investment Funds (see more on p. 2).

Stasney encourages other congregations to consider setting up a planned giving committee, utilizing the resources and planned giving program manual available through WELS: "The current manual seems quite comprehensive and is a must-go-to for anyone starting from scratch."

Stasney gives all credit to God for his blessings on St. Peter. "The Holy Spirit has worked miracles at St. Peter over and over again, and our members have historically been cheerful givers," he says. "To God be all the glory."

### Inside

▶ STARTING A PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM

▶ RATE INCREASE GOOD NEWS FOR DONORS



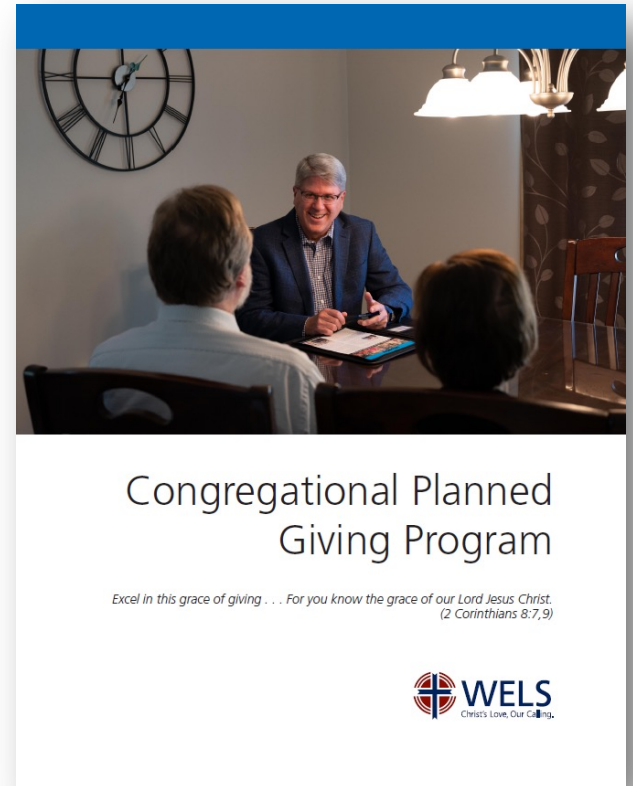


## Resources

### Congregational Planned Giving

Encourage planned giving in your church using synod resources and your local giving counselor

[wels.net/plannedgivingprogram](http://wels.net/plannedgivingprogram)



### Congregational Planned Giving Program

*Excel in this grace of giving . . . For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
(2 Corinthians 8:7,9)*



## Stewardship Toolbox

- “Mission prayers” for various ministries
- “Stewardship by the Lectionary” devotionals based on weekly readings share God’s stewardship truths according to the pericope

[mcg.welsrc.net](http://mcg.welsrc.net)





# Scriptural encouragement

“Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus... Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another— and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:19, 23-25).

**Thank you!**  
**WELS Ministry of Christian Giving**  
**[mcg@wels.net](mailto:mcg@wels.net)**  
**800-827-5482**