LWML English District March, 2020

Dear Women of the LWML,

For all of us, because of the Coronavirus many of our lives, plans will have to change. What doesn’t change – God is always with us.

**LWML Issues Travel Restrictions for BOD**

LWML President Debbie Larson, today, issued a travel restriction for the members of the LWML Board of Directors until May 3, 2020. This measure will impact LWML district conventions held during this time period and the LWML BOD is praying that the Lord will guide the decisions each LWML district president will make as they consider postponing their gatherings. Blessings continue amongst Corona virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) concerns. *"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life ..."* (Luke 12:22). *"And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?"* (Luke 12:25). *"Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"* (Luke 12:33-34). By the grace of God, the women of the LWML will find the opportunities to serve His people and share His Gospel. The LWML will continue to serve with gladness.

The LWML eNews also stated: “The Thrivent Choice program continues to be a blessing to LWML. Beginning in 2010, the LWML has received $197,620 in Thrivent Choice Dollars to date. Thrivent Choice Dollars go 100% to mission grants.”

**WHAT A WONDERFUL IDEA** – Last month I received an e-mail from our LWML District treasurer. She had received $120.00 to be used for our 2018-2020 Mission Grants. The donor was Gail Arndt, VP of Gospel Outreach. For her birthday, instead of gifts, she asked her family and friends to donate to our English District grants.

**NEWS FROM OUR MISSIONARIES - - - - Excepts from their own letters**

**Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster – Prague - The Czech Republic**

“On our way to Czech lessons, we pass by a church that has this beautiful crucifix outside. In the summer time, it is surrounded by the green leaves of the tree, and you cannot see much behind them. As we passed it lately, we have admired the stark contract between the golden body of Christ with death all around – the darkness of the cross, the leafless tree, and the gray Prague weather so frequent at this time of year. How many people walk by and do not even acknowledge it? How many see it as a symbol only of a long-dead faith? Or, how many see it only as a sign of a tortured death? But for the Christian, life is seen in this image, because we know that Christ has changed death into life. “

“Our annual walk through the Lenten season is crucial for us because it puts before us the cross of Jesus as the source of salvation and the means of eternal life. However, this is needed perhaps even more in this year’s Lent. All around the globe, the coronavirus is on everyone’s mind. People are worried and down-right frightened because death seems to be everywhere. But for the Christian, things are different. While we do not want to be fool-hardy, death is nothing to fear. Because even our deaths are not an end, without any more life to come. But rather a momentary rest until the Lord Jesus Christ raises us from death into eternal life.”

“The Czech Lutheran church does not have the tradition of midweek worship during Lent. But our congregation has a lot of influence from America! We felt great when we had a good turnout on Ash Wednesday. But the joy was challenged the next week when we had only three people—Dale, Martin, and Suzanne. This week was going to be better, members were saying that they would be there….then the coronavirus showed up, and now we are canceled at least for this week. We pray that this might pass quickly!”

“Since this newsletter was started, we have learned more about the coronavirus is doing here. The Czech Republic has shut schools, businesses and its borders with its neighbors. On top of that, the USA is not a place to which we can go. Please pray for us that we remain healthy as we pray the same for you. We commend you to Christ!”

**The Apple of His Eye Mission Society –Steve Cohen, Nancy Cohen, Robert Roegner and Kristi Roegner – Israel.**

Each month the e-mail letter I receive from “The Apple of His Eye” is approximately 7 pages. Of course I cannot include everything. This month I will use excerpts from Kristi Roegner.

 “Bob and I have felt welcomed here in Israel. From those at Immanuel Church Lutheran to those we’ve met in shops and other places, people have been kind to us. Receiving a warm welcome has enabled us to feel as though we “belong”, despite the relatively short time we’ve been here. Immanuel’s congregation is a melting pot of cultures and languages coming together to worship the Triune God at one of three weekend services (Hebrew service Friday afternoon. Hebrew English service Saturday morning, and English service Sunday morning). We’ve been enthusiastically welcomed and will now help welcome others – visitors who attend a concert or other event, worship at the church and or drop in through the week during “Open Church” Tuesday – Thursday afternoons. It amazes me how many people stop by to see the church and its beautiful windows. It provides wonderful opportunities for hospitality and meaningful conversations!”

“I’ve learned that the Torah puts great emphasis on hachnasat orehim (welcoming guests and showing hospitality). It is a fundamental Jewish value, an expression of kindness, and is considered a mitzvah (commandment).”

**Rev. Dr. Jonathan & Deaconess Cheryl Naumann – Latin America – Dominican Republic**

Pastor Jonathan – “The last weekend of February and first couple of days of March were spent in San Juan, Puerto Rico, providing spiritual care to our LCMS missionaries, during their much-needed break from continuous work in the aftermath of dozens of earthquakes. Yes, even full-time missionaries need Spiritual care! And it is when we rely on God to provide all of our needs that we are refreshed in both body and soul to continue our work in His name! In the Dominican Republic (where the LCMS missionary community includes 24 adults and 23 children), I still teach weekly youth confirmation classes; am providing pre-marriage counseling for engaged missionaries; and lead weekly Lenten services in English, along with taking my turn preaching in Spanish at various missions. My time at the seminary is currently focused on preparing the seminary library for use by students and professors as well as members of our missions or partner churches throughout the LAC region. THAT is a big job, but God is blessing our effort through some wonderful volunteers! **Thank you for your prayers and support!”**

Deaconess Cheryl – “In our February 2018 newsletter we reported on the installation of Pastor Sergio Fritzler and the dedication of a new church building for Lamb of God Lutheran Church in Licey. God has truly blessed His Word going out from this congregation – already using the young mission as a “mother church” for two more mission starts in the same areas of Santiago. The first Service of the Word was held in Villa Dura just before Christmas. Pastor Navarro, Pastor Fritzler and seminary field workers are working tirelessly to connect their youth outreach efforts to families in the more rural area of Villa Dura. Their weekly Bible study regularly brings together about 30 children from the community, with increasingly more adults coming to join. More than 80 children and 20 adults were present for the first Service of the Word in Villa Dura!”

 “Since the Mercy Center serves not only the Dominican Republic, but our missions and partner churches throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, there are several projects in the hopper in other countries., Four congregations in Venezuela are scheduled to have workshops on “Go and Be reconciled” and a large conference using our Spanish translation of “Every One His Witness” is being planned for church leaders in Mexico. Here in the DR in the next couple of months there will be workshops on health education, associated with some type of evangelism initiative, for each of the communities around our LCMS congregations.”

“You may recall that our LCMS mission in Jamaica opened its first Lutheran School five months ago in an area call Parade Gardens in the capitol city of Kingston. Two weeks ago, Mia Daley, a toddler enrolled at the Lutheran school, was hit by a stray bullet while she was dressing to go to our Lutheran church. She is in intensive care in a Jamaica hospital, with a spinal cord injury and damage to her liver and kidney, and the doctors are concerned that she may not be able to walk again. We are praying that God would have mercy on this little one, her family, and those who care for her.”

“Topics related to Life Issues – especially those that are already publicly debated in North America – are just starting to be addressed in many areas of Latin America. This May our seminary’s annual symposia will focus on Life Issues, and the Mercy Center conference on the last day of that symposia will address Abortion and Euthanasia. Rev. Michael Salemink, President of Lutherans for Life, is working with me and our regional nurse to develop materials appropriate for the Latino peoples in LAC.”

Pastor Tom Sanders from Faith Lutheran Church, Arlington Heights, IL., expresses: Pray! Pray for your individual situations, family and friends, community and nation. It does not matter what or who you pray for, most importantly, pray daily through the day, no matter what you are doing. Our Father, the Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will hear our prayers.

Yours in Christ,

Ruth Crowl

VP Christian Life/Human Care