The Mission Voice

LWML Louisiana-Mississippi District





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Journey to Faith: The Trip for a Lifetime

In the mid-1980s, my in-laws had a VHS camcorder, and we recorded many family events. I have been concerned that our family might be unable to view these videotapes. I found a working VHS player and bought a converter to change the tapes to a digital format. I have laughed and shed tears of the incredible journey of the previous 40 years. It was wonderful to hear the voices of loved ones who have passed on again. As I watched, it was like I was there again with the kids being born and holidays with loved ones. What a journey it has been!

Reflecting on my journey as a Lutheran woman in mission, I see the many people the Lord has placed in my path who nurtured my faith and supported me. Romans 12:2 says, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." Our Lord reminds us of our calling as Lutheran Women in Mission.

One of LWML's primary focuses is equipping women to honor God by serving others. Encourage other women in your congregation to come and be renewed through Bible Study and fellowship at the Louisiana-Mississippi District Retreat and other activities. *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes* away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing (James 1:22-25). Please, never give up on asking ladies to participate in LWML functions. You don't know the seeds the Holy Spirit has planted since you last asked.

Continue to nurture your spiritual growth by serving Him through participating in LWML functions. Our dear Lord provides guidance in His Word as we embark on this journey through life.

Leslie Koenck LA-MS District President

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8).

"Celebrate the Lord of the Nations"

Greetings in the name of the LORD! I pray that all is well with you, with your families, with your congregations, with your LWML societies, with your LWML zones, and with the LA-MS LWML District. "May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you." (Jude 1:2) As you know, our theme for this biennium is drawn from Psalm 33, verses twelve and thirteen, which read:

¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage! ¹³ The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; (Psalm 33:12-13, ESV)

When we read the word, "*LORD*", in the ESV translation, we should also have in mind that this is the personal name of God, "YHWH", typically pronounced Yahweh, that he revealed to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3:14-15. As such, this is the name of the one true God, the triune God – The Father, Son & Holy Spirit. So, with that in mind, we could rewrite of our theme verses as:

¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is [YHWH], the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!¹³ [YHWH] looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; (Psalm 33:12-13)

or

¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is [the one true God, the triune God - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit], the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!¹³ [The one true God, the triune God - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; (Psalm 33:12-13)

In our last newsletter, I focused on the work of God the Son. In this newsletter, I will focus on the work of the Third Person of the Holy Trinity, God the Holy Spirit.

¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the [one true God, the triune God – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit], the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!¹³ The LORD [one true God, the triune God – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit] looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man; (Psalm 33:12-13)

When it comes to the work of God the Holy Spirit as it is identified in the Third Article of the Creed, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.", we were taught in Dr. Luther's Small Catechism to believe and confess the following:

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.

In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.

On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

"Blessed is the nation", blessed are you, whose God is YHWH, the triune God. Blessed are you because the God the Holy Spirit took you who were once spiritually blind (1 Cor. 12:4) and gave you eyes to see your Savior, Christ Jesus. Blessed are you because the God the Holy Spirit took you who were once dead in your sins and trespasses (Eph. 2:1) and gave you life in Christ Jesus through the waters of Holy Baptism (Titus 3:5-7). Blessed are you because God the Holy Spirit took you who were once an unbeliever, separated from God and gave you faith that trust in Christ Jesus through the hearing of the Gospel (Rom. 10:17). Blessed are you because the God the Holy Spirit has enabled you to confess that Jesus is Lord (1 Cor. 12:3), so that you will be saved and never be put to shame (Rom. 10:10-13)

"Blessed is the nation", blessed are you, whose God is YHWH, the triune God. Blessed are you because the God the Holy Spirit continues to be at work in you through God's Word and Sacraments to keep you in the true faith that leads to life everlasting. Blessed are you because God the Holy Spirit continues to seek out the sheep who continually wander from the fold of Jesus Christ and bring them back to their Good Shepherd and restore them into a right relationship with the Triune God (LSB 612, *cf* Luke 15). Blessed are you because the God the Holy Spirit continues to lead you to repentance and turns you around and brings you back to receive that forgiveness that Jesus has won for us and freely pours out upon us for the sake of Christ Jesus. This is why we continue to celebrate the LORD of the nations in our individual lives and collectively each and every day. (LSB 806) And this is why we continue to joyfully proclaim Christ in the world around us, and support missions at home and abroad, because we know that God "would not see the sinner dead, I want him turned from error's ways, Repentant, living endless days." (LSB 614, *cf* Ez. 33:1-20)

"Blessed is the nation", blessed are you, whose God is YHWH, the triune God. Blessed are you because the God the Holy Spirit "will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom" (2 Tim 4:18a) as St. Paul says, "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power that enables Him even to subdue all things to Himself" (Phlp. 3:20-21) Or as we sing in the suggested Hymn of the Day for Pentecost Sunday (LSB 497):

Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord, With all Your graces now outpoured On each believer's mind and heart Your fervent love impart. Lord, by the brightness of Your light In holy faith Your Church unite; From ev'ry land and ev'ry tongue This to Your praise, O Lord, our God be sung: Alleluia, Alleluia!

Come, holy Light, guide divine, Now cause the Word of life to shine. Teach us to know our God aright And call Him Father with delight. From ev'ry error keep us free; Let none but Christ our master be That we in living faith abide, In Him, our Lord, with all our might confide. Alleluia, Alleluia!

Come, holy Fire, comfort true, Grant us the will Your work to do And in Your service to abide; Let trials turn us not aside. Lord, by Your pow'r prepare each heart, And to our weakness strength impart That bravely here we may contend, Through life and death to You, our Lord, ascend. Alleluia, Alleluia!

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all mercies and God all comfort be with you now and always.

Pastor Boldt LA-MS LWML District, Sr. Pastoral Counselor

The Season of Spring

Greetings in Christ,

The season that follows winter was called Lent following the church calendar until about 500 years ago when it started to take on a new title, "Springing time, Springtime, or Spring of the year". This notion is of the "Spring of the year," when plants "spring up" has many names in many languages which communicate the things we associate with this time of year. Danish voraar, Dutch voorjaar, German Frühling, French printemps, Latin tempus primum, and here is a good one, ancient Persian Adukanaiša, which apparently means "Irrigation-Canal-Cleaning Month." One thing is common about all these words, they describe this season in a way that gives a sense of freshness, earliness, newness, cleanliness, and youth that we all associate with this time of year.

Another thing that comes to mind this time of year is the miracle of new life as it "springs up" all around us. A clean slate, a chance to start afresh, these are the things we associate with Spring. It is really a beautiful time of year, a time of excitement for things to come, anticipation about all the wonderful things we hope to happen in the coming months. Here in the LAMS LWML we have many reasons to be excited about all the wonderful things coming our way. We can always look forward to checking off yet more of our mission grants. We can look forward to our own opportunities to vacation and enjoy God's beautiful creation this summer. We can look forward to the retreat in May (which I will sadly be unable to attend due to a prior commitment). We can look forward to the blessings of spring that are unique to the delta and gulf south region of our country.

With all the remarkable things coming up it is no wonder we often suffer from "Spring Fever". As a matter of fact, I think I am suffering a bit of "Spring Fever" myself. I especially look forward to our next convention in June.

As you may know the theme verse for the 41st Biennial LWML Convention is, 2 Peter 3:18 "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen." With the theme of "Growing in God's Grace" I look forward to enjoying all the great speakers, activities, and presentations. I have not attended since 2018 in Mobile, AL and now I

Look forward to enjoying the Omaha area with Y'all.

Even more exciting than all of this, is the fact that we are all refreshed by the greatest spring of all...... The "Spring of Living Water", Who refreshes us with hope, joy, love and peace every day with the gift of everlasting life in His presence. No greater gift exists, and we are all blessed to be recipients of this undeserved gift. So, if you feel a little bit run down after a long, cold winter, take a moment when it is warm in the coming weeks and go outside walk in the warm grass in your bare feet (watch out for bees) and thank God for a chance to be alive and enjoy His beautiful creation!

Have a great spring and a great summer! In Christ Pastor Robert Portier, LAMS LWML Junior Counselor

Organizational Resources

LWML ladies are amazing. Loraine Rathman was on the nominating committee for the Southern Zone; she called and asked me if I would run for an open position. I explained that at this time my mom was in bad health; she was living with Nick and me. Peter, my brother, Nick and I were taking care of her. I did not have time for anything else. My mother went home to our Lord in August 2017. She was extremely ill and it was a blessing that she was in her eternal home with no pain. Nick and I could go places and do things without getting someone to be with mom.

Nick and I were shopping at Walmart and I started praying to God... OK, God, please lead me to be a blessing to You. Loraine Rathman called and explained that our beloved Southern Zone President, Myrlene Pertuit, went home to our Lord unexpectedly in December 2017. Someone is needed to fill her position. Loraine asked if I would consider putting my name to run for President. I guess God answered my prayer very fast. I told Loraine that I'd be honored.

My time as President was a wonderful blessing. All our LWML ladies make you so welcome. I am honored to be a part of our LWML family. Our work in this world gives me such pride.

I accepted the position of LWML LA-MS VP of Organizational Resources. YWR and bylaws were my goals. I started on both; I did not get very far before things happened in my life. Several times I began to work on these things and I had health issues that set me back. I appreciate our LWML family's patience with me. I am also working on Prayer Partners so as soon as I am over this pneumonia recuperation I plan to get back to God's work. Thank you, God!

God's Blessings, Kathy Capace *LWML LA-MS VP of Organizational Resources* 985.882.4007 / 504.251.1972 <u>kcapace@gmail.com</u>

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it (1 Corinthians 12:27).

We All Serve

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:3-8 TLSB). The Holy Spirit works in each of us and helps direct us how we should go. Nominations are now being accepted for the election of the following district officers at the 2026 LWML Louisiana-Mississippi District Convention. Nominations will be received through September 30, 2025.

- Vice President of Organizational Resources, currently Kathy Capace
- Vice President of Special Focus Ministries, currently Betty Roberson
- Treasurer, currently Joanie Schendel
- Junior Pastoral Counselor, currently Robert Portier, who becomes Senior Pastoral Counselor at the 2026 convention.
- Nominating Committee, currently Lauretta Houston, Terry Kendrick, Gerda Portier, Anita Granger

The first four offices serve four-year terms, and the nominating committee serves a two-year term. To nominate a woman (who has previously held or currently holds any office at the zone level) for any of the listed district offices, please complete the LA-MS District Recommendation found on the web site and submit it to the Nominating Committee Chairman (include your name, mailing address, and email address). Permission from the person to submit her name is not needed as the committee will determine which are qualified nominees.

The Nominating Committee should have at least three members to be elected from a slate of at least five representing a minimum of three zones.

To nominate a pastor for Junior Pastoral Counselor, please provide his name to a LA-MS district board member on the nominating committee. As per the LWML LA-MS Bylaws, the Board of Directors shall select six nominees, if possible, for Pastoral Counselors at the fall board meeting in odd numbered years. The Nominating Committee shall submit the names of the nominees to the LCMS Southern District President for approval. From the list of approved nominees, the Nominating Committee shall select two and obtain their written consent to serve if elected. Send it to Nominating Committee Chairman, Lauretta Houston at ladhouston49@gmail.com or you may send it via postal mail to Lauretta Houston, PO Box 1644, Rosepine, LA 70659.

Please consider yourself, a sister, and a pastor for nominations. As my LWML mentor, Liz Hilliard, advised, "Don't be quick to say 'no'. Pray first and consider the calling." If you have held an office at the zone level and have never served at the district level, perhaps it is time for you to serve in a different position. You will not be alone. You have support from many ladies. We are all members of one body and serve the Lord with gladness. The only question is HOW will you serve?

Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed. Proverbs 15:22

God bless you, give you peace and wisdom.

Lauretta Houston Nominating Committee Chair

Historian/Archivist Update

Reminder of materials to collect and archive for LWML--

Society Level: (collected by President, Secretary, or Archivist)

- 1. *Signed* copies of society minutes and agendas
- 2. *Labeled* photos from special events (who, what, where, when)
- 3. 5-year history of society
- 4. Copy of society bylaws

SEND COPIES OF ABOVE TO ZONE ARCHIVIST

Zone Level: (collected by Archivist)

- 1. All received society materials
- 2. Zone signed minutes and agendas from executive board meetings and rallies

These materials can be emailed or brought to your zone Spring rally or the May Retreat. Thank you to all society, zone, and district leaders for diligently maintaining our LWML heritage and history.

Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people (Colossians 3:23).

Spring blessings and joy to all,

Gail Gerike LA-MS District Historian/Archivist

News from the Southern Zone

Hello to all of the ladies of the LWML LA-MS District. I am Laura Lips, the proud and blessed President of the Southern Zone. I am pleased to combine this summary of our societies' activities and how they have been able to *"Serve the Lord with Gladness"* since our last *Mission Voice* submission.



The <u>**Cross of Calvary University-Baton Rouge</u>** society president, Kathy Abbott, stated that they met in January to sort and pack food items for the LSU and Southern Food Pantries, and they continue to collect food items for these campuses throughout the year. They also hosted and provided snacks for the January Southern Zone Spring Executive Board Meeting.</u>

In February, she and Harriett Bridges were able to attend the "Phil's Friends" workshop held at Trinity. They enjoyed participating with all of the ladies and making cards and hats. The main focus of their service is providing for the students who attend both LSU and Southern University, following His command "... Jesus called his disciples to him and said, "I have compassion on the crowd because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. And I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way."

The *Holy Trinity-Covington/New Life-Folsom* society president, Rhonda Jackson, excitedly shared that they had a truly enjoyable Christmas luncheon, with an ornament exchange, at a local restaurant. They have also been working on several ongoing projects, including sewing and decorating bereavement pillows for parents who have lost a newborn. I feel that if you have ever lost a child (no matter their age), you can surely relate to the huge hole that this loss leaves in one's heart and life, and that one of these pillows would be so comforting to you on many occasions. They also continue to knit and crochet prayer shawls for their Prayer Shawl Ministry; and also have a project "in the works" making "goody" bags for infusion patients at a local cancer center. They are truly living out the words of *Psalm 147:3, He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*

The <u>St. Paul-Hammond</u> society president, Gail Gerike, shared that she attended the Zone Executive Board Meeting held at Cross of Calvary University on 1/5, where plans were made for the Spring Rally, to be held at Redeemer on 3/22, using the theme "**Trusting in the Lord**" and the Bible verse Matthew 6:34, Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

In February, the annual Southern Zone LWML Prayer Service was held at St. Paul and officiated by Pastor Louis Boldt. The LWML prayer service was titled **"Blessed** *Are They...*", using the Beatitudes from *Matthew 5:1-12*; and was live-streamed via YouTube. The link was shared with District President Leslie Koenck, who placed it on the District website so everyone could participate virtually, so that those who could not attend in person could use the link, *lwml.org/prayer-service*. District Past President Michelle Zollinger initiated the live streaming of the Southern Zone annual event.

Also in February, three of their ladies were able to participate in the "Phil's Friends" workshop at Trinity; this was the 3rd or 4th workshop each of them has attended. Gail shared that the combined spirit of joy in all of the attendees was a sight to behold, a living example of *Proverbs 27:17* (*"Just as iron sharpens iron, friends sharpen the minds of each other."* (*Proverbs 27:17*)

The <u>**Trinity-Baton Rouge</u>** society president, Liz Slothower, shared news about their annual "Veteran's Honor, Soup-to-Go & Bake Sale." The proceeds were divided to support both the National and District mite grants and contribute towards the congregation's youth being able to attend the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans this summer. In December, they caringly collected jackets and toys for children in North Carolina who, along with their families, were greatly affected by Hurricane Helene in late September. In February, they had a good time hosting a "Phil's Friends" servant event and working on projects for the men, women, and children cancer victims they serve. She then shared (shush!) that they are currently planning a "spring garden party luncheon" and will bless the</u>

preschool families and staff with gifts.



The Southern Zone "Phil's Friends" Coordinator, Rhonda Jackson, would like to share the accomplishments of the above-referenced event. "This was our 4th "Phil's Friends" servant event; 19 ladies attended; 18 Cards of Encouragement were created; 18 journals were decorated; 6 fleece blankets were tied; and 30 knitted/crocheted hats were donated, along with Cards of Hope that were finished. God has blessed all the ladies with talents to work on these items to benefit "Phil's Friends".

The **Zion-Bogalusa** society president, Cara Hall,

shared that they have enjoyed the following activities: In October, they gave out candy bags at a local food bank. Then, in November, they gathered items that filled six food boxes given to local families so they could enjoy and celebrate Thanksgiving together over a meal. They also adopted three local children in December so that they could enjoy the wonders of Christmas; and they donated \$150 to a local Senior Center. January was when they turned their hearts toward home; buying three new banners for the Church. As their president, she believes that, *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).*

As the President of the Southern Zone, I have had a delightful time getting to know all of the ladies in our societies intimately. The Bible verse that comes to mind when I think upon all of their works is *Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deeds (Proverbs 19:17).*

Laura Lips President of the Southern Zone

Unfortunately, due to an error on my part, I am unable to include an update from the following Southern Zone Societies: **Good Shepherd-Baton Rouge, Redeemer-Mandeville, St. James-Gonzales, The Village-Lacombe**. I promise, you will be hearing from them with an update on their service projects and special events in the next Mission Voice.

News from the Northern Zone

Northern Zone Spring Rally will be held April 5 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Monroe. The theme is "Faith," using Hebrews 1:11 as our Bible passage. Our society has been busy making plans.

While thinking about this, the hymn " My Faith Looks Up to Thee" is on my mind. Over and over, it repeats in my head. To my husband's grief, I even sing it aloud at times. What beautiful words this hymn speaks. It's almost like a sermon in a nutshell. My faith looks up to thee, thou lamb of Calvary Savior divine! Now hear me when I pray, take all My guilt away. Oh, let me from this day be wholly thine!!

What blessed assurance we have that we are loved so much that Jesus gave his life for us, forgives us of our wretchedness, and makes us wholly his.

Pat Brady President of the Northern Zone

News from the Southwest Zone

The Southwest Zone held their Spring Rally on March 8 at Redeemer Lutheran Church in DeRidder. The Bible study theme was *"Heart" Matters: A Look at Mary* by Shari Miller, East Helena, Montana. The participants had a day filled with God's word of encouragement, fellowship, zone business, and ended our time together singing "Go, MY Children, with My Blessing." The last verse states "I the Lord will bless and keep you and give you peace; I the Lord will smile upon you and give you peace: I the Lord will be your Father, Savior, Comforter, and Brother. Go, My children; I will keep you and give you peace."







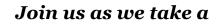
News from the New Orleans Zone

The members of the 2024 New Orleans Spring Rally was held at Bethel Lutheran Church on March 23, 2024. The following officers were elected-Vice President-Andrea R. Marrero replaced Oddistine Moore; Secretary-Kristi T. Nodurft replaced Shila Alfred-Jacob; Treasurer-Alida Z. Olson replaced Betty C. Roberson; VP Human Care Gail W. Brogan replaced Catrice E. Kagler and Yolonda W. Prevost-Parliamentarian. The officers not up for election are Gladys B. Brown-President, Erica C. DeJean-VP Christian Life The outgoing officers will be a support to the newly elected officers. Our Pastoral Counselor-Rev Limakatso Nare who replaced Rev. Robert A. Belknap. Rev. Nare swore the new officers in.

Those in attendance brought hygiene and period products, as well as gently used clothing to be given to Covenant House. A Litany was recited by all blessing the abundant outpouring of gifts. The gifts were delivered to Covenant House by Gail W. Brogan, VP of Human Care, as well as other members of the New Orleans Zone.

The Spring Rally and workshop will be held on March 22, 2025. St. John Lutheran will host the gathering. We look forward to seeing our LA-MS District president, Leslie Koenck.

Submitted by, Betty C. Roberson





Journey to Faith: The Trip for a Lifetime

LWML LA-MS District Christin Life Retreat May 2-4, 2025

REGISTRATION FORM

LWML Louisiana-Mississippi District Christian Life Retreat
"Journey to Faith: The Trip of a Lifetime"

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Special foo	d restrictions		

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT DUE APRIL 14, 2025

If you plan to attend the National LWML Convention. Please send an email to President Leslie Koenck. Looking forward to seeing you there!



Lutheran Women in Mission 2025 Convention June 26–29, 2025 CHI Health Center — 455 N 10th St, Omaha, NE 68102

Convention Information and Registration: Find out all the details about the 2025 Convention in the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* Winter 2024 insert. Online registration opened March 1.

Click here to view the 2025 Convention Information and Registration PDF.