

2007 Annual Meeting Summary

On Monday morning, September 17, 2007, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduates and other WELS pastors gathered in the seminary chapel for the first annual meeting of WLS Alumni. 140 attended. WLS Alumni began more than a year ago, after an electronic poll of WELS pastors indicated robust interest in founding a formal society of seminary alumni. The seminary administration selected an ad hoc organizational committee from poll respondents. Pastor Richard Starr (WLS 1978) led the committee in establishing name, constitution, and bylaws. In early 2007, by another electronic poll, alumni elected the first WLS Alumni executive committee: Daniel Balge ('85), president; Earle Treptow ('93), vice-president; Carl Ziemer ('73), secretary; and Aaron Christie ('97). The executive committee worked to communicate with alumni and, pending approval by the first formal meeting of WLS Alumni, to implement the constitution. They brought their actions and proposals before the assembled WLS Alumni for approval.

Balge opened the meeting with a reading from 2 Timothy 2:1-15 and prayer. The assembly sang "God of the Prophets." The ad hoc committee's work was acknowledged. The WLS Alumni officers were introduced. The assembly approved the adoption of the constitution and ratified the executive committee's nominees for WLS Alumni committees. Serving the WLS Alumni as committee members are Daniel Voigt ('92), Benjamin Kuerth ('06), and Christopher Doerr ('00) – Auditing Committee; Robert Hoepner ('72), Martin Petermann ('53), and Kurt Schaser ('01) – Nominating Committee; Kenneth Brokmeier ('88), John Brenner ('77), and Daniel Heiderich ('98) – Membership Committee; and Jonathan Schroeder ('99), Kenneth Fisher ('93), and Douglas Tomhave ('98) – Investment and Grants Committee. To comply with the constitutionally staggered terms of office these committee members will serve four-, three-, and two-year terms respectively within their committee. In future committee elections the terms of office will be the constitutional three years each.

The assembly approved a proposal of prioritized and flexible levels of monetary support for student aid, continuing education for Seminary professors and graduates, and an endowment fund, in that order. WLS Alumni directed the officers to explore by appointed committee a proposal to write a book on the seminary's history, with publication to coincide with the seminary's sesquicentennial in 2013. As the meeting was being conducted, attendees signed a register that will be used annually to record participants in the meeting. Attendees were invited to offer written critique of the meeting, proposals, and direction of WLS Alumni, and to offer suggestions regarding the same. The meeting adjourned with the singing of the doxology. A light lunch followed.

WLS Alumni will meet next on Monday, September 15, 2008, again in the morning before the annual Seminary Symposium. In the meantime the committees will begin to function. The executive committee will follow the direction given by alumni. They will communicate with WLS Alumni primarily by e-mail and through the WLS website. WLS Alumni will, as God blesses, build on an encouraging beginning.