

The Clarion

November 2023 Volume 26 Issue 4

President Laura's Post

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?" Romans 8:36

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last week, my husband and I took our very first fall camping trip. While we were excited about seeing our friends and maybe seeing the colors, we also worried about the weather. You see, the forecast was chilly, especially at night. Extra blankets and warm clothes were packed. Firewood was purchased, and fire starters were brought along to make the process easier. Meals were planned prior to leaving, and food was purchased. We were trying to be prepared.

I have been thinking a lot about being prepared. Many times, our plans and preparation do not do any good. An illness, an accident, financial hits, and sick kids or grandkids may throw our plans off their path. But God knows the plans that He has for us. He has prepared for us the means to overcome the obstacles that throw us off our paths. He gives us His Word, to comfort us in times of difficulties. He gives us "all that we need to support this body and life". He gives and sustains our faith, that we may endure our trials and the derailment of our plans. Sometimes our plans do not come to fruition because God has a better plan for us. We do not often see it at the time, but later, we know that it was God's plan all the time. We are often delayed in our plans. Our trip gets delayed by a flight cancellation, or our arrival gets delayed by a traffic jam. Maybe we are needed at home, or maybe being a few miles behind our schedule keeps us away from an accident. (I often think this while traveling through Chicago on my way to Michigan. It helps with my patience level).

In thinking about the themes of our conventions, fall rallies and retreats this year, I think that God has been preparing us. Our district convention theme, "Thy Kingdom Come" made us think of the urgency of Christ's coming. We pray Thy kingdom come, but are we really prepared for that event? We pray that God would give us His Spirit so that we may believe His Word and "live under Him in His Kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness" (Luther's Small catechism, Question 257). Our national convention theme, "Celebrate the Lord of the Nations" reminded us that while we celebrate our Lord, we also need to be proclaiming the gospel. We want others to be as prepared as we are. Our theme for LWML Sunday this year was "The King is Coming" (Ps 24: 7-10). A call to "Lift up your heads, O gates!". We are a royal priesthood, a chosen people, set apart by God for good works so that others will praise our Father in heaven. With our Fall Rallies, we were reminded to "Love One Another", which we do because He first loved us. **What a better way to serve God and the Church than by being A Lutheran Women in Mission; "proclaiming Christ, supporting missions and equipping women to honor God by serving others". (LWML Mission statement)**

I have been using “**Through the Bible in a Year**” from **lwml.org** this year for my daily devotions. I have come to realize that though the world seems to be in chaos, it has been since the fall of mankind. God’s people often turned away from Him and made their own plans.... remember the Tower of Babel? God’s people often did not see their plans as being contrary to God’s Word until they were suffering the wrath of God, then they would turn back to God and repent. God continually forgave them and granted them forgiveness and mercy. We are not any better than the people of the Bible, simultaneously saints and sinners, and we will remain so until we enter heaven. What a comfort God’s Word is! It reminds us of the immeasurable mercy of God and gives us strength to carry on when our plans are derailed.

The appropriate response to being prepared, then, is to include Jesus in all your plans. Pray before you make your plans. During your planning be sure to thank God when those plans reap the needed or wanted result. God is faithful, knowing even beforehand what you need and how things should work. We need to remember this in the upcoming Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas seasons. Involve God in your planning and preparations. He wants to hear from you. He wants you to be mindful of where all your blessings come from. He wants you to be ever mindful of Him, the Lord and giver of all good things.

³⁷ “For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man”. Matt 24: 37-39 (ESV) So we continue to plan, asking God’s will and blessing on our plans. Some of the upcoming events that we are planning are the **district convention which will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rock Island, IL on April 26-27, 2024. Plan on coming as we “Hark the Voice of Jesus Calling” based on Luke 10:2 “And he said to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest”.** Again, praying for God to assist with our plans. Our keynote speaker will be Rev. Mark Frith with the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty. He will be speaking to us on how we can assist in the harvest field of government. **Our national Representative will be Arlene Naasz, VP of Organizational Resources. Another event that is being hosted by the Rebekah Circle at St. John’s Lutheran Church, 13443 Townline Rd, Green Valley, IL on Friday, March 8th and Saturday, March 9th, 2024, is a retreat with Deb Burma, “Leaning on Jesus”.** Plan on joining some of the ladies in the district for Bible Study, song, and fellowship.

May God bless you and yours as you plan celebrations for the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Bring Him in to all your planning, before, during and after. As always, I thank God for all of you, my sisters in Christ. Please pray for the LWML Central Illinois District as we plan for upcoming events, mission grants, and new officers.

Laura Strattman
LWML CID President

Next Deadline for Clarion is February 25th

The Mites Keep Marching ON!



Through the grace and goodness of God, we were able to fund our first mite goal of the 2023-2024 year. CID President, Pastor Mohr, happily received this \$30,000 for Student Aid for church workers at our October 5th board meeting. Praise and Thanksgiving! We now march on toward our second goal of \$25,000 for Springfield Lutheran High Transportation. The Lord will continue to bless our mite boxes as we fill them with coins and dollars, offered with prayer.

When you read this article, the deadline for submitting proposals for 2024-2025 will have passed. I have received several for consideration by the mission grants committee. We will be meeting in late November to discuss them and make concise explanations for your board

approval and ultimately, voter approval at our District Convention. Thanks to those who serve on this committee and many thanks also to all who submitted grant proposals.

Wishing you a Grateful Celebration of God's Abundant Blessings this Thanksgiving!

Cheryl Long
VP of Gospel Outreach and Mission Grants

Orphan Grain Train Collection



Wow CID! We did an amazing job filling the truck for Orphan Grain Train on Saturday, October 21st. We loaded 700 quilts, 50 bags of clothes, 15 boxes of school kits, 25 boxes of hygiene kits, 132 pillowcase dresses, 6 bags of hats, scarves, and gloves, 12 bags of baby items, many boxes of school supplies, toys, walkers, crutches, and many miscellaneous items. We also collected \$142. Thank you to everyone who donated. A special thank you to the guys and gals at Our Saviors in Springfield for helping! Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow!

Sharol Bolton, Human Care

Prison Ministry

The LWML of St. John's Lutheran Church in Geneseo has purchased 30 Spanish Bibles for Rev. Pablo Dominguez to be used in his prison ministry at East Moline Correctional Center. Elizabeth Neumann presented these Bibles to Rev. Dominguez. They have submitted a voucher to the District's Prison/Jail Ministry for reimbursement - a grant provided by the LWML of the Central Illinois District. Congregations interested in reaching out to those incarcerated in their area can find more information on the Central Illinois District's web page under "Prison Ministry," or by contacting Rev. Rodney Blomquist at prisonministry@cidlcms.org.



Multiple LWML Zones Enjoy Presentation



Dr. Gerald Perschbacher LL.D. and his wife Sharmon from the Missouri-Illinois Branch of Orphan Grain Train covered 625 miles (Sept. 11-14, 2023) while visiting three LWML zone rallies (Zones: Danville, Champaign, and Bloomington) with a total attendance of 160 (plus a few others who were guests). They received a modest bag of quilts for Orphan Grain Train. Gerald gave at least an hour-long lively presentation on the purpose, activities, and rise of Orphan Grain Train nationally and in the Missouri -Illinois branch. Part of the presentation was a visual PowerPoint of the St. Louis site and general operations in preparing and loading a shipment and providing goods for local pantries. Sharmon Perschbacher set up a display with photos, kits, a quilt, and handouts on how to prepare items for Orphan Grain Train. She also spoke briefly as part of the presentation. Gerald took several pictures at the rallies of the LWML ladies pointing heavenward to give God the glory.

LWML Celebrates Anniversary



LWML from Christ Lutheran Church in Peoria celebrates its 76th Anniversary this year. On Sunday, April 27, 1947, our pastor, the Rev. Dr. Schuelke met with a few ladies to form plans for a Lutheran Women's Missionary League in our church (Christ-Peoria). In May 1947 they met again to adopt a constitution and elect officers. The group started collecting mite boxes in July 1947. At this time mite boxes are collected before worship services on the first Sunday of every month. The first Birthday Dinner was held in April 1948 and this tradition continues to this day with a Birthday Lunch. The first Strawberry Festival was held in June 1948 and continued until the early 1990's. A few years later our group hosted our first Cookie

Walk. The proceeds from it fund our donations for mission projects throughout the year. After 76 years and with our congregation's support, our ladies continue to serve the Lord with gladness.



Effingham/Shelby Zone Rally

The Effingham/Shelby Zone held their Fall Rally on September 20th. The Ladies Aid of Faith Lutheran Church, Shumway hosted the event that was attended by 41 members, 4 pastors, and 2 guests. The Zone Counselor, Rev. Steven Becker led the opening devotion based on the theme "Abound in Love for One Another." Rev. Rodney Blomquist shared about his work as the CID Prison/Jail Ministry Coordinator and his volunteer work as chaplain at the Taylorville Correctional Center.

Business included electing Elaine Probst as Zone Vice-President and approving the Zone Bylaws. Marsha Courson, Zone delegate to the National Convention in Milwaukee gave an interesting report. She would be happy to share with your group. District Sr. Pastoral Counselor, Rev. Gaylord Spilker led the Bible study entitled "Love One Another." The ladies collected 450 food and personal care items and \$1,070 for the St. John's Food Pantry, Effingham.

It was a great day to "Abound in Love for One Another" because of God's great love for us.

Danville Zone Rally



The Danville Zone Fall Rally was held at Trinity Lutheran Church in Danville. 57 members and guests enjoyed a delicious breakfast with the meeting starting immediately after in the church sanctuary. Dr. Perschbacher from the Orphan Grain Train gave a very informative presentation on their distributions in the United States and overseas. The Bible study entitled "Love One Another" was led by Rev. Ryan Meyer, District Counselor. Carol Schuldt was elected to serve as president and Gretchen Elliott as secretary – treasurer. The door offering was \$334 and the ingathering totals were amazing. The Orphan Grain Train received 40 items and \$246. The Crosspoint at the Y received 366 items and \$125. These collections definitely reflected the theme of the day which was "Abound in Love for One Another".

Quilting

The ladies at Peace Lutheran Church in Thomasboro are finishing a quilt for a University of Illinois student that is a member of their church. They have made several quilts this year for their members and shut-ins. In the photo is Lois Wood, Joanne Wallace, Margo Hays and Evelyn Miller.



More “What’s Your 80?” Projects

Even though the National Convention is over and the celebration of the 80th year of LWML is over, there are more projects from our Central Illinois groups that need to be highlighted.

Springfield Zone



Our Savior’s LWML in Springfield chose to assemble 80 hygiene kits to distribute to various Springfield shelters. During February and March, generous donations were collected from the LWML members as well as the members of the congregation. God richly and abundantly blessed this project. There were over 85 kits assembled which were distributed in April.



Lincoln Zone



To help celebrate the 80th anniversary of the National LWML, the ladies from the Lincoln Zone have been busy gathering items to fill shoeboxes for Samaritan’s Purse/Operation Christmas Child Shoebox. Each group within the zone filled boxes with goodies for three various age groups for both boys and girls. All the boxes in the zone were gathered together. It was a great mission project and our zone ended up with 94 boxes, along with \$580 to help with shipping costs. The

boxes were taken to a drop-off location in Havana and from there, they will go to a warehouse in Minnesota to be distributed wherever they are needed this coming Christmas. Our ladies were excited to do some of their Christmas shopping early to help several needy children have a Blessed Christmas later this year.

More “What’s Your 80?” Projects

Decatur Zone



The ladies Guild of Concordia Lutheran Church in Decatur collected over 80 different snacks to be given to Muffley School. The snacks are given to the students during the school day. They chose this school to help because the teachers were providing the snacks by themselves.

Lutheran World Relief Collection

Women of Faith (WOF) at Faith Lutheran Church, in Kewanee, Illinois collected items that were donated by church members and assembled them into 48 personal care kits which will be given to Lutheran World Relief.



National Mite Goal

The 2023–2025 fiscal period is July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2025.

Amounts received as of September 30, 2023, are as follows:

Mission Goal for 2023–2025 Biennium: \$2,350,000.00

Amount Received: \$671,269.10

Total Mite Offerings Still Needed: \$1,678,730.90

“Journey To Faith” Enjoyed at Camp Cilca

The weekend of October 6th and 7th the conference center was filled with 35 ladies attending the Central Illinois District Retreat. The registration was at the main dining hall at 5 PM which was followed by a meal prayer by Pastor Ryan Meyer. The delicious meal was made by the ladies of the Lincoln Zone and included chicken casserole accompanied by many salads and desserts. The Friday evening session of “Journey To Faith: A Trip for a Lifetime” began with a welcome by Esther Becker, in the absence of Laura Strattman. The skit which included a pirate ship and 3 pirates and a cruise ship with a captain and first mate made their debut. The parts were played by Rhonda Kruse, Esther Becker, Brenda Hendricks, Annie Guerrettaz, and Nancy Stremming. After a Biblical treasure hunt, the Bible study entitled “What Is Spiritual Growth” began which was led by Pastor Meyer. Games and fellowship followed before bedtime. After eating a delicious breakfast provided by the Camp Cilca staff, the Bible study continued led by Pastor Spilker. The participants studied stages of spiritual growth, intellectual growth, ethical growth, devotional growth, and emotional growth. Other topics for the afternoon were marks of spiritual growth and nurturing spiritual growth. There was a skit for each topic which took the participants to Treasure Island, Rock of Salvation, Valley of Forgiveness, Pinnacle of Devotion, Mountains of Joy, and the Pillars of Faith. It was an eventful trip with great friends!





MARCH 8, 6:30 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.
MARCH 9, 8:30 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH (SAND PRAIRIE)

13443 TOWNLINE RD, GREEN VALLEY, ILLINOIS 61534
INCLUDES SNACKS FRIDAY, CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH SATURDAY

Hosted by Rebekah Circle

REGISTRATION WILL BEGIN AT 6:30 ON FRIDAY AND 8:15 ON SATURDAY.

MAIL REGISTRATION FORM (BELOW) AND \$30 REGISTRATION FEE TO:

SHEILA LUTZ, 1908 DANE KELSEY DR., PEKIN, IL 61554

(MAKE CHECKS OUT TO REBEKAH CIRCLE)

Registration Deadline February 24th

Name _____ Cell Phone _____

Address _____

email _____

Please check one of the following:

Friday only _____ Saturday only _____ Friday and Saturday _____

For Questions or more information, please contact Sheila
at sheilawml@gmail.com or 309-347-8990.