

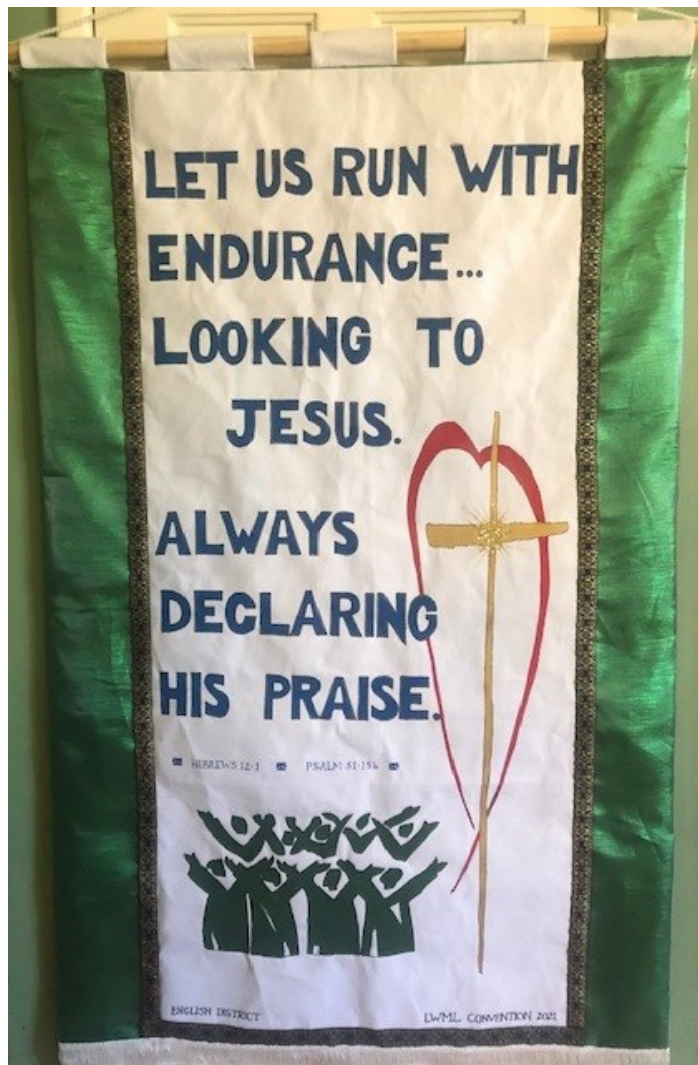
**Lutheran Women's Missionary League**

VOL. LVII, NO. 2

English District

August 2021

**Lutheran Women's Missionary League  
2021 Convention  
Lexington, Kentucky  
June 24–27**



as seen in the golden glow of the cross, enables us to do so with praise. The regal border and accent remind us of the heavenly prize that awaits us.

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) welcomed 2,787 people, including 586 participants attending for the first time, to the LWML Convention in Lexington, Kentucky, June 24–27, 2021, under the theme "Running the Race ... Looking to Jesus." The convention theme was based on Hebrews 12:1–2. The LWML voting body adopted a \$2,150,000 mission goal for the 2021–2023 biennium. This goal, by the grace of God, will fund 28 mission grants as women and men respond in prayer, offerings, and Mite Box donations during the next two years. The complete list can be found on the lwml.org website under Missions – Mission Grants.

**Voting Body Elects New Leaders**

On Saturday, June 26, 2021, the convention voting body elected these servant leaders:

- Vice President of Christian Life: Susan Brunkow, Kansas District
- Vice President of Communication: Kathy Pavelock, Eastern District
- Vice President of Gospel Outreach: Karen Morrison, Kansas District
- Recording Secretary: Brenda Piester, Kansas District
- Jr. Pastoral Counselor: Rev. Gary Piepkorn, Rocky Mountain District

There were 61 clergy in the procession and 60 helping with communion distribution at the Thursday evening Worship Service.

Saturday morning there were 82 countries represented in the flag procession. Six new countries were added this last biennium. They were Cambodia, Cameroon, Macau, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia.

The current LWML English District theme: *Open My Lips!* is illustrated in the logo with the singing choir's praise being directed to Jesus, represented by the cross. His sacrificial love for us, depicted by the red heart, compels us to run our race with endurance. The power of the Holy Spirit,

# LWML English District President

**Darlene Keca**

lwmldarlene@gmail.com

It was wonderful to see my LWML sisters and brothers as we met to celebrate “Running the Race ... Looking to Jesus” in Lexington last month! There was never enough free time to spend with friends. Those hugs, hugs and more hugs were awesome.

What a joy it is to see how God is working through this incredible organization. Every LWML convention is a new and exciting adventure. If only we could bottle it and give it as gifts, wait, we can by sharing the experience with others. Not everyone is able to attend an in-person LWML convention, but they don’t need to be left out. It’s not too late, by going to the lwml.org website, on the home page there is an option to **GO TO LIVESTREAM**. Once you click on that, there are options which allow you to select specific sessions. Isn’t technology wonderful? Well, at least when it works and if you happen to know someone that can help when it doesn’t.

Your delegates were “Running the Race...Looking to Jesus” before we assembled in Kentucky. Please thank those from your zone who were willing to take on this responsibility. 2021 was the first time we voted on the proposed mission grants prior to convention. Each delegate was notified through their email and had from May 23 – 29, 2021 to cast their ballot. Some even took the time to share the proposed mission grants with their societies, groups and/or zones. This allowed them to get feedback from the women they were representing as to how they wanted them to vote.

**Did you see the new LWML Mission Statement?**  
**As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.**

Assisting the women of the LWML to put the new Mission Statement into practice, the committee also provided five LWML Core Values:

- Christian Women — We live as redeemed children of the Triune God.
- In God’s Word — We live in joyful response to the Holy Scriptures.
- Mission-Focused — We answer God’s call to share His Gospel at home and abroad.
- Embrace Diversity — We are sisters in Christ who value and benefit from each other.
- Servant Leaders — We are called and equipped by God to serve others.

A new LWML brochure was also created with the new LWML Mission Statement inside. These are available from the LWML Office for you to order. Remember; if you need Mite boxes notify our LWML English District Secretary, Tonya Blomeling at [tonyalrose@yahoo.com](mailto:tonyalrose@yahoo.com), they come in packs of 25. The district pays the postage to have them shipped directly to you. Check your supply; you may need some for LWML Sunday. Get ahead of the rush.

Something else I wish I could bottle and share with each of you is the blessings I’ve received by serving in various positions on the LWML English District Executive Committee. Please prayerfully consider serving at society (group), zone and/or district level. The Lord has a plan for you, be willing to open your heart to the path he has in mind.

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*  
(Proverbs 3:5-6)

Sincerely your sister in Christ,

Darlene Keca



## Junior Counselor Rev. Joshua Ulm

**“These women don’t mess around!”** That was my first thought when I arrived in Lexington for the LWML convention, and it ran through my mind the rest of the weekend. My first introduction to the LWML convention was fitting; the servant events. The massive convention dining room was flooded with purple and bustling with activity as the women of the LWML got to work doing what they do best, serving the Lord with gladness! At my station we were assembling large print Scripture calendars for those who are losing their sight. The room was full of energy and full of joy! There could not have been a better introduction to the LWML or a better start to the weekend.

The next highlight was the worship service. Again, I found myself thinking, **“these women don’t mess around.”** This last year has deprived many of us of those large worship services we hold so dear. The opening service was a good start at making up for lost time. The first hymn was “Lift High the Cross”. Standing in the hallway with the other pastors, we heard the joyous (and beautiful) sound of 2500 Lutheran women lifting their voices in praise. As the pastors walked in, the lovely, joyous, voices of the women of the LWML mixed with the booming voices of the pastors. When that many people are singing with that much joy, you don’t just hear the music, you feel it. It was one of the greatest honors of my ministry to join in worship and assist in distributing the sacrament to the women of the LWML.

My last **“These women don’t mess around”** moment came during the awarding of mission grants. As a lifelong Lutheran, I’ve seen my share of mite boxes, and even filled a few as a child. The purple boxes have always been a fixture in my life, but I had no idea what happened to those mites. When I heard the mission grants being supported and saw the total amount being given to mission work in the United States and around the world, my jaw hit the floor. LWML English District President Darlene Keca got several minutes of amusement watching me wrap my head around the dollar figure and the impact for the kingdom of those mission grants. Again, I thought **“These women don’t mess around.”** If we could get more organizations to run like the LWML, so many of our problems would disappear!

If you haven’t attended an LWML convention, you’re missing out. It was an honor and a joy to attend, to worship, to sing, and to laugh with my sisters from the LWML. The convention was a happy reunion and time of fellowship for many, but it was outwardly focused, never losing sight of the goal of reaching the lost and serving the Lord with gladness. This weekend of service, worship, and mission is one that I will never forget, and every time I think back on my time in Lexington I am sure I’ll remember **“These women don’t mess around!”**

Pinning of the YWR: Ashley Beffrey, Rev. Ryan Beffrey, Rev. Joshua Ulm, Bethany Ulm and President Darlene Keca.



# RUNNING THE RACE... LOOKING TO JESUS

The National Convention in Kentucky was an inspiring experience, filled with information sessions, Bible studies, inspiring speeches and so much more. This was only my second national convention and I had forgotten just how inspiring these conventions truly are. One of my favorite parts was the pageantry: especially the parade of flags from the countries LWML has made a difference in. I was also blown away by the number of volunteers that stepped up to handle the many tasks involved with putting on an event of this size, and the parade of Pastors attending. It was truly a blessing to have the opportunity to attend!

Carol Klein, Western Michigan Zone



I love going to LWML Conventions, this one was no exception! I could write a long article about everything that went on at the convention, but I think others will cover much the same things that I would. I will write about one part of the convention which is one of my favorite parts and not everyone attends this one which I will be talking about, because this one begins before the convention starts. I am talking about the SERVANT CONNECTIONS! (servant events).

The Servant Connections are held on the Thursday morning in which the convention actually begins. That means that, unless you live close to where the convention is at, you need to get there the night before. There are three sessions of Servant Connections This year, they had 8 activities which you could choose from. You can do as many activities as you would like to, or have time for. Some people spend their entire 2 hours on 1 activity. It's up to you. All of the activities are wonderful.

This year the activities to choose from were:

1. Assembling Blessing Bags for Concordia, Ann Arbor students and St. John's Lutheran Church, Campus Ministry in Lexington, KY
2. Making "No Sew" Fleece Pillows and Lap Robes for Graceworks Lutheran Services in Dayton, OH
3. Collating and Binding Braille and Large Print Materials for Lutheran Braille Workers, Yucaipa, CA
4. Packaging 30,000 Nutrient-rich Meals for Love the Hungry in Louisville, KY

5. Making Witness Bracelets for MOST Ministries in Ann Arbor, MI
6. Assembling School Back Packs for Orphan Grain Train, Indiana Branch
7. Coloring and Writing Cards of Hope for Phil's Friends in Crown Point, IN
8. Assembling and Writing Encouragement Cards for Refuge for Women in Lexington, KY

This year, instead of doing the activities, I had the privilege of being able to be a volunteer to help the people who came to make witness bracelets for MOST Ministries. That was an awesome experience for me. Since I am a Board member of MOST, I volunteer at MOST, and I go on mission trips, I was happy to help out in this way. I helped for the first 2 sessions and helped and watched many people make bracelets. Then, in return, I was able to take some of the bracelets on the mission trip that I went on less than two weeks after the convention. I went on an Eyeglass Mission Trip to Guatemala with MOST Ministries from July 8-July 16. So, the people from Santiago Zamora in Guatemala were able to receive some of the bracelets which some of you made at the Servant Connections at the convention!

The convention was a great blessing and I hope that more of you can experience other conventions in the years to come.

Janet Stechholz, Greater Detroit Zone

Judy Wiedenkiller (Milwaukee Zone), Janet Stechholz (Greater Detroit Zone), Carol Klein (Western Michigan Zone), Melinda Williams (Philadelphia Zone)



# RUNNING THE RACE... LOOKING TO JESUS

## OUR FAITHFUL GOD

Convention is celebration! We celebrated running our Christian race – together! Of the 34 proposed Mission Grants, twenty-eight were able to be funded, truly an opportunity for celebration.

We celebrated worship, partaking of Word and Sacrament. As the entrance of banners for each of the LWML district moved through the auditorium, we celebrated color, design, and creativity. We celebrated the outreach of love and unity as eighty-one brightly decorated banners represented the countries in which missions are going forward were presented.

With thanksgiving, we celebrated our magnificent God and Lord, who graciously and mightily uses those contributions of mites and talents.

“O celebrate the Lord with me Let us exalt His name together!”

Judy Wiedenkeller, Milwaukee Zone



Before June 24, 2021, I knew almost nothing about the LWML. I had heard of it but saw it more as a ladies' group that did something for missions. I had heard about mites but had no idea what they did. It was simply a group of ladies who love the Lord and wearing purple! I sent in my application to be a YWR, unsure of what the future might hold.

And then came the notification that I had been selected. Now this thing that I knew nothing about was mine. All I knew was that in June I would be going to Lexington. As a horse lover and someone who used to show horses, I was excited to have an excuse to go to the heart of horse country!

I had been to Zone Rally and that was it, so I was expecting a big Zone Rally—prayer, Bible Study, hearing about Gospel outreach going on in the world, and eating together. So, you can imagine how I felt when my husband, Ryan, and I walked into the lobby of the Central Bank Center to register and saw the registration tables ready with materials for almost 3,000 people! Then we walked into Rupp Arena, and I was overwhelmed! The arena floor was set for all the delegates, the stage was decorated, and the AV crew was doing their final tests before the convention began the next day. I realized then that I wasn't at a Zone Rally anymore!

The next day was my first day of YWR responsibilities. I was assigned as one of the first workers at the Gifts from the Heart receiving area. I couldn't believe it as cart after cart came down the elevator with gifts for Assurance for Life Ministry, MOST Ministries, and others. After that I went into the Exhibit Hall where I was assigned to the Committee on Young Women booth, helping attendees make their own fancy Kentucky Derby hats, headbands, and fascinators. I don't know how many women I helped, but every one of them told me how excited she was for me as a YWR. I felt so loved, encouraged, and welcomed. I started to realize why so many women love LWML! It really was a family.

The District Banner procession was a very moving time for me I got to walk with President Darlene Keca, who has become a wonderful friend! Looking up from the arena floor to see the attendees filling the arena made me real-

## RUNNING THE RACE... LOOKING TO JESUS

ize how big the LWML really is. And it was just as humbling to have that same experience again the next day when I carried the Angola flag in the flag procession. To see how many places the LWML and our mites have gone opened my eyes and got me so excited to go home and do more for LWML, especially for my society and zone! If everyone got to see this, they would be in love with the LWML!

Even though my days as a YWR were long and filled with all kinds of activity and I got back to the hotel room exhausted every night, I loved my time. It was good to go to the Bible Studies, hear the comedienne, pray together, and make so many new friends. Every meal we shared together brought conversations that could have gone on forever. The other YWRs were wonderful women, and the Lord brought together an interesting group of women. I made so many new friends who I have been in touch with since convention ended. I came home encouraged by them and especially Darlene. She loves LWML and every time I talked to her about LWML I loved it even more myself. I couldn't wait to get home to help make everyone else as excited about LWML as I am.

My family has been working hard on filling mite boxes. We want to be a part of seeing the \$2 million+ come together for the spread of the Gospel that will come because of the mission grants. I have talked to so many people at church about what good their prayers and change can do. I can't wait to get people to see that LWML isn't just a ladies group or women who really like purple. I want them to see that this is where they can be a part of something big that will make a difference for so many people around the world. I want to encourage other women the way I was encouraged. I'll always be thankful that Gail never stopped asking me to apply to be one of the District's YWRs. She helped open my eyes to a great world here in the LWML!

We practically have our travel plans ready for Pittsburgh and can't wait for Milwaukee! I am thankful to have been one of our YWRs and I am excited to see how I can be more involved in LWML and get more women to be involved as well. I want to encourage other women the same way I was encouraged. I'm excited to see how God uses all of this for the good of His Church and mission work around the world!

Ashley Beffrey, YWR



# Call to Action

Merciful Lord, for the benefit of Your people you call faithful women to serve in a variety of offices in Your Church. Grant that your Holy Spirit may lead and guide us in nominating women to serve among us in the LWML English District according to Your gracious will, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. (Taken from LSB)

This coming year, we will be voting into office a new President, Vice-President of Gospel Outreach, Treasurer and three individuals to serve on the nominating committee. We know women of the LWML are intelligent, dedicated and find joy in serving the Lord through the mission of the LWML. This is an opportunity to get to know some beautiful and amazing Christian women. They will give you friendship and mentoring, and although each woman has a different position, the Executive Committee works as a team. As someone once said, "God does not call the equipped, He equips those called."

Each nominee must be an active member of her local society and must have served as an officer on zone level or as an officer of a non-Zone unit. While it is not required it is extremely beneficial if the nominees for the office of President have previously served on the District Executive Committee. Please encourage members of your zone to prayerfully consider applying for one of these positions. Applications for Nominations are available on our website: [www.englishdistrictlwml.weebly.com](http://www.englishdistrictlwml.weebly.com) under, the Convention Central tab.

If you have any questions, contact the Nomination Chairman - Cinda Souer at [lwml.ed.webservant@gmail.com](mailto:lwml.ed.webservant@gmail.com).

Respectfully submitted,  
2020- 2022 Nomination Committee Members:  
Laura Calvert – Arizona Zone  
Ruth Crowl – Greater Chicago Zone



## **Paying Mission Grant**

### **Restoring Hope through Outreach Programs, Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church & Camp Restore, Detroit, MI**

On June 2, 2021, Anna Richert and Janet Stechholz from the Greater Detroit Zone of the LWML English District, presented Elizabeth Parrish, the Director of Camp Restore, with the Mission Grant of \$3,000 for “Restoring Hope through Outreach Programs.”

She and her sister gave Anna and Janet a tour of Camp Restore’s facilities at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in Detroit. They renovated classrooms on the top floor of the building into dormitories. They made gardens on part of their property. They plan to renovate two houses into safe places, one for children and one for adults. They have many exciting plans in their future.

Camp Restore Detroit’s role is to invite ministry teams to Detroit to help in restoring the neighborhoods in Detroit.





## Grant #5 Soldiers of the Cross LCMS Mission Advancement, St. Louis, MO

Soldiers of the Cross provides transitional financial support for church workers who find themselves in a financial crisis with no other avenue of support for such necessities as food, medicine, insurance, and shelter.

Soldiers of the Cross (SOTC) is dependent solely on contributions and is one of LCMS mercy programs that help active and faithful pastors, teachers, and other church workers in financial or personal crisis. Many pastors and church workers often face ongoing challenges (both during and after their careers) to meet their most basic living expenses.

This program responds to urgent financial challenges among all servants of the church. Typically, a single-payment grant provides assistance when a crisis or unusual burden arises. Soldiers of the Cross grants have been used to help pastors and teachers, as well as military chaplains, church secretaries, custodians, day-care workers, and other servants of the church.

"One of our Synod's top priorities must be helping our church workers in their time of need," said the Rev. Matthew C. Harrison, LCMS president. "Many have given a large portion of the lives to serve, very often in modest circumstances. While these are challenging times for many families, we must make every attempt to help our servants of the church."

Our LCMS church workers are susceptible to suffering just like those they serve. Sometimes this suffering relates to health issues, sometimes financial issues, and unfortunately, some church workers suffer due to the unloving words and actions of their own congregations. But Scripture is clear: If one part of the body suffers, we all suffer (1 Cor. 12:26). As so together - as the Church - we seek to care for our faithful servants who are suffering.

Sometimes workers are reluctant to accept the grants, so Carlos Hernandez, Director of Church and Community Engagement with the Synod's Office of National Mission tells them, "Look, this is not our money - this is God's money. You've been praying to God for help? This is God helping you. He's just using us as a conduit. Know that this is a prayer that's been answered. And we're just here as servants of God."

The LCMS has more than 2.3 million baptized members in more than 6,100 congregations and more than 9,000 pas-

tors. Two seminaries and 10 colleges and universities operate under the auspices of the LCMS, and its congregations operate the largest Protestant parochial school system in America. That's a lot of church workers - "Soldiers of the Cross".

As Soldiers of the Cross provides emergency support, there has been recognition that helping church workers retain health insurance is a top concern. Some workers face emergencies such as a serious illness, or a spouse who suddenly becomes ill and can no longer work. Sometimes funds fill the "gap" between difficult times. Some live-in communities hit by natural or man-made and civil disasters. In the last several years, we have experienced an unprecedented number of floods, tornados and hurricanes which have directly impacted our called church workers.



### Convention News: Mission Pledge Walk

Walking a 1.5-mile loop in beautiful downtown Lexington, nearly 1,100 participants, plus those walking in their neighborhood, brought contributions totaling \$96,232.92. This total will be updated if donations continue to arrive at the LWML Office. Beginning with a prayer led by Host Committee Pastoral Counselor Rev. Mark Moog from the LWML Indiana District and followed by the traditional Call to Post, the walkers took off! Participants enjoyed the bluegrass music performed by the Lueker family children at Thoroughbred Park.



**Please pray for...**

**MISSION GRANTS 2020–2022**  
**Mission Goal: \$18,000**

**Military Share Food Distribution—  
Operation Barnabas—Calvary Lutheran Church, Mechanicsburg, PA—  
\$3,000—PAID**

**MOST Ministries Clean Water Filters  
(Mission Opportunities Short Term)  
Ann Arbor, MI—\$3,000—PAID**

**Epiphany Lutheran Church Food Truck, Epiphany Lutheran, Dorr, MI—  
\$3,000—PAID**

**Restoring Hope through Outreach Programs, Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church & Camp Restore, Detroit, MI—  
\$3,000—PAID**

**Soldiers of the Cross, LCMS Mission Advancement, St. Louis, MO—\$3,000**

**Chaplain Scholarships for Medical Mission Trips, LCMS Mission Advancement, St. Louis, MO—\$2,500**

**Grief Share—Grief Recovery Support Group Program, Catalina Lutheran Church LWML Society, Tucson, AZ—  
\$500**

**Convention News: Offerings Received**

The following were collected during the convention. Because offerings are still being received via mail, these are the unofficial totals and updates will be announced in a later eNews:

Convention Offering #1 — LWML Mission Goal 2021–2023: \$43,494

Convention Offering #2 — King’s Community Outreach in Fort Wayne, Indiana: \$27,434

Convention Offering #3 — Gifts for All God’s Children’s Connecting Kids to Christ Center, in Detroit, Michigan: \$28,207

Convention Offering #4 — POBLO International Ministries in Clinton Township, Michigan: \$27,079



**Save the Date**  
LWML English District Convention  
Friday, April 29 – Sunday, May 1, 2022  
Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh/Southpointe  
Canonsburg, PA

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