

The Clarion

February 2024 Volume 27 Issue 1

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

I cannot believe it is 2024 already. I pray that you all had wonderful holidays filled with family and friends. I also pray that you stayed healthy with all the events that hopefully happened in your world. My biggest prayer is that the emphasis for the CHRISTmas season was just that.... Christ who was that little baby laid in a manger who willingly came down to save us from our sins.

2023 was an eventful year. There were district and national conventions, fall rallies and a retreat. There were so many opportunities to come together with our sisters in Christ to praise and serve Him together. My favorite part is getting to see you and visit with you as I travel throughout the district. I am humbled and awed with the women in this district. Whenever there is something to get done, it gets done well and often bigger than the original planned goals. I am surrounded by women who are mentors and who I want to be like "when I grow up". Of course, pushing 60 hard, you would think that I am grown up. The thing is, as Christians, we are never fully "grown". We are always looking to grow in the Lord. We look for ways to grow in the Word. We are always looking for ways to serve the Lord with gladness. Not that our works do anything for us, but that our works shine the light of Jesus to those around us. We *get* to serve others; we don't *have* to! What joy and privilege we are given in the LWML! Ways to serve others with our sisters in Christ.

This last year, I completed the "Through the Bible in a Year" calendar. What a different way to go through the Bible! I have probably read in all 66 books before, in bits and pieces, but reading the Bible like this was different. In my journey this year, a couple themes kept coming at me. First, our God is a jealous God. He wants to be first in our lives. He wants us to look to Him in all that we do, both the big and the little things. I read recently, where a pastor got into the habit of saying a little prayer even before answering the phone, "Help me, Lord Jesus". Praying that his responses were appropriate and helped the person on the other end of the line. That is the way God wants to be in your life...always first in your thoughts and prayers. Second, I was struck by how forgiving the Lord is. So often, He would be angry at the Israelites in the Old Testament, exiling them for their idolatry and their unwillingness to follow Him only. Just when you think they were done for, God would reach out to them in love and mercy. Reconciling them to Himself again. We must remember that He is like this with us also. Whenever we do not place Him first in our thoughts for our needs and try fixing things on our own, He gently guides us back to Him. He loves us and only wants what is best for us. He died for all our sins, even the ones with which Satan plagues us. If you would like to read the Bible this way, go to **lwml.org** and type "through the Bible in a year" in the search bar to get the calendars. As this is coming out in February, you can start there and go through next January.

This year we have some great events planned also. **In March, the Peoria/Pekin Zone is having a retreat with Deb Burma** which is titled **“Leaning on Jesus” on March 8th -9th**. Please look under the Peoria/Pekin Zone tab for the registration form. It was also in the November Clarion. **Big plans are underway for the 79th Annual District LWML CID Convention**. The theme this year is “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.” **The convention will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rock Island, IL on April 26-27, 2024**. Plan on coming a day early and seeing some of the nearby sites! Arsenal Island is great for the history buffs in the family. The Mississippi River boasts some great parks where you may spot an eagle or two. There are some great sights along the Great River Trail that passes by the John Deere Pavilion. The John Deere Pavilion will appeal to the tractor fans in your family. The Broadway Historic District boasts 19th century architecture. Maybe check out the schedule for the Circa ‘21 Playhouse which opened in 1921 and is a dinner theater with the waitstaff as the players. So many things can happen at district conventions - Voting for Mission Grants! Servant Events on Friday Afternoon! Worship Service with Communion! Friday Fellowship! Voting for New Officers! Attending Breakout Sessions! Making new friends and meeting up with old friends! Make a girls trip out of it!

I hope to see you all at these upcoming events and I pray that 2024 brings God’s blessings to you and your service in the LWML CID.

Laura Strattman
LWML CID President

Grant Update

We have been blessed to fund grant # 2 to Lutheran High! This check was delivered by Ashlyn, great niece of this VP and a LuHi sophomore. She presented it to Zack Klug, LuHi principal! These funds will aid in the purchase of a ‘mini’ bus as current buses show much use.

Shortly you will be receiving with your convention invitation, the new list of mite grant proposals for the 2024-2025 year. Thanks to the grant committee that met in late November. These proposals will be presented to the District Board at our February meeting. Following approval, you will have a slate of grants to select from for funding from April 1, 2024 through March of 2025. Talk about keeping numbers straight!



With that said, we still have some work to do to meet our current goal and fund the remaining selected projects! God truly blesses our mites and all that they do! Keep those mite boxes overflowing! See you at the Rock Island Convention!

VP of Gospel Outreach and Mission Grants,
Cheryl Long

Salem Lutheran Cookie Walk

The Ladies Guild of Salem Lutheran Church in Jacksonville sponsored their annual cookie walk on December 1st. The proceeds (\$2400) was distributed between the Jacksonville Food Pantry, Swaddling Clothes, Salem Schools Adopt-A-Student Program, and The Orphan Grain Train. The Junior High students from the school shopped for the food, helped transport it to the Food Pantry, and put it on the shelves. Then, they volunteered their time to fill boxes for clients who were appreciative of their efforts. It was a multi-age effort to help feed those in need in the Jacksonville Area.



Illinois March for Life

The 2024 Illinois March for Life will be held April 17th in Springfield. Better parking will be available this year. More information will be out soon.

“Leaning on Jesus” Retreat

The Rebekah Circle of St. John’s Lutheran Church (Sand Prairie) in rural Green Valley would like to invite you to a retreat, “Leaning on Jesus,” written and led by Concordia Publishing House author, Deb Burma. Deb, a pastor’s wife from Columbus, Nebraska, is a witty, and joy-filled speaker. Join us on March 8 & 9 for fun and fellowship with other sisters in Christ as we delve deeply into the Scripture and, together, learn more about depending on God’s strength. Session one starts on Friday, and sessions two – four will be on Saturday. Make plans to secure your reservations today. If you have any questions, please contact Sheila Lutz, [309-635-7050](tel:309-635-7050) or sheilalwml@gmail.com. Registration forms and other information was in the November Clarion.

Servant Events for Convention

Activities for Friday at the District Convention in Rock Island in April will include tying quilts, marking Bibles for the Illinois State Fair, making Witness bracelets and puppets for MOST Ministries, and an off-site trip to help at a Food Pantry.

Help! I am in need of a couple gals who could help at the table crocheting finger puppets. The simple pattern can be found on the MOST Ministries website. If you are able to help, please contact me, sharolb2@yahoo.com or 217-737-1106. I have all the yarn; I just need someone who can crochet.

We will also be collecting eyeglasses and glass cases for MOST Ministries. A pattern for the glass cases is on the MOST website. The ladies from Ash Grove (Danville Zone) have already made 150 cases. WOW!! Way to go!

MOST Ministries has opportunities for short term mission trips. Our CID budget has funds to help you. Why not consider a Mission trip this summer?

I am sorry to say, we are no longer collecting stamps. There is not a market for them. I will keep the stamps I have and will continue to look for an outlet to sell them. Thank you to everyone who has collected and trimmed stamps over the years!

Serving the Lord with Gladness!
Sharol Bolton, Human Care Chair

Cookie Walk



St. Paul Blue Point Ladies Aid in Altamont had a cookie walk. All members were asked to bring 8 dozen cookies. 90 boxes of cookies were made. Of those boxes 15 went to the members of our congregation who are 80 years or older and to the shut-ins. A free will donation was accepted for the remainder. Funds from the cookie walk will go to the upgrade to the church playground.

Champaign Cookie Walk



The St. John's LWML of Champaign held a cookie walk on December 2, 2023. The church members did an amazing job of baking cookies. Cookies that were not sold on that day, were available on the following Sunday between church services. So happy to report that \$1,221 will be distributed between St. John Lutheran School and local charities.

Trees on the Tees



Trees on the Tees is an event that takes place at the Hickory Point Golf Course which is on the north side of Decatur. The ladies from Decatur St. John's LWML sponsored a tree and decorated it with "Names of Jesus". They were one of many groups that sponsored an eight foot decorated tree that was displayed under the outdoor pavilion. The ladies handmade the names that hung from the tree.

Next Clarion deadline -

April 25th

**The 79th Annual
Lutheran Women's Missionary League
Central Illinois District Convention**



Theme - "Hark the Voice of Jesus Calling"

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.'

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Rock Island, Illinois

April 26-27, 2024