

# ACCENT

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On Lutheran Women's Missionary League  
English District

Winter 2016-2017

## LWML Women in the Season of Advent: Anticipation and Hope

As Lutheran Women in Mission the season of Advent is a time of preparation in so many different ways. It all begins in the hope that God will come again into our world to reveal himself as a God of newness, of possibility, a God of new things. This time of year we contemplate hope embodied in a newborn baby, the perfect example of newness and potential. We hope that God will once again be faithful and see our circumstances, to hear our cries, and to know our longings for a better world. And we hope as He first came as a newborn baby that now He will come again as King!

LWML women are called to be faithful stewards of what is entrusted to us as God's people. We cannot, and do not, put limits on what God can do with the smallest things, sometimes the most unlikely of people, and the most hopeless of circumstances so we reach out to the world with our little mite boxes in anticipation and hope.

Advent is wonderful time in the church year because it can be observed in our homes as well as our church. Many of our LWML societies help to decorate the church, prepare meals before the Wednesday night Advent worship service and sponsor Angel Trees for those in need. In my home church our society gives of their time and talents at our Sunday school Live Manger on the front lawn of our church. Also, it's a time to involve children in activities at home that directly connect with our worship. As we witness to our neighbors and the world we often place an Advent wreath on our front door and on our dining room table with five candles, four around the wreath and the Christ candle in the center. We read or have our children or grandchildren read an Advent devotion as we light the candles, which includes lighting a new candle each week.

These are many of the ways we prepare for the coming of our Lord and Savior. Not only do we prepare our hearts and minds during Advent but we reach out and prepare our families, friends, and neighbors around the world for His coming as an infant and our King.

*Cherie F. Voorhees, Editor*

**N**ow to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever. Amen (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Each year one of the vendors at my place of employment supplies us with daily inspirational calendars. Some of my favorite from this year are hanging on my office bulletin board:

- God always gives us a fresh start, it's called today.
- Anything less than 100% is a compromise.
- I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish he didn't trust me so much.
- If God is with us, who can be against us.  
*Romans 8:31*
- Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.

Although, reading LWML and Lutheran Hour Ministries devotions and Portals of Prayer is a daily habit, it is heart-warming when my work calendar begins the day with a spiritual quote.

Thank you to all zones and societies for faithfully submitting mites. Our LWML English District has completed \$7,000 of the \$16,000 Mission Goal for the 2016-2018 biennium, and I am optimistic that the next grant will be completed prior to year-end! Please continue to send your mites in regularly.

As we prepare ourselves spiritually during this Advent season, let us keep praying and encouraging each other as we share our gifts with God through Mission Grant recipients and provide a legacy for future generations of LWML sisters in Christ.

*Susan Fleishmann, Treasurer*

**But as for me, I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; you are my God, do not delay (Psalm 40:17).**

## “Mary or Martha Christmas?”

Jan Simmons, LWML English District President  
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Whenever Advent begins the big question that always enters my mind is; am I going to have a “Mary” Christmas or a “Martha” Christmas? I am sure you are familiar with the verses Luke 10:38-42 where Jesus ends with “Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, *“you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.”*

As the LWML English District President, I always strive for a “Mary” Christmas but inevitably end up with a “Martha” Christmas. This year will be extremely difficult because my house decorations and Christmas baking will have to be exceptional because my daughter is getting married New Year’s Eve, and there will be a multitude of guests and celebrations that will have to be just perfect. Nothing is wrong with being practical and efficient if it doesn’t interfere with the more important message of Christmas. What we see is Martha puts more emphasis on serving the meal than serving Jesus and Mary puts more emphasis on listening to Jesus than fixing a meal.

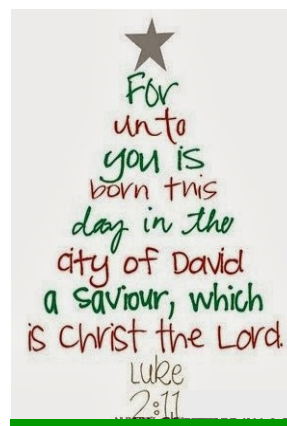
What are you going to do this Christmas? Will you have the perfect meal but miss reading and studying God’s Word? Will you have a perfectly decorated and clean house but not do any service for those less fortunate or make an effort to reach the unreached to Christ? The choices we make this Advent season affect our lives and the lives of others. We CAN make the choice to seek the good. Jesus tells us to “seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness ... (Matthew 6:33).

Talk to your LWML society about service projects, during this Advent season, to help the less fortunate. Encourage Bible studies that help your societies focus on the true meaning of Christmas. Set up opportunities for the children in your Sunday schools to collect items for children less fortunate. Our LWML does a cookie exchange, but instead of taking all the delicious homemade morsels home, we package them for the community “meals on wheels”. Not only is this a special treat for the recipients of meals but it gives the volunteers a break from making a dessert for one of the days they are scheduled to provide meals. It is also a good opportunity for us to study God’s word and enjoy some Christian fellowship. Other possibilities are helping with a soup kitchen or donating items to a food pantry. Possibly you could look inside your own congregation, maybe there is an elderly couple or a single mother that could use some help with a meal, or cleaning, or they may just need someone to sit and talk or join them in a devotion or prayer.

I admit, I have trouble having a “Mary” Christmas, but this year I am determined. By reading the Bible I will pray that the Holy Spirit will help me to achieve this goal and that I can truly have a “Mary” Christmas.

May God Bless and grant you a “Mary” Christmas and a Healthy New Year! ►

**One shining star to make the world bright,  
One infant child on that wonderful night,  
One little prayer for those we hold dear,  
To bless you at Christmas  
And all through the year.**



A Christmas Mite Box ... Wrap your Mite Box in Christmas wrapping paper, put a slit in the top, and set it out with your Christmas decorations. Fill it each day with gifts of coins and encourage your family to do the same. What a wonderful Christmas gift it would be for our next mission grant recipient!

## “Did you Know?”

Darlene Keca, Vice-President Organizational Resources  
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## “Ladies of the LWML”

Ruth Crowl, Vice-president of Christian Life/ Human Care  
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*O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! (Psalm 8:1).*

**A**dvent by Candlelight is something our society celebrates on the first Sunday of Advent. This gives our members and friends an opportunity to join in fellowship, reflection, worship and praise at the beginning of the Christmas season. If your society would be interested in getting something like this started, we would be happy to share some of what we have done over the past several years.

A small change since the last *Accent* publication; President Jan asked if I would serve as liaison to our webmaster, Marissa. As this does fall under Article IX – Duties of the Officers Section 4 b - coordinate the public relations for the LWML District, the answer had to be yes. The website is a great way to communicate. We have the ability to post events before and after they occur, along with special ministries taking place within our societies and zones. There never seems to be enough time at conventions to share various ideas, this gives us the opportunity to do so. Information that you would like posted on the website, pictures can be included, should be sent to [d.keca@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d.keca@sbcglobal.net) or 9907 West Elm Court, Franklin, WI 53132. If sending via e-mail please put LWML in the subject line, I will try and confirm receipt of the submission.

- ◆ Did you know there are samples of bylaws for societies and zones available?
- ◆ Did you know that our district bylaw changes have to be reviewed by the LWML Structure Committee before being published and voted on at convention?
- ◆ Did you know our district bylaws reflect changes made at the LWML national level?
- ◆ Did you know LWML English District has a handbook available which contains our bylaws, standing rules and travel policy?

I leave you with this thought, taken from the *Portals of Prayer*. As you gather this Christmas please keep in mind – believers all, gathered together by the One whose love leaves no one behind. ▶

**YOU DON'T KNOW  
CHRISTMAS JOY  
UNTIL YOU KNOW THE  
JOY OF JESUS!**

**A**DVENT. What does this word mean? It means “coming” or “arrival.”

Just think about the people of the old testament, the generations, how long they waited in faith for the coming of their Savior. Yes, they had signs, they had their Prophets, they knew there was a God, and they waited and waited for the Savior.

*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14).*

Our Savior did come and now we wait in anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent.

Advent begins each year the fourth Sunday before Christmas. As we prepare again for Christ's birth we also prepare our churches with decorations and flowers, we prepare our hearts with anticipation through prayer, we read about Jesus Birth in the Bible, we listen to the gospel, we sing Christmas hymns, and we share His love for us with others, all in anticipation of Him coming again.

The gifts, the shopping, the cooking, the baking of cookies, are just a side line in preparation of Christmas. Our joy in this world is His arrival. ▶



**ACCENT Deadline: February 15, 2017.** Please send current news, zone and society reports, minutes, photos, etc. to: Cherie Voorhees 1305 Lower Ferry Road, Ewing, NJ 08618 or FAX to: 609.896.0341, or send me an attachment through e-mail at: voorheescf14@gmail.com

## “The Coming of Jesus Calls for Celebration”

Rev. Eric Carlson, JR Pastoral Counselor  
pastorcarlsonlcms@gmail.com



*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons (Galatians 4:4-5).*

**A**dvent is a special time in the Church Year. It is a time when we prepare for the coming of Jesus. There is a lot of excitement as we look back and celebrate the coming of Jesus as a baby in a Bethlehem manger long ago. We also eagerly look forward to the second advent of Jesus, the day when He will return in glory to make all things new again.

Advent means “coming,” and the focus of the season is on the coming of Jesus. Long ago, Adam and Eve sinned and ate the forbidden fruit. Even as they were cast out of paradise, they were given a promise. They were told that a child was coming, a child that would crush the serpent’s head.

After being sent away from the Garden, Adam and Eve had to deal with pain and suffering and death. They had to go through the grief of losing their son Abel at the hand of his brother Cain.

But through every trial and hardship, through tears and pain, they had the promise that a Messiah would be born to destroy the work of the devil and bring healing to all of creation.

When the fullness of time had come, the promise was fulfilled. *God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law (Galatians 4:4).* Just as promised, Jesus came and was born as a baby in Bethlehem. The Son of God, through whom all things were created, dwelt among us.

The coming of Jesus as a baby calls for celebration because He came to undo all of the damage caused by sin. As promised, He came to crush the devil and His lies. He came to redeem us from the law by fulfilling it for us. Unlike Adam and Eve and every person born since, Jesus did not sin. He was obedient to God the Father unto death, even death on a cross. By the blood He shed, you and I have the greatest gifts imaginable. We have forgiveness and eternal life!

As we celebrate the coming of Jesus during Advent, look back with joy to the first nativity, the night when the Son of God was born as a baby and placed in a manger. But also remember that Jesus is coming again and it could be very soon. When the second advent of Jesus takes place, the damage done by sin and the devil will come to an end. No more death. No more suffering. Creation will be restored completely. Jesus is coming! Prepare to receive Him with joy!▶

# Prepare

### **Our Mission Goal for the 2016-2018 biennium \$16,000**

1. **Gospel Hands VBS - \$2,000 (PAID)**  
Lutheran Friends of the Deaf,  
Mill Neck, New York
2. **Catechisms for Sudan & Sudanese Immigrants - \$3,000 (PAID)**  
Lutheran Heritage Foundation,  
Macomb, Michigan
3. **Operation Barnabas Committee - \$2,000**  
Calvary Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg,  
Pennsylvania (PAID)
4. **It’s All About the Kids - \$3,000**  
Lutheran Special Education Ministries,  
Farmington Hills, Michigan
5. **Missionary Work of Deaconess Rachel Powell - \$3000**  
Dominican Republic
6. **Grace Community Meals - \$3,000**  
Grace Lutheran Church, Wyoming, Michigan

## “Mites at Work Freely Sowing, Serving & Sharing”

Diana Honebrink, Vice-President of Gospel Outreach  
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**T**he LWML English District mite offerings continue their work of **Freely Sowing, Serving & Sharing** the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At the time of your reading this, two more mission grants have been paid, bringing the total mission grants awarded thus far to \$7,000.

The seed for our second mission grant, Catechisms for Sudan & Sudanese Immigrants, was **sown** in 1992 with the founding of the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF). Since that time, LHF has **shared** the Gospel and **sown** seeds of faith in 100 different languages in 83 countries. Typically LHF, a Recognized **Service** Organization (RSO) of the LCMS, begins **sharing** the word by translating Luther’s Small Catechism and, depending on the needs and request of the church, continues with children’s material, devotionals, hymnals, and other resources and texts for seminarians and pastors.

The Holy Spirit has worked mightily through LHF’s books, **sowing, serving** and **sharing** in Sudan, Africa. Twenty years ago, LHF sent Andrew Elisa five copies of the English language Luther’s Small Catechism and a Book of Concord. Excited by what he read, Andrew eagerly **shared** this good Lutheran doctrine with everyone he met, eventually founding the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan, today called the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sudan-South Sudan, or ELCS-SS. Today the ELCS-SS includes approximately 100 Lutheran churches, five Lutheran elementary school and two kindergartens located throughout Sudan, attended by more than 20,000 baptized Lutherans.

Luther’s Small Catechism is the primary resource used by the ELCS-SS for **sowing** the seeds of faith in Muslim Sudan and Animist South Sudan and among Sudanese immigrants here in the United States and Canada. As at Pentecost the Holy Spirit gave the disciples power to preach the Gospel in the languages of the people, so too does the \$3,000 grant provide Luther’s Small Catechism in the Nuer, Zande, Acholi, Bari and Moru languages **servicing** Sudanese people in Sudan and North America by **sharing** the Gospel in their own languages.

The seed for our third mission grant, Operation Barnabas Committee Calvary Lutheran Church, was first **sown** in 2007 when LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces initiated Operation Barnabas. Operation Barnabas **serves** to equip LCMS congregations for compassionate care and Gospel-**sharing** outreach to military members, families and veterans.

The Operation Barnabas Committee at Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania is partnering with the Veteran Outreach Office of the YWCA of Greater Harrisburg in an ongoing program to **serve** homeless female veterans by assembling and distributing comfort bags to them and to their children. Every bag contains a sealed card with female veteran specific information for help from the Veteran’s Administration and contact information for Calvary Lutheran Church. One of the most important features of the bags is the inclusion of pocket New Testaments and Psalms – **sowing** the seed of the Gospel.

The \$2,000 grant is helping to fill comfort bags, enabling the Operation Barnabas Committee at Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church to **serve** homeless female veterans and their children by providing for their physical needs and by **sowing** the seed of God’s Word.▶



## Advent Wreath

**1st CANDLE** – (purple) **THE PROPHECY CANDLE or CANDLE OF HOPE** – We can have hope because God is faithful and will keep the promises made to us. Our hope comes from God. (Romans 15:12-13)

**2nd CANDLE** – (purple) **THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF PREPARATION** – God kept his promise of a Savior who would be born in Bethlehem. Preparation means to “get ready”. Help us to be ready to welcome YOU, O GOD! (Luke 3:4-6)

**3rd CANDLE** – (pink) **THE SHEPHERD CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF JOY** – The angels sang a message of JOY! (Luke 2:7-15)

**4th CANDLE** – (purple) **THE ANGEL CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF LOVE** – The angels announced the good news of a Savior. God sent his only Son to earth to save us, because he loves us! (John 3:16-17)

**5th CANDLE** – (white) **“CHRIST CANDLE”** – The white candle reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins! His birth was for his death, his death was for our birth! (John 1:29)