



living stones

POSITIONED TO THRIVE

WELS WOMEN'S MINISTRY CONFERENCE

*You also, like living stones, are
being built into a spiritual house.*

1 PETER 2:4-5

/ liv·ing stōhn /

A Christian woman who uses her God-given gifts and talents to build up God's kingdom and bless those around her, wherever that may be.



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Presentation material for Donn Dobberstein, Mike Westendorf, and Paul Wendland will be handed out at their sessions. You can also find it by clicking on *Presentation Materials* link at wels.net/wmconference.

A WARM WELCOME TO YOU!

Welcome! We are so thankful and excited you are here! It is our prayer that your experience at the 5th Triennial WELS Women's Ministry Conference is a blessing.

This conference is designed to NURTURE your faith with God's Word through presentations, study, and worship. Free and fellowship time are built into the schedule. This time is meant to ENCOURAGE you as you meet other women like you and share experiences together. We also want to EQUIP you for the life God has designed for you. Presentation material and resources are included in this binder. They can also be found online at wels.net/women.

Our conference theme is Living Stones: Positioned to Thrive and is based on 1 Peter 2:5: "you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house."

This conference will highlight God's design and purpose for the Christian woman in our society today. From openly speaking about Jesus at work or on the college campus, to reaching out in love to another generation, to working with others in God's kingdom, each woman is uniquely and purposefully in that place by God's design.

Even when it's difficult. Even when it's lonely. Even when it doesn't make sense.

With God's Word, this conference will nurture, encourage and equip you to see how God intends for you to thrive in the unique situation He has placed you in.

May God richly bless your time here!

The 2019 Conference Planning Team:

Linda Gumm, Jackie Haag, Paula Nimmer, Dawn Schulz, Mary Watson, Kathie Wendland

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Thursday, July 18

- 4:30 pm** Registration
- 6:30 pm** Welcome & Opening Devotion
- 6:45 pm** Opening Address
- 7:45 pm** Fellowship

Friday, July 19

- 6:30 am** Breakfast for those in dorms
- 8:00 am** Morning Devotion
- 8:15 am** Keynote Address
- 9:30 am** Breakout
- 10:30 am** Breakout
- 11:30 am** Lunch
- 1:30 pm** Afternoon Praise
- 2:00 pm** Presentation
- 3:15 pm** Breakout
- 4:15 pm** Breakout
- 5:15 pm** Compliment Service
- 6:00 pm** Dinner
- 7:00 pm** Fellowship

Saturday, July 20

- 6:30 am** Breakfast for those in dorms
- 7:00 am** Positioned and Thriving
- 8:00 am** Morning Devotion
- 8:10 am** Presentation
- 9:15 am** Breakout
- 10:15 am** Breakout
- 11:15 am** Closing Worship
- 12:30 pm** Positioned and Thriving

INFORMATION

Hospitality Table

Extra Materials, Lost and Found, Directions, & General Information

The Hospitality Table is located in the back of the Gym. Volunteers will be available throughout the conference to answer questions and give assistance. You can also text questions to Beth Gumm (262) 995-5224.

Wireless Access

To connect to WIFI click on the “lps__convention__access” WiFi network, available in all the buildings on campus. This is an open network so no password is required. If you need further assistance contact: joe@lps.wels.net or (920) 262-8100.

NPH has come to us!

On Thursday from 4:30-9:00 pm and Friday from 8:00 am-5:00 pm, visit the Northwestern Publishing House display in the gym to learn about their latest book releases and other resources to help you in your walk with Jesus. While you're there, pick up a promo code for shopping on the NPH website at nph.net. When you use this code, you'll receive free shipping on a purchase of \$30 or more. NPH will also have a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate. Be sure to enter the drawing when you visit the NPH display.

Electronic Devices

We kindly ask that all devices be silenced and vibrate turned off during worship, presentation, and breakout sessions to show consideration for others. Feel free to gently point out this reminder to those who may not have had the opportunity to see it.

Download Conference Material

Recommended reading and additional resources

Visit wels.net/wmconference to download presentation and break out material. Additional conference information and resources recommended by the presenters and facilitators are also available.

Conference Clothing

You can still order WMConference apparel at the online store. Visit welswomensministryconference.orderpromos.com or stop at the Hospitality Table for help ordering. The store will close on Saturday, July 20. Let everyone know you are a Living Stone!

Evaluation Form

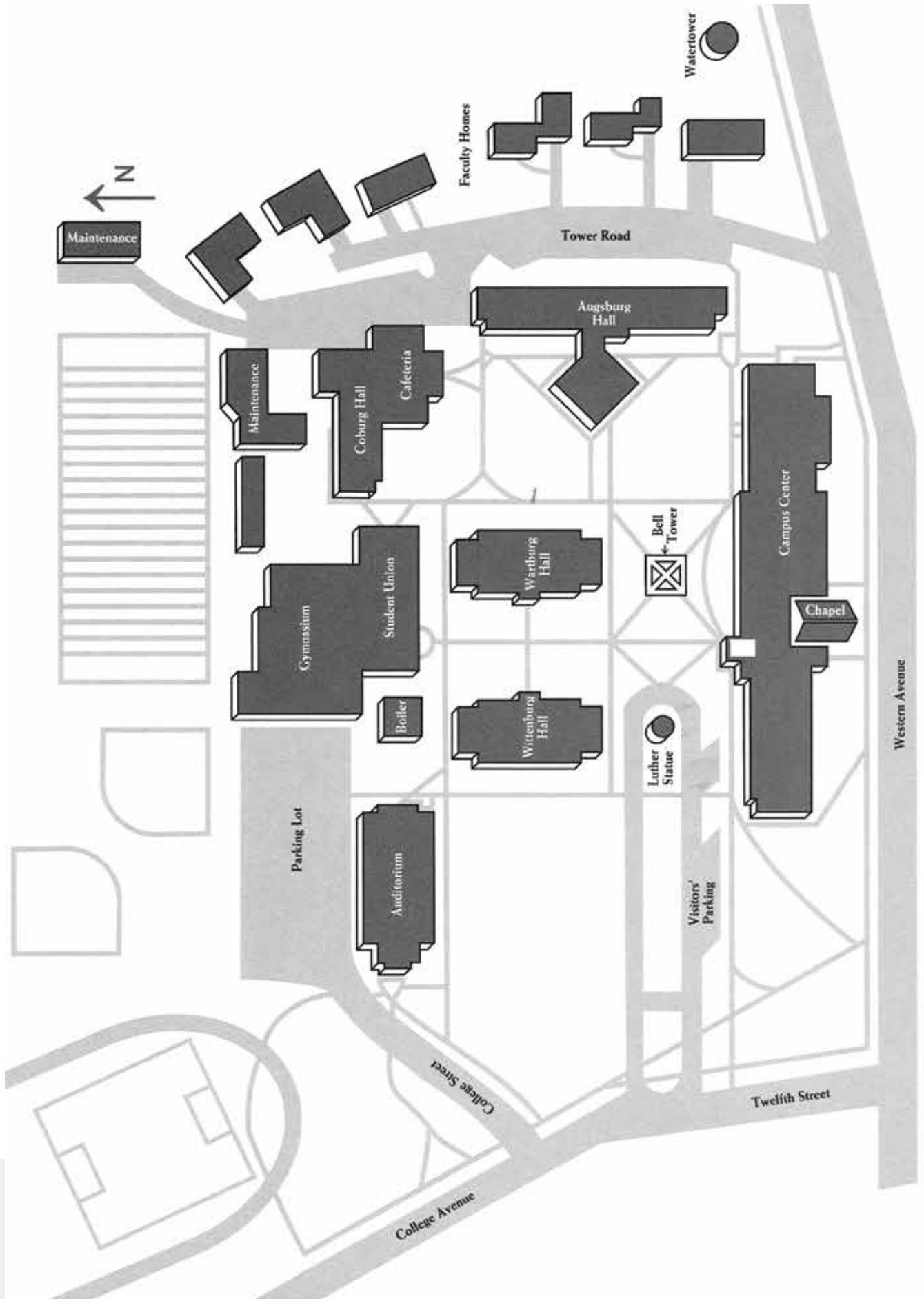
Your feedback is essential. Please look over the evaluation questions and consider filling them out while the conference is in progress. When you are finished on Saturday, tear it out and bring it to the Hospitality Table for your chance to win a \$25 NPH gift card. The drawing will take place after the closing worship. You do not have to be present to win, but contact info must be complete.



**A CHANCE TO
WIN A \$25
NPH GIFT CARD**

GET AROUND

Luther Prep Campus Map



SPECIAL FEATURES OF THIS CONFERENCE

Positioned and Thriving

Networking with Living Stones in Action: Saturday at 7:00 am and 12:30 pm

Throughout the WELS there are many examples of women thanking Jesus by using their gifts and talents through organizations or their own initiatives. To highlight these varied examples the conference is featuring a session called “Positioned and Thriving”. The purpose of this session is to give women an opportunity to tell us how they use their gifts and talents to share Jesus as Living Stones in God’s kingdom.

Imagine a Saturday morning farmer’s market of ministry. Grab a coffee and stroll around the room. Explore some of the endless ways to serve. Learn more about these women and their service through personal interaction with them. Contact information can be found in this binder, on the screen in the front of the auditorium, and at the Hospitality Table following the session.

All of the “Living Stones” in this session are looking forward to answering the following suggested questions. Choose one or two. Don’t be shy. They LOVE sharing how they build up fellow believers and show Christ to unbelievers, no matter where the Lord has positioned them in life.

- Do you remember what it was like when you started?
- What blessings has God given you in this ministry?
- Have you felt as though you were “scattered stones” or faced rejection because of your ministry?
- Based on our conference passage, where is your ministry positioned in God’s “spiritual house”?

Friday Night Fellowship

Friday 7:00 pm

Building Relationships. Giving Encouragement. Sharing Experiences. And Making New Friends. This is what Friday Night Fellowship is all about. You asked us to give you more free time to

meet women just like you for conversation and networking. We listened. Meet women from across the synod for a night of fellowship. Located behind the bleachers of Umnus Field you’ll find lights, chairs, tables, and plenty of women eager to meet you and share the bond we have in Jesus. Beverage tickets will be given at registration.

Take a Tour of Luther Prep School

Luther Prep School has been preparing high school students for college study as pastors and teachers for over 150 years. Take a tour of the campus to see the various programs, studies, and opportunities Luther Prep offers its students.

45-minute tours will be held on Thursday at 4:30 and 5:15 pm, Friday at 11:30 and 12:15 pm, and Saturday at 12:30 pm. Meet in the Gym Lobby at the LPS display if you would like to see all Luther Prep School has to offer.

NOTE

Tours involve going up and down a few staircases.

Friday Free Time Options

Private Prayer in the Chapel

The chapel will be open on Friday from 11:45 am-1:45 pm if you would like some quiet time for prayer. To show respect for those taking advantage of this opportunity, we ask that all conversations be moved outside the closed doors of the chapel. Thank you!

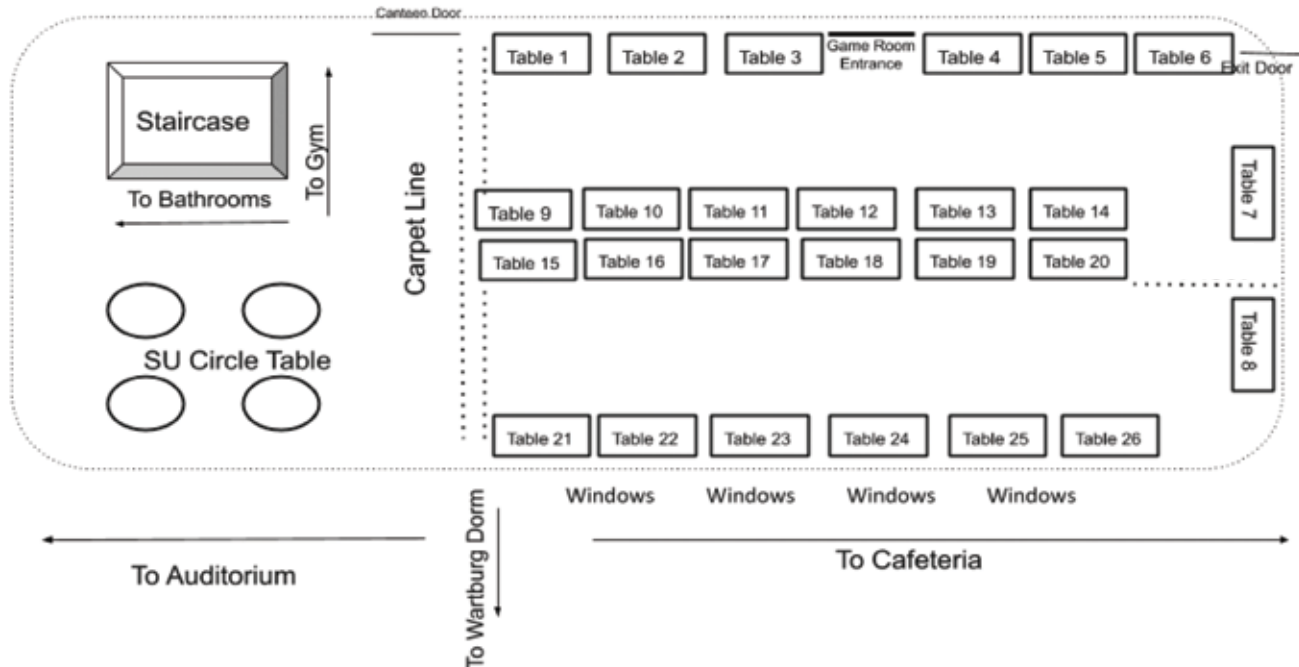
Afternoon Praise

Friday from 1:30-2:00 pm, Mike Westendorf will be leading us in song before the afternoon session. He has served for over 7 years as music director and outreach coordinator for the Point of Grace Campus Ministry in Milwaukee and serves on the ministry team of St. Paul’s Lutheran in Muskego, WI where he leads worship twice a month.

Luther Prep Tours

See the campus and variety of programs Luther Prep School offers its students. See times and meeting location above.

POSITIONED AND THRIVING MAP & CONTACT INFORMATION



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PRESENTATION MATERIAL – MIKE NOVOTNY

“Chosen & Precious—Two Words to Thrive in Christ”

Introduction: Me, Empathy, and Input

Activity: Name (and explain) three adjectives that describe the modern female experience.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Conclusion: It's hard for a woman to _____.

Positioned to Thrive:		

Person #1—Jesus

A. Jesus was chosen by God.

1. Proof:

- a) 1 Peter 2:4 — “As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God...”
- b) 1 Peter 2:6 — “See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone.”
- c) 1 Peter 1:20 — “[Christ] was chosen before the creation of the world.”

2. The Greek word for “chosen” means to _____.

3. The Power of the Chooser:

- a) Jesus was chosen by GOD!
- b) Analogy—Mr. Dreamy vs. Mr. Creepy

B. Jesus was precious to God.

1. Proof:

- a) 1 Peter 2:4 — “As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him...”
- b) Matthew 12:18 — “Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight.”

2. The Greek word for “precious” means of considerable _____.

3. Two Defining Moments:

- a) Jesus' Baptism—The dove and the voice
- b) Jesus' Transfiguration—The cloud and the voice

C. The result? Jesus _____.

1. He lacked nothing (Psalm 23:1). He knew the secret of being content (Philippians. 4:12). He was satisfied (Psalm 90:14). He thrived.
2. John 17:13— “I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.”
3. The key: John 2:24— “But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people.”

Transition—An inappropriate story about two brothers, a robber, a rifle, and a photo-shopped Jesus.

Person #2—You

A. You are chosen by God.

1. Proof:

- a) 1 Peter 2:9 — “But you are a chosen people.”
- b) 1 Peter 1:1-2 — “To God’s elect...who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.”
- c) 1 Peter 2:4-5 — “As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house.”
- d) Matthew 22:14 — “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

2. Activity: Recall a time when you were chosen for something.

- a) Who chose you?
- b) What did you get chosen for?
- c) How did it feel to be chosen?

3. Objection! Why me?

- a) Story—Mozart and the unworthy beggar.
- b) 1 Corinthians 1:26-28 — “Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not.”

B. You are precious to God.

1. Proof:

a) 1 Peter 2:9— “But you are a chosen people...God’s special possession.”

b) Story—Two Surprises, One Changed Man

c) Numbers 6:23-26— “This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: ‘The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.’”

C. The result? You can _____!

1. As you come to Jesus, every spiritual gift is _____ yours.

2. Activity: How could you remember and apply that truth when you leave this conference?

Conclusion: Two girls, two words, and one final blessing

PRESENTATION MATERIAL – NAOMI SCHMIDT

God Uses All the Legos

“You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house.”

Lessons from the Lego story

- We can feel like leftover, unused, unneeded Legos or we don't know where we fit in.
- We struggle to understand our purpose or others don't understand our purpose.

Designed to Thrive

We need to hear God's truth as we struggle with self-doubt and our purpose. Why am I here? What now? Why am I like this? We long to fit in, find our place, and serve the Lord but then we wonder if we're doing what we're supposed to do! We ask these questions in our personal, professional, social and spiritual lives.

What You Are: Living Stones

- There are many familiar “design” passages:
 - Psalm 139:13-16 – You created my inmost being, fearfully and wonderfully made.
 - Jeremiah 1:5 – I formed you in the womb and set you apart.
 - Ephesians 2:10 – We are God's handiwork, created to do good works.
 - Isaiah 64:8 – You are the potter, we are the clay.
 - 1 Corinthians 12 – Spirit gives different gifts as He determines for the common good.

This Is Not a Self-Esteem Lesson it Is a Building Plan

Two perspectives

- Proverbs 31:10 – She is worth far more than rubies.
- 1 Peter 2:5 – Living stones
 - Genesis 1:26 – Made in the image of God (thoughts, actions, emotions).
 - Isaiah 55:8-8 – Your thoughts are not my thoughts.
 - Romans 7:15-20 – The good I want to do, I don't do.
 - 2 Timothy 3 – Lovers of self, money and pleasure
 - Isaiah 51:1 – Listen to me – look at the rock from which you were cut.

Christ, the Rock and Living Stone

- Isaiah 28:16 – A precious stone and sure foundation.
- 1 Corinthians 3:11 – No foundation other than Jesus Christ.
- On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand!

Luther:

Christians who hear the Gospel are they who are built, and the stones which are to be fitted on this corner stone; so that we are to repose our confidence on him, and let our hearts stand and rest upon him. I must therefore take heed to myself that I have the form which this stone has, for if I am laid upon him by faith, then I must also bear such marks and polish as he had.

Positioned to Thrive

We find ourselves in challenging situations and relationships that are difficult. In the midst of hardship and struggles we wonder, “Why this?” “Why now?” or “What does this struggle mean?” We face trials and don’t know what to do. Authority can be oppressive and our culture defies God. Even in our personal lives, there is heartache, conflict and suffering. We face financial or health hardships. It doesn’t feel like we’re thriving.

Where You Are: Positioned to Glorify God

- 1 Peter 1:1
 - Elect – Chosen by the Triune God, redeemed
 - Exiles – You don’t belong here or fit in. You will feel rejected in the world.
 - Scattered – Military, missionaries, professional career moves, called workers, college students.

Luther:

Suffering is the school in which God chastens us and teaches us to trust in him so that our faith may not always stay in our ears and hover on our lips but may have its true dwelling place in the depth of our hearts.

- We thrive and glorify God even in suffering
- We grow in the midst of hardship at work, home, church and in relationships & marriage:
 - James 1:2-4 – Patience in suffering (also written to scattered & suffering believers).
 - 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 – His power is made perfect in weakness.
 - Hebrews 12:6-13 – He disciplines those He loves.
 - Romans 8:28-29 – God works so we are conformed to the likeness of His Son.
 - 1 Peter 2:5 – You are being built into a spiritual house.

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity:

“Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on; you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently He starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make any sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of – throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were being made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it Himself.”

- God calls us to holy living. He dwells in us and we reflect Him to the world.
 - 1 Peter 1:1 – Sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Christ
 - 1 Peter 1:13-16 – Be self-controlled and obedient. Be holy!
 - 1 Peter 2:9-10 – Chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation to declare His praise
 - 1 Peter 2:11-12 – Abstain from sin, live good lives that glorify God
 - 1 Peter 2:13-3:7 – Submit with respect to show your love for God

Thriving in our Purpose

We ask, “What is my purpose?” or “What is the plan?” Without understanding the big picture or final goal, our daily life and struggles can be overwhelming. Thousands of years ago, God’s people had the same questions and God gave them a holy temple to remind them again and again of who they were and who He is. Today, our questions are answered with temple language that is clear and powerful.

Why You Are: God's Purpose

- Old Testament temple pointed to the Lord through worship and sacrifices (1 Kings 5-8, 2 Chronicles 2-7)
 - 1 Kings 8:6 - Ark of the covenant was in the Most Holy Place - where God dwelled.
 - Decorated with fine gold carved with gourds and open flowers, palm trees and chain designs, precious stones, sculptured cherubim, pomegranates and lilies. Every piece was important.
 - 2 Chronicles 7:1 – The glory of the Lord filled the temple.
- New Testament temple was much less glorious, the spiritual focus is now on the Messiah.
 - Psalm 118: 22 – The stone the builders rejected had become the cornerstone
 - Zechariah 10:4 – From Judah will come the cornerstone.
 - John 1:14 – The Word became flesh and dwelled among us.
 - John 2:19 – Destroy this temple and I will raise it up.
- Believers are now the radiant and living temple of the Lord

- 1 Corinthians 3:16 – You are God's temple. God's Spirit dwells in you.
- Revelation 21:3 – God's dwelling is among His people.
- Psalm 144:12 - Our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace.
- Ephesians 2:21-22 – The whole building rises and becomes a dwelling.

Luther:

- [The temple] grows out of faith and is a work of love,
- We will all be fitted one to another, and all thus become one building, locked into one another by love.

PRESENTATION MATERIAL – RACHEL FRITZ

Excellence for Exiles

1 Peter 2:11-12

¹¹ Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. ¹² Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

Who are you based on 1 Peter 2:11-12?

Take a minute to think about the life of a foreigner or exile. Or think about a trip to different country or place. What are characteristics of their life? What do you think they feel? What does it look like as an outsider?

What is the contrast in v. 11 to v. 5?

What is the purpose to live “good lives” and “good deeds”?

What can a believer do that no one else can do?

How is excellence defined in the world?

Genesis 41:41-57 - How is Joseph giving glory to God?

1 Kings 5:3-12 - Who is giving glory to God?

1 Kings 10: 9 The Queen of Sheba's response:

"Praise be the to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the Lord's eternal love for Israel, he has made you king, to maintain justice and righteousness."

How does a Christian demonstrate excellence?

How does God use you to do his work?

How has God revealed himself in the past?

1 Kings 17:8-16 _____

Matthew 8:5-13 _____

Acts 12:3-19 _____

Luke 7:36-50 _____

How do we see God hiding today?

How does this change how you will interact with others?

Christians working with unbelievers can see two things:

1) _____

2) _____

1 Peter 5:8-11

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers through the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power forever and ever. Amen

For further Bible study

Romans 5:3-5

What does this passage tell us about our life on earth?

How is the hope listed in this passage different from the hope the world gives?

Reflect on how this passage outlines how God uses affliction to bring us closer to him:

Philippians 1:27-30

When you are standing in the world, who is standing with you?

Why do we suffer?

For whom do we suffer?

Notice that destruction and deliverance will exist in the same event. It depends on which side you are standing.

Bibliography

Just a note on these, some are Scriptural, some are secular.

They all have assisted me to live as an exile and prepare for this presentation.

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PRESENTATION MATERIAL – DAWN SCHULZ

Now what?

As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:4-5)

Relationships, Getting Ahead, and the Next Round

Now What? _____

“This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.” (Exodus 19:3-6)

See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the Lord my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations, who will hear about all these decrees and say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him? (Deuteronomy 4:5-7)

Now What? _____

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (1 Peter 2:9)

Now What? _____

1) _____

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do, for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” (1 Peter 1:14-16)

We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (Hebrews 10:10)

For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy. (Hebrews 10:14)

2)

For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel. (Ezra 7:10)

He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:16)

3)

As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right. (1 Samuel 12:23)

4)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. (Romans 12:1)

I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. (Philippians 4:18)

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that openly profess his name. Hebrews 13:15

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. (Hebrews 13:16)

Jill Pole

Now What? _____

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

Now What? _____

My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise. (Psalm 51:17)

BREAKOUT MATERIAL – MICHELLE BIRSCHBACH

Professing Your Christian Faith

When Water Cooler Talk Can Land You in Hot Water

Freedom of religion is a constitutionally protected right in the United States. It is not, however, an absolute right. This breakout session will provide an introductory exploration into the potential legal ramifications of religious expression in the workplace, in schools as well as in other public venues.

1 Peter 3:15-16: ¹⁵But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

WELS beliefs are clear:

1. We believe that not only the church but also the state, that is, all governmental authority, has been instituted by God. “The authorities that exist have been established by God” (Romans 13:1). Christians will, therefore, for conscience’s sake obey the government that rules over them (Romans 13:5) unless that government commands them to disobey God (Acts 5:29).
5. We believe that Christians are citizens of both realms and serve God by faithfully fulfilling their duties in both (Romans 13:6, 7).
9. We reject any views that hold that citizens are free to disobey such laws of the state with which they disagree on the basis of personal judgment.

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” Religious freedom includes two complementary protections: the right to religious belief and expression and a guarantee that the government neither prefers religion over non-religion nor favors particular faiths over others.

This Breakout Session will explore the legal implications of witnessing:

- In the workplace (as an employee)
- In public schools
- In public venues/forums

Disclaimer: These materials and this breakout session is for discussion purposes only and by its very nature is general and summary in its content. The information provided is not intended as particular legal advice for a particular purpose or situation. No attorney –client privilege is hereby created. Each state and/or municipality has its own specific rules and particular laws that may apply.

Employees in the Workplace: Witnessing through Speech

Employees in the public sector (i.e., who work for governmental entities), have First Amendment rights in the workplace subject to certain restrictions. Employees who work in the private sector do not, as a rule, have First Amendment protection for their speech in the workplace. However, anti-discrimination laws apply in either situation.

- A company that allows employees to engage in non-work related conversations (i.e., politics, family, sports, etc.) may not prohibit voluntary religious discussions between employees either. The same rules apply as would to any other private conversation.
- Other employees may not stop religious exchanges simply because they overhear a religious conversation.
- Two legal limitations to keep in mind:
 - An employee must not allow religious discussions to interfere with work.
 - If a coworker indicates directly or indirectly that she does not wish to discuss matters of religion, the Christian employee should immediately stop discussing it with him or her. Religious conversations at work should take place privately and voluntarily.
- The decision regarding religious conversations with clients or customers, however, rests with the private employer and not with the employee.

Employees in the Workplace: Witnessing through ACTION

Employers must reasonably accommodate employees' sincerely held religious, ethical and moral beliefs or practices unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the employer.

- A reasonable religious accommodation could be an adjustment to the work environment that allows employees to practice their religion or sincerely held ethical or moral beliefs. (i.e., flexible scheduling, voluntary substitutions, swaps, job reassignments and lateral transfers).
- In addition to allowing absences from work for religious observances, an employer may be required to allow exceptions to dress or grooming codes
- It is the employee's responsibility to inform the employer of the need for a religious accommodation.

Public Schools: Parents

Parents have the right and the responsibility to direct their children's education - even when the children are in a public school. As a parent, you often have the right, generally to:

- Opt your children out of curriculum that would require them to violate your family's religious beliefs.
- Review the curriculum and teaching materials for any of your child's classes.
- Opt your child out of any extracurricular activity.
- Be notified if your child is enrolled in a course that includes sex education, family planning, homosexual themes, diversity issues, or extreme violence.
- Access your child's record, including grades, disciplinary, and counseling proceedings.
- Remove your child on days of religious observance.
- Receive the same tax credits and vouchers to attend religious schools that are also available for attending non-religious schools.
- Choose the school environment that best fits your child's needs, whether public school, charter school, private school, or homeschool.

Generally, if the school does not have a compelling reason to require the participation, the school must allow the student to "opt out" of the activity, class, or assignment at the parent's request.

Public Schools: Students

Students have certain free speech rights:

- Students have the right to choose a religious topic to complete a class assignment, when a choice is given - as long as the assignment otherwise meets the teacher's academic objectives and requirements.
- If a school receives federal financial assistance, the Federal Equal Access Act requires the school to permit access to Christian students—from elementary to high school—who wish to form a Bible club. The clubs must be student initiated and student led.
- Prayer that is student initiated is still permitted in public schools. The First Amendment does not prohibit a student's personal expression of prayer in school. Rather, the Free Exercise Clause protects a student's right to pray, even in public schools.
- Students cannot harass other students that do not wish to participate.
- Since students do have freedom of speech in school, they should be permitted to discuss their religious beliefs in the classroom as long as their comments are pertinent to the discussion at hand.

Public Schools: Teachers, Aides, Etc.

Teachers, aides, and arguably parents and chaperones, (i.e., those that have a position or certain level of perceived control), generally, are not permitted to express personal religious beliefs with students, in school or at a school sponsored setting. Courts have determined that Establishment Clause considerations generally trump a teacher's free speech and free exercise rights when the two conflict.

- Since the teacher exercises pedagogical control of the classroom, she must permit students to discuss religion when it is relevant to the topic at hand. However, when this is done, all viewpoints should be equally welcomed and the teacher's viewpoint should not be articulated.
- In general, teachers may not read the Bible or tell Bible stories, conduct devotional exercises, or pray in the classroom.
- Teachers may not witness to students even in private conversation while on school grounds or school sponsored event.
- On the other hand, teachers may include objective information about religion wherever it naturally falls in the course curriculum.
- Teachers are always permitted to teach about religion or to answer students' questions (either in or out of class) about religion as long as they do so in an objective, neutral, and academic manner.

Public Forums

The public forum doctrine is used with respect to the First Amendment to determine the constitutionality of speech restrictions implemented while physically located on government property.

There are three categories of government property for purposes of access for expressive activities:

1. Traditional, or quintessential, public forums (examples: Streets, parks, and sidewalks) are considered open to public discourse by tradition and are designated as traditional public forums. Generally, no prohibition against communicative activity.
2. Limited, or designated, public forums (example: municipal meeting rooms) are nonpublic forums that have been specifically designated by the government as open to certain groups or topics. Reasonable time, place and manner regulations are permissible and any content-based prohibition must be narrowly drawn to effectuate a compelling state interest.

3. Nonpublic forums (examples: jails, public schools, and military bases) are nonpublic forums and can be restricted based on the content (i.e., subject matter) of the speech, but not based on viewpoint.

The nature of a place, the pattern of its normal activities, dictate the kinds of regulations of time, place, and manner that are reasonable.” In determining what is reasonable, the Court stated that “[the] crucial question is whether the manner of expression is basically incompatible with the normal activity of a particular place at a particular time.”

Irrespective, nearly all local municipalities have some local ordinances with requirements that must be followed – even if it is as simple as obtaining a license.

Notes:

BREAKOUT MATERIAL – LINDA GUMM

Someone's Watching

Someone's Watching: Living Christian Attitudes

"Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. For, 'Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.'" (1 Peter 3:8-12)

Introduction

World views

- A. Lack knowledge of what some of these virtues are or what they truly look like
- B. Lack appreciation of these virtues
- C. Sidebar: World views infiltrate the church

Dissecting the living attitudes

Ephesians 2:10: "We are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

- A. "Live in HARMONY with one another."
- B. "Be SYMPATHETIC."

Hebrews 4:15,16: "For we do not have a high priest [Jesus] who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are, yet was without sin. So let us approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

- C. "LOVE as brothers (and sisters)."

Ephesians 2:4,5: "Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved."

John 15:12: "This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you."

Mark 12:30-31: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." ... 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Romans 12:9-10: "Do not just pretend to love others. Hate what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another with brotherly love. Think of others as deserving more honor than yourselves."

D. "Be COMPASSIONATE."

Matthew 9:36: "When [Jesus] saw the crowds, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were troubled and downcast, like sheep without a shepherd."

I Corinthians 1:3-7: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our trouble, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the same comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, so through Christ our comfort also overflows. If we are troubled, it is for your comfort and salvation. If we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you the ability to endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is sure, since we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so you also share in our comfort."

E. "Be HUMBLE."

Philippians 2:3,4: "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility consider one another better than yourselves. Let each of you look carefully not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

Philippians 2:7,8: "He made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death – even death on a cross!"

Coming out on top – Psalm 34 reference

- A. Sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit
- B. This IS reality - God's eyes ARE on the righteous

Hebrews 6:10: "For God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love that you showed for his name's sake, when you served the saints, and while you continue to serve them."

Conclusion

Continued study at home

Read I Timothy 4:6-16, "A Good Servant of Christ Jesus," and John 14 and 15 and 16 – all about love. Also read the stanzas of CW Hymn #491, "O Master of the Loving Heart."

BREAKOUT MATERIAL – LORI LORIG

Uniquely SHAPED: Stepping Boldly into Your Personal Calling

S

H

A

P

E

D



Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.

1 Peter 4:1-11 Living for God

¹ Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. ² As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ³ For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. ⁴ They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. ⁵ But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Ephesians 2:8-10

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

1 Corinthians 12:1

Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.

Spiritual gifts are divine abilities distributed by the Holy Spirit to every believer according to God's design and grace for the common good of the body of Christ.

Administration

The gift to organize, delegate, and motivate people in such a way that what needs to be done gets done.

Serving (Arts/Crafts)

The gift of artistic ability and creativity to enhance and build up the Kingdom within a church in this supportive role.

Evangelism

The gift to present the Gospel especially to those who are not a part of the Body of Christ.

Encouragement

The gift to bring words of comfort and consolation, encouragement and counsel to other members of the Body of Christ in such a way that they are helped and healed.

Faith

The gift to see something that needs to be done and believe that God will do it even if it looks impossible.

Giving

The gift to contribute material resources with extraordinary generosity to the work of the Lord.

Serving (General)

The gift to work behind the scenes in practical ways to make it easier for others to carry out the ministry of the Word.

Serving (Manual Arts)

The gift of skilled hands used in practical ways to make it possible for others to carry out the ministry of the Word.

Hospitality

The gift of being able to make visitors and strangers feel welcome and at home.

Prayer

The gift to pray earnestly and with persistence, knowing that there will be positive effects in building the Kingdom.

Knowledge

The gift to understand correctly and to communicate clearly the great truths God has hidden in His Word.

Leadership

The gift to influence others towards a specific goal in order to build up God's kingdom.

Showing Mercy

The gift to come to the aid of suffering people and alleviate distress.

Music (Vocal)

The gift of being able to skillfully sing praises to God.

Shepherding

The gift of being able to assume an ongoing personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of another Christian or group of Christians.

Writing

The gift to inform, encourage, instruct, or entertain readers clearly, effectively, and concisely with the written word.

Wisdom

The gift to relate and apply the truths of the Word to specific needs and problems of life.

Music (Instrumental):

The gift to play skillfully a musical instrument in praise of God, especially in the corporate worship service.

Teaching

The gift to clearly explain and effectively apply the truth of God's Word so that others may learn and profit.

Prophecy

The gift to reveal God's truth and proclaim it in a relevant and timely manner for understanding, correction, repentance or improvement

Discernment

The gift to distinguish between truth and error. It is able to differentiate between good and evil, right and wrong.

Some of the material in Spiritual Gifts Discovery Tool is taken from Gifted to Serve, by Professor David Valleskey © 1983 Northwestern Publishing House. Adapted and used with permission.

Take the assessment: wels.net/wp-content/uploads/sgt

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Notes:

BREAKOUT MATERIAL – LORI LORIG

Uniquely Different: Building Diverse Teams for God's Glory

1 Peter 2:1-3 (NIV)

¹ Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. ² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

1 Peter 4:1-11 Living for God

¹ Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because whoever suffers in the body is done with sin. ² As a result, they do not live the rest of their earthly lives for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. ³ For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. ⁴ They are surprised that you do not join them in their reckless, wild living, and they heap abuse on you. ⁵ But they will have to give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. ⁶ For this is the reason the gospel was preached even to those who are now dead, so that they might be judged according to human standards in regard to the body, but live according to God in regard to the spirit.

⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Corinthians 12-13

1 Corinthians 12:27

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Revelations 7:9-10

James 2:1-4

Romans 12:3-5

Personality Assessment by Gary Smalley

In the space provided, identify the degree in which the following characteristics or behaviors most accurately describe you at home or in relationships with others.

0 = not at all, 1 = somewhat, 2 = mostly, 3 = very much

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Likes control	<input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic	<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistent
<input type="checkbox"/> Confident	<input type="checkbox"/> Visionary	<input type="checkbox"/> Calm	<input type="checkbox"/> Reserved
<input type="checkbox"/> Firm	<input type="checkbox"/> Energetic	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-demanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Practical
<input type="checkbox"/> Likes challenges	<input type="checkbox"/> Promoter	<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys routine	<input type="checkbox"/> Factual
<input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solver	<input type="checkbox"/> Mixes easily	<input type="checkbox"/> Relational	<input type="checkbox"/> Perfectionistic
<input type="checkbox"/> Bold	<input type="checkbox"/> Fun loving	<input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable	<input type="checkbox"/> Detailed
<input type="checkbox"/> Goal driven	<input type="checkbox"/> Spontaneous	<input type="checkbox"/> Thoughtful	<input type="checkbox"/> Inquisitive
<input type="checkbox"/> Strong willed	<input type="checkbox"/> Likes new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> Patient	<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-reliant	<input type="checkbox"/> Optimistic	<input type="checkbox"/> Good listener	<input type="checkbox"/> Sensitive
<input type="checkbox"/> Persistent	<input type="checkbox"/> Takes risks	<input type="checkbox"/> Loyal	<input type="checkbox"/> Accurate
<input type="checkbox"/> Takes charge	<input type="checkbox"/> Motivator	<input type="checkbox"/> Even-keeled	<input type="checkbox"/> Controlled
<input type="checkbox"/> Determined	<input type="checkbox"/> Very verbal	<input type="checkbox"/> Gives in	<input type="checkbox"/> Predictable
<input type="checkbox"/> Enterprising	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> Indecisive	<input type="checkbox"/> Orderly
<input type="checkbox"/> Competitive	<input type="checkbox"/> Popular	<input type="checkbox"/> Dislikes change	<input type="checkbox"/> Conscientious
<input type="checkbox"/> Productive	<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoys variety	<input type="checkbox"/> Dry humor	<input type="checkbox"/> Discerning
<input type="checkbox"/> Purposeful	<input type="checkbox"/> Group oriented	<input type="checkbox"/> Sympathetic	<input type="checkbox"/> Analytical
<input type="checkbox"/> Adventurous	<input type="checkbox"/> Initiator	<input type="checkbox"/> Nurturing	<input type="checkbox"/> Precise
<input type="checkbox"/> Independent	<input type="checkbox"/> Inspirational	<input type="checkbox"/> Tolerant	<input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled
<input type="checkbox"/> Action oriented	<input type="checkbox"/> Likes change	<input type="checkbox"/> Peace maker	<input type="checkbox"/> Deliberate
<input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL SCORE	<input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL SCORE	<input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL SCORE	<input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL SCORE

Your high score represents your personality strength.

Column 1 = _____ Lion

Column 2 = _____ Otter

Column 3 = _____ Gold Retriever

Column 4 = _____ Beaver

The Smalley Institute: Personality Interpretations

	The Lion	The Otter	The Golden Retriever	The Beaver
Relational Strengths:	Takes charge. Problem solver. Competitive. Enjoys change. Confrontational.	Optimistic. Energetic. Motivator. Future Oriented.	Warm & relational. Loyal. Enjoys routine. Peace-maker. Sensitive to feelings.	Accurate & precise. Quality control. Discerning. Analytical.
Strengths out of Balance:	Too direct Impatient. Too busy. Cold blooded. Impulsive. Takes big risks. Insensitive to others.	Unrealistic. Day-dreamer. Impatient. Over-bearing. Manipulator. Pushy. Avoids details or lacks follow through.	Attract the hurting Missed opportunities. Stays in a rut Sacrifice own feelings for harmony. Easily hurt or holds grudges.	Too critical or too strict. Too controlling. Too negative of new opportunities. Lose overview.
Communication Style:	Direct or blunt. One-way. Weakness: Not a good listener.	Can inspire others. Optimistic or enthusiastic. One-way. Weakness: High energy can manipulate others.	Indirect. Two-way. Great listener. Weakness: Uses too many words or provides too many details.	Factual. Two way. Good listener (tasks). Weakness: Desire for detail and precision can frustrate others.
Relational Needs:	Personal attention and recognition for what they do. Areas where he or she can be in charge. Opportunities to solve problems. Freedom to change. Challenging activities.	Approval. Opportunities to verbalize. Visibility. Social recognition.	Emotional security. Agreeable environment.	Quality. Exact expectations.
Relational Balance:	Add softness Become a good listener.	Be attentive to other's needs. There is such a thing as too much optimism.	Learn to say no. Establish emotional boundaries. Learn to confront when own feelings are hurt.	Total support is not always possible. Thorough explanation isn't everything.

Additional Resources:

“Wired that Way” by Marita Littauer

Doing Church as a Team by “Wayne Cordeiro

Strength Finders 2.0 Clifton Strengths and Strength Based Leadership by Tom Rath and Barry Conchie

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Notes:

BREAKOUT MATERIAL – KATHIE WENDLAND

Placing Myself Under God's Authority

By Grace I Submit to God's Authority

Not as a slave to a harsh master but as a loved child of my Father!

1 Peter 2:13–1 Peter 3:7

1 Peter 1:2–1 Peter 2:11

I. First of all – God's Grace

A. *Chosen through the foreknowledge of God the Father*

B. *Through the sanctifying work of the Spirit*

C. *For obedience to Jesus Christ and*

1. *Sprinkling by His blood*

2. *Bear fruit*

D. *Ponder what Jesus has done for us*

E. *Look in awe at what Jesus has secured for us for eternity*

F. *Troubles and suffering on earth refine us and bring us closer to God*

G. *You are precious in God's sight, bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ...You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring Word of God.*

With a God ordained purpose for my earthly life...

H. *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God that you may declare the (excellencies) of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

II. The Christian's Response to God's grace

Therefore... our purpose on earth as redeemed people of God

A. *For obedience to Jesus Christ and*

1. *Sprinkling by His blood*

2. *Bear fruit*

B. *Therefore...Be Holy*

C. *Therefore...Rid yourselves of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander*

D. *...that you may declare the (excellencies) of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

E. *You are the people of God... As foreigners and exiles abstain from sinful desires which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, ...they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

We live as aliens and strangers in the world, out of step with the world around us so that they notice how different we are and after laughing at us they give us opportunity to tell them how great our Savior and Redeemer is and what he's done for us all. What an awesome responsibility and privilege I have in this life! I get to be Christ's ambassador, living my life so that my actions and words reveal to the unbeliever the awesome God and Savior that I have.

1 Peter 2:13 – 1 Peter 3:7

III. Submitting to God's authority

This is the first instruction Peter gives as an example of what being an alien and stranger will look like on our earthly walk as Christ's ambassadors.

At all levels from the highest government position to the family home all those in authority from presidents and kings, male or female, to husbands and fathers and women in homes where there is no adult male are in that position because God put them there.

They are therefore God's designated representatives and by definition are in submission to God, whether they know it or not.

The word "submission" is a word Americans hate and rebel against and yet it is a fundamental attitude of God's people because God's people recognize that when submitting to others in authority they are in reality submitting to God himself. All sin is sin against God and rebellion against him. Numerous passages let us know God's distain for the proud, the arrogant, the rebellious and his just judgment on those who live in that manner of attitude. An attitude shared by the proud, the arrogant, and the rebellious is that they all feel and live like they know better than God and in effect can be masters of themselves and others.

In contrast, God's people who have been chosen by his grace live lives of humility seeing how awesome God is in comparison to themselves, recognizing that all they are and have is from the hand of a gracious God. God's people also recognize they have been chosen by God's grace to be placed under the governments and employers they have and in the homes in which they live. These institutions have been created for our good. Jeremiah's letter to the exiles is an excellent description of God's purpose for Christian "exiles" throughout the ages. (Jeremiah 29:4-14)

For the next 20 minutes let's take a look at some examples from Scripture to give us a better idea of the reality of submitting to God's authority as well the blessings that follow.

While there are discussion sections included they will be addressed during the breakouts that many of you have chosen. Anyone who has not chosen either of the additional breakouts is encouraged to work through those sections at home with her Bible open.

Submitting to God's authority on all levels of life

This includes:

A. OT examples—

God himself with prophets as his spokesmen — Moses, Joshua, Samuel

Priests (only sons of Aaron) as his mediators — Exodus 28-30:10, Leviticus 8-10, 21-24:9, Numbers 18

Babylon — Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, Daniel 1-5, 7

Persia — Isaiah 44:24-45:7, Daniel 2, 6, 7-8, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

Greece — Daniel's visions and Nebuchadnezzar's dreams: Daniel 2, 7-8

NT example —

Rome — Daniel 2, 7, Romans 13, Philippians, 2 Timothy

B. God makes it clear that rebelling against those earthly authorities is rebelling against him.

Negative examples from which to learn:

Children of Israel against Moses — Exodus, again and again

Miriam and Aaron against Moses — Numbers 12

Sons of Korah against Aaron — Numbers 16

Vashti against Xerxes — Esther

Sapphira — Acts 5:1-11

Positive examples from which to learn:

Jael — Judges 4:4-24

Abigail — 1 Samuel 25:1-42

Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego — Daniel 1, 3

Daniel — Daniel 1-6

Ezra, Nehemiah — Ezra 1-7:26, Nehemiah 1-2:10, 13:1-9

Mordecai and Esther — Esther

Other examples for you to recognize when reading and studying the Word:

Pharaoh — Genesis 39-50, Exodus 1-12:37

Kings of Israel — both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms- 1 Samuel 8 - 2 Kings and Chronicles

Assyria — Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom — 745BC-about 700 BC- 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jonah, Nahum

Negative example — The Israelites against Samuel — 1 Samuel 8

C. Government

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority, whether to the (President) as supreme authority (in the US) or (all elected and appointed officials and governmental agencies) who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

Live as free people... What does that mean? How does Scripture define it?

Do not use your freedom as a cover up for evil... Often done in the US today. What does that look like?

Live as God's slaves...How did Paul's readers understand this?

Show proper respect to everyone...Everyone??? Really???

Love the family of believers... What can that possibly have to do with submitting to the government?

Fear God... How will that shape my behavior and attitude in my life as an exile?

Honor the (President, Governor, elected and appointed officials)... Does this really apply today? I'm sure it was much easier to do this when Peter was writing it, right?

See also Romans 13 for Paul's instruction on the same topic.

D. Workplace – How did people become slaves at the time of the apostles?

(Employees) in reverent fear of God submit to your (employers), not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.

It is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God.... If you suffer for doing good, and you endure it, this is commendable before God...

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his steps.

Secular organizations – These are organizations Christians choose to join. What guidance does this section of Scripture have for 21st century Christians?

See also Ephesians 6:5-9 and Colossians 3:22-4:1 for Paul's instruction on this.

E. Husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, men and women in the family structure

Wives, in the same way (As believers are to submit to government authorities, and as slaves [employees] are to submit to masters [employers], Christian wives place themselves under the authority God has given them as a blessing. The term calls for submission to a recognized authority, and authority given by God's perfect design.) be submissive to your husbands so that, if any do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives.

Wives, if your husband is an unbeliever, why would you want to be submissive to him – even if you really, really don't agree with him?

Review IV. A.**, B.**, and D.** before discussing this.

Your beauty should not come from outward adornment ... Instead it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.

Discuss the point Peter is making here. In a culture that emphasizes appearance over substance what contrast is in the Christian's mind? In a culture that no longer understands, "Don't judge a book by its cover," and has replaced it with, "A catchy cover is all you need to become whatever you might want to become," what will be the goal for the Christian woman and wife?

Your beauty...should be that of your inner self...a gentle spirit... For in this way the holy (–

you are holy, remember?—) *women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed (lit. “listen, respond to”) Abraham...*

Discuss how putting your hope in God makes you beautiful AND makes you holy.

Discuss the purpose of this statement, *“They were submissive to their own husbands...”*
Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

See also Ephesians 5:25-33 and Colossians 3:19, 21. List why it is such a blessing to have a Christian husband to whom to submit.

Remembering the blessing that being called to submission is for women, what about women who aren't married? Who is there for them? This is a HUGE point for Christian women who are single for any reason and at any point in their lives.

Discuss what we as sisters in Christ can do to encourage and help out single women of any age. Also discuss some danger areas to be aware of for single women.

See also Ephesians 6:1-4 and Colossians 3:20-21 for additional instructions for Christian families

F. Within the church

1 Peter 5:1-5 again charges the men in leadership within the church to take responsibility for the welfare of the entire flock. Their attitude and conduct are to be exemplary: *“Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers --- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedily for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.”*

IV. Discussion

A. ** At all levels all Christians are called to submit to God’s authority and to those to whom he has delegated it.

Define submission according to Scripture...

Contrast that definition to what sin has turned it into in today’s world and especially in our culture.

B.** At all levels all Christians to whom God has given authority are called to Christ-like servant leadership.

Define the purpose of God-given authority...

Contrast that purpose with the sin-filled purposes we see around us.

C.** At all levels any Christian asked, expected, or commanded to do something contrary to God's Word will refuse to comply regardless of consequences for two reasons. First of all keep in mind that each and every one of us is under God's loving authority. If at any time the head over us is telling us to act contrary to God's Word and will we "*must obey God rather than men*". Second we know we can trust that God is in perfect control of the situation and will always provide for his people.

Discuss examples of being asked, expected, or commanded to do something against God's Word in today's world...

Discuss what factors will come into play when deciding whether or not we as Christians must refuse to comply.

Discuss consequences that may result from refusing to go along with the culture and rather representing Jesus Christ as his called ambassador.

When they hurled insults at (Jesus), he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins, and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed...

For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

V. Christian women in the secular world –Explain and discuss

A. Agree or disagree? Women in general including Christian women are more vulnerable and at risk of being used/abused simply because men are bigger and stronger.

B. Agree or disagree? There are actions Christian women can take to decrease the possibility of being used or abused by men.

C. Christian women need to be encouraged to stand against anyone who has power (physical, positional, emotional) over them when being asked to do something against the law of the land or against God's will and Word. Most often to always when Christian women and/or wives are called to submission in some way the phrase "as to the Lord" is included. Discuss what that means and how it applies when deciding whether the situation calls for humble submission or firm and confident standing against the one placed as head over her.

D. Agree or disagree? Christian women trust in God's promises to always take care of them in a way that will bring them closer to him.

E. Agree or disagree? Christian women respect and submit to all those in authority over them, male or female.

VI. Christian women in the home – Agree or disagree? Explain and discuss

A. In the case of an unbelieving spouse, father, brothers a Christian woman will strive to be a Christian in all she does, including an attitude of submission toward her husband, or father and respect for her brothers. Her goal is to win them over to know Christ with behavior that is Christ-like.

B. A Christian woman who has a Christian husband, father, or brothers enjoys the added blessing of having Christian men in the home who love her and encourage her to be all she was made to be. Because they understand Christ-like servant leadership they are an added blessing who have been given responsibility to watch out for her welfare with Christ's love for the church as the example.

C. Christian wives are perfect because they are Christian.

D. Christian men are perfect because they are Christian.

E. A Christian wife needs to be encouraged to stand against a husband who has authority over her when he is asking her to do something against the law of the land or against God's will and Word. A Christian wife trusts in God's promises to always take care of her and her children in a way that will bring her and her children closer to him. Keep the family of Korah in mind as well as the account of Ananias and Sapphira.

VII. Christian women in congregations – Agree or disagree? Explain and discuss

Within congregations, Christian women have the added blessing of having Christian brothers who have been called to positions to look out for their spiritual welfare and to equip them to serve as Christians in whatever position to which the Lord has called them, within the church or outside of the church.

VIII. Submitting to God's authority and to those to whom he has delegated it is rich in blessing from a most gracious God and Savior. Praise Him!!!

BREAKOUT MATERIAL – COLLEGE CAMPUS PANEL

Living Christian on the Secular College Campus: Panel Discussion

Meet your panel speakers:

Jenna Keller is a soon-to-be junior studying Occupational Therapy at Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon, WI. Jenna is currently the head of Cornerstone Campus Ministry in Mequon, and she is also active with The Point of Grace Campus Ministry in Milwaukee and Awake and Alive.

Kayla Frank (Priebe) graduated in May with her bachelor's degree in accounting at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, where she also played on the Women's Golf Team. She was involved in the campus ministry at Martin Luther in Oshkosh. She married her high school sweetheart in June and moved from Appleton to Madison, and will be starting her job in public accounting at Baker Tilly in the fall.

Delaney Leffel grew up in a not-so-Christian household, but started attending church and BIC classes in high school with the invitation from her future husband, Trenton. After graduation, she moved with Trenton to Colorado to study Neuroscience. At St. Peter's in Fort Collins she completed BIC class, was baptized, and helped start a campus ministry. Delaney and Trenton were married their sophomore year of college. Delaney has been accepted at Colorado State to start pursuing a degree in Veterinary Medicine in August.

Brainstorm: Before the panel discussion begins, or during introductions, write down 1-3 questions to topics that you would like the panel to discuss.

Question 1:

Question 2:

Question 3:

Room for notes from panel discussion:

Key Takeaway: Write down one key takeaway of something that you learned or helped you grow more from this discussion.

Action Plan: God has given each one of us gifts and a purpose. (1 Peter 4:10). Write down one or two ways God has used this discussion to inspire action in your daily life.

Words of encouragement as you head back out into your mission field:

“Resist him [the devil], standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast” (1 Peter 5:9-10)

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ...Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers” (Romans 8:31-32, 35-38).

“As you come to him “the Living Stone” rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him, you also “like living stones” are being built as a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood” in order to bring spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:4-5)

THANK YOU AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many Thanks and Acknowledgments

The Conference Planning Team has been humbled over the last three years to our God-given gifts and talents to plan this conference. We have certainly witnessed God's guiding hand in weaving together every aspect of this conference. We also couldn't have completed the task without many other helping hands.

Thank you to our speakers. What a blessing to learn from you and be encouraged in the Word! We thank you for the time and effort it took to study, write and prepare, and for the time you are spending with us this weekend. We are honored to have you share God's wisdom and knowledge with us.

Thank you to the women on the other Women's Ministry Committee teams for your continual support. Your ideas, suggestions, and presence at the conference are such a wonderful encouragement. Thank you for your desire to serve and support our efforts. Thank you for your involvement, help and prayers.

Thank you to Naomi Schmidt for all her help with the conference website, advertising, and her feet on the ground promoting the conference. Thank you for your time and commitment to excellence. Thank you for sharing your computer skills and knowledge of the Women's Ministry Committee.

Thank you to Pastor Ben Kratz for his service on the Women's Ministry Committee as well as leading us in worship this weekend. Your spiritual guidance is a blessing. We also thank you, Pastor Tim Gumm for sharing God's Word with us this weekend during our devotion and worship services.

Thank you to the young women who volunteered to be our support team this weekend. Thank you for your time and desire to serve. You are so greatly appreciated. Thank you for being our "gophers" and set up crew, for offering assistance and sharing a welcoming smile. You are a vital part of this conference.

Thank you to Seth Pahmeier for his work on the conference logo and supporting graphic material. Thank you to Sarah Schrader for her design work on the conference binder and signage. Thank you for all the hours you contributed sharing your vision and design talents with us. We appreciate your efforts, time, and patience with our "suggestions" and requests.

Thank you to Kathy Thurow and Rachel Willems for editing and proof-reading this conference binder. Your time and attention to detail was vital!

Thank you to Lauren Plagenz for your design work on the Living Stones sculpture.

Thank you, Clifford Koeller, for being our photographer this weekend. Your time and "eye" are greatly appreciated. The photos will be a wonderful reminder of the conference and will help with future promotional projects.

Thank you to all instrumentalists and vocalists who participated in devotions and worship services this weekend. Thank you for sharing your musical abilities with us and leading us in song.

Thank you to Luther Preparatory School, President Matt Crass, Bonnie Kuerth, Cindy Krause, as well as the cafeteria, tech and support staff. Thank you for allowing us to have the conference here, for all your help and assistance with facility details, and your readiness to work with us.

Thank you to Laura Schulz, the administrative assistant at synod headquarters, who was a crucial link in all our advertising, setting up online registration, and communications with synod administration. You are the reason so many things went right. Thank you for your experience, wisdom, and connections.

May the Holy Spirit use what we have learned at this conference as Living Stones. To God be the glory!

WELS WOMEN'S MINISTRY 2019 CONFERENCE EVALUATION

Our goal is to provide the highest quality and spiritually encouraging conference possible. Your feedback is essential. Completed forms can be turned in at the Hospitality Table. Contact information must be complete to be eligible for the \$25 NPH draw.

How did you hear about the conference? Please check all that apply.

WM email
 Facebook
 Instagram
 WELS website
 Forward in Christ Ad
 Conference Flyer at a Retreat
 Conference Brochure
 Announcement at a Conference/Retreat/Rally
 Church Bulletin Announcement

Next to each statement below check the appropriate box and give your comments.

Overall I was satisfied with the:	Agree	Disagree	Comments
Registration Process			
Lodging (specify dorm or hotel)			
Meals			
Time given for sessions, worship, free time and meals			
Information provided so I was aware of conference logistics			
Audio and visual I could hear and see everything			
Cost of conference good value			
Other:			

Which general aspects of the conference were most valuable to you and why?

Which general aspects of the conference were least valuable to you and why?

Do you have positive comments or constructive feedback about the worship services or devotions?

Do you have positive comments or constructive feedback for the presenters?

Do you have positive comments or constructive feedback for the breakout leaders?

What topic(s) would you find useful or helpful for future conference themes and why?

What additional services, activities, or resources would you like to see WELS Women's Ministry provide to nurture, encourage or equip you and the women in your congregation?

As WELS Women's Ministry grows, so do opportunities for involvement. Let us know if the following are ways you can use your gifts in service.

____ writing devotions ____ graphic designer ____ social media marketing ____ video editing
____ planning team for 2022 conference ____ Other: _____

If you have any questions or would like to explore the possibility of serving with WELS Women's Ministry, please email womensministry@wels.net

Name: _____ Email address: _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Age Range: under 30 _____ 30-40 _____ 41-50 _____ 51-65 _____ older than 65 _____

Contact information must be complete to be eligible for the drawing. Place completed form in the box on Hospitality Table.