

The Mission Voice

LWML Louisiana-Mississippi District



Summer 2024 Issue:

- District Convention - Celebration!
- Encouragement from Our President
- A Word of Thanks
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Celebrate the
Lord of the nations...



Our 41st Biennial LWML LA-MS District Convention, held April 26 – 28, 2024, at the Hilton Garden Inn, Bossier City, LA, was amazing as usual. God's love surrounds you as the Convention starts, and it continues even after you go back home. I wish all our ladies (and gentlemen) could be there and get that experience. We set up a YWR photo booth with props for all to take fun photos.

This year, Nick and I were joined by our YWR granddaughter, Jules. With her bubbly, positive attitude, she made the convention even better. Several members of our Village



Church family had the pleasure of attending the Convention.

Congratulations to our new Officers: Leslie Koenck, President; Rita Salathe, Vice President of Christian Life; Melissa Meeks, Vice President of Communication; Andrea Ferguson, Vice President of Gospel Outreach; Rhonda Jackson, Secretary; Rev. Robert Portier, Junior Pastoral Counselor; and Laurretta Houston, Terry Kendrick, Gerda Portier, and Anita Granger, nominating committee members.

Thank you for going on this wonderful adventure serving Christ.

I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being (Psalm 104:33).

Yours in Christ,

Kathy Capace

Vice President of Organizational Resource

What a Celebration!!

In the last weekend of April 2024, Bossier City, LA became the place to be for the best celebration of the year. More than 89 Lutheran women and men gathered from all over the Louisiana-Mississippi District to “Celebrate the Lord of the Nations...” at the 2024 District Convention. This highly anticipated biennial event was a weekend filled with fellowship, service, and the Word.

As attendees arrived at the Hilton Garden Inn on Friday, our gracious hosts from the Northern Zone could be seen rushing around the corridors like busy worker bees sporting bright green bandanas. In the Exhibit Hall, the bidding was fierce at the Silent Auction to raise money for Mites; meanwhile, at a particularly sparkly table, special guest Linda Gage from LWML Gifts of Love shared information on estate planning and sharing your faith through your final wishes. Just outside, the



Christian Life table provided a “Recharging Station” for body, soul, and electronic devices complete with a variety of devotionals and free back & shoulder massages courtesy of the Smith Institute of Massage Therapy. Across the hall, attendees got crafty at our Servant Events making cards and journal covers for Phil’s Friends cancer patient care packages or Caring & Sharing cross necklaces.

At 7:30 Friday evening, the convention was officially opened by President Michelle Zollinger as she “lit” the 3-wick candle representing the Trinity. Pastoral Counselor Rev. Louis Boldt then led the assembly to “Lift High the Cross” as he began the processional for the opening worship service. Jules Capace from the Southern Zone carried in the District Convention Banner which stood on stage throughout the convention. Throughout the evening, Anita Granger and Deedee Koyn provided beautiful music with keyboard and flute. LCMS Southern District President Pastor Eric Johnson offered a powerful sermon inspiring attendees to proclaim, “Amen!” The evening concluded with the President’s Reception, where attendees had the opportunity to “get to know” each other by playing a little Ice Breaker Bingo.

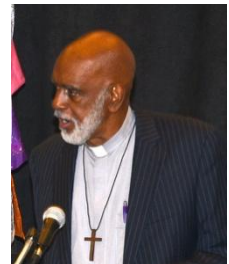


Saturday dawned nice and early with some assembly singing before the session opened with the Zone Banner Procession and the Past District Presidents leading us in the League Pledge. Throughout the day, attendees received inspiring words. Bible Studies led by our Pastoral Counselors, Rev Louis Boldt and Rev Michael Shannon, helped us explore our convention theme and keep our focus on the cross. LWML Strategic Plan Facilitator Cheryl Mattil (from our neighboring state of Texas) brought us all the latest news from

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LWML Louisiana-Mississippi
District



LWML National and a video greeting from President Eden Keefe. Amy Barton, director of House of Grace (grateful recipient of our Gifts from the Heart ingathering), spoke to the assembly about how this local ministry helps young women in the Shreveport-Bossier area transition from the foster care system to independent life as an adult.

We also heard from Mites in Action Speakers who reported on their projects from the 2022-2024 Mission Grants. Deedee Koyn told us about how Holy Trinity, Covington, LA has become known in the community as “the snack church” because their First Responder Substation, which was expanded with their Mission Grant, provides a safe space with refreshments available 24 hours for first responders to take a break or write reports. Andrea Ferguson and Lauretta Houston of Redeemer, DeRidder, LA presented a slideshow of how their Mission Grant constructed a fully functional space within their church building to provide a respite for disaster relief workers. Amidst all this inspiration, the voting body of the convention took time to make decisions that will allow our District to continue our service to God’s Kingdom for the next biennium. A Mite goal of \$60,000 was set and 6 projects totaling \$30,000 were selected to be funded at the district level. Some amendments to the bylaws were passed and the following officers were elected to serve for the next four years:

- President: Leslie Koenck, Trinity, Leesville, LA
- Vice President of Christian Life: Rita Salathe, St. Paul, Hammond, LA
- Vice President of Communications: Melissa Meeks, Christ, Shreveport, LA
- Vice President of Gospel Outreach: Andrea Ferguson, Redeemer, DeRidder, LA
- Secretary: Rhonda Jackson, New Life, Folsom, LA
- Junior Pastoral Counselor: Rev Robert M Portier, Immanuel, Bossier City, LA
- Nominating Committee: Lauretta Houston (chair), Terry Kendrick, Gerda Portier, Anita Granger



The celebration continued Saturday evening with a delicious banquet provided with great service by the staff of the Hilton Garden Inn. After dinner, guests were entertained by the River Cities Jubilee Barbershop Chorus. This group of men from the Shreveport area have been bringing barbershop-style singing to the community for over 75 years. With a repertoire that included Barbershop classics, Pop favorites, and even a little Gospel, the performance received a resounding applause.

Sunday morning opened with prayer as the results of Saturday’s elections were presented. Pastor Boldt installed the newly elected officers and reaffirmed the dedication of those officers continuing in their positions for the next two years. A lovely Worship Service led by Pastors Boldt and Shannon concluded this mountaintop experience that had renewed and recharged our spirits as we celebrated the Lord of the nations. Afterward, as everyone hugged goodbye and began their journeys home, they carried that celebration and joy out into the world, so all may know that we are HIS heritage. (Psalm 33:12-13).



My Dear Sisters in Christ,

I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to serve our Lord with gladness as your new LA-MS District President. The overwhelming love and support I have received from you, my dear sisters in Christ, has touched my heart and filled me with profound gratitude. The LWML Vision Statement is “The LWML is the leading group for LCMS women where each woman is welcomed and encouraged to use her unique God-given gifts as she supports global missions and serves the Lord with gladness.” As women of the LWML, I encourage you to seek out women of all ages to join in proclaiming His glory among all peoples! Our Lord has equipped us to serve Him through our God-given gifts. We need to continue to assist others with their growth in their relationship with the Triune God by inviting them to fellowship with other women of faith. Our Lord will guide, lead, and “train” us in this endeavor as we think outside the box. The Mustard Seed Daily Devotions are an excellent resource to share with other women.



Continuing to Train — Encouragement

In the Word

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near (Hebrews 10:24–25).

Of the Word

Having a hard time remaining consistent with your runs? Want to meet more runners like yourself? You may want to consider joining a local running club. Increasingly popular, these clubs serve to support, encourage, and motivate members while training.

The author of Hebrews directs us to meet together and give encouragement to each other. Today’s Christians call it “going to church.”

Where else will you consistently hear the Word of God preached and receive the Sacraments? Where else can you join with other Christian voices to pray, praise, and give thanks? As you run your race of faith, meet together in worship and Bible study to support, encourage, and motivate each other.

Walking with my Lord

Dear God, thank You for Your Church on earth where I learn of Your faithfulness. Through Your Holy Spirit motivate me to reach out to others with encouragement as they run their race of faith. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

Mustard Seed: The Race of Faith. Author: Amanda Stacy, DCE. 17/28 ©2015 Code: #4019

Seek His truth,
Leslie Koenck
LA-MS District President

Thanks

*I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds
(Psalm 9:1).*

It has been a joy to serve as Financial Secretary. I would like to thank Michelle Zollinger for appointing me and trusting God that I would do the best that I could. Oh, how I wish I could speak as wisely and tactfully as Michelle! (Could she have gotten that from Ida Mall?) I have learned a lot from her. For instance, how much the President does that is not seen and how much she cares about LWML and our sisters and brothers in Christ. She has gone above and beyond my expectations of a President.



I have enjoyed working with treasurers Elizabeth Smith and Joanie Schendel. Both of them have helped keep me updated with what they spend money on (no mink coats have been purchased).

Taking in the donations and keeping track of where the money goes has been a highlight. Along with the checks for mites, quarterlies, delegates, half national delegate monies, memorials, conventions, retreats, and other designated funds, I have received notes, mustard seeds, purple odds and ends, and bookmarks. These have all been encouraging to me. Please keep that up in the future.

I know that your new financial secretary, Elizabeth Smith, will appreciate them. Thank you for not being offended by my using up birthday cards or Christmas cards, and for letting me text you to acknowledge funds.

I would also like to thank Pastors Culver, Shannon and Boldt. They have always been an inspiration to me and leaders that I look up to. They are easy to talk to and always willing to offer advice. Their love for Christ is always evident.

Our Board of Directors works as a team and each person pulls her own weight. The time has flown by. Just as I am getting to the end of my term, I think that I have almost figured out what I am supposed to do and a way to do it! I would be happy to serve as financial secretary in the future, but I need to go where God leads and serve with gladness wherever and whenever that is. Again, thank you for allowing me to be your financial secretary.

God's blessings to the new board of directors and appointees.

In the future, please forward your mites to

Elizabeth Smith
P.O. Box 1644
Rosepine, LA 70659

Thanks for the memories!
Lauretta Houston

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances,
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-19).*

Mission Grants for 2024-2026 Biennium

Praise our gracious and merciful Lord for His guidance in the selection as well as His rich blessings! *Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you* (Matthew 7:7) the 2024 to 2026 LA-MS District Grants!

We are starting off strong as we are close to paying the first grant! Please continue to send in your mites.

In grace & peace,
Andrea Ferguson
LA-MS District VP of Gospel Outreach

The 2024 -2026 La-MS District Grants (listed in pay order)

1. Concordia Seminary at St. Louis Food Bank \$5,000

Funds will offset the cost of stocking the St. Louis, MO Seminary Food Bank. The food bank offers groceries, personal care items, and cleaning products free of charge to seminary students and families.



2. Epiphany Lutheran of Jackson: New Paraments and items for the Altar \$5000

Funds will assist Epiphany Lutheran to purchase new paraments and items for their altar. Epiphany was attacked by an arsonist in 2022.



Epiphany Lutheran Church in Jackson, Miss., was destroyed by arson on Nov. 8. The church is the oldest, historically black church in Mississippi. (Jacqueline S. Hollins)

3. Forged by Fire Services \$5,000

Funds will purchase food and supplies to feed people across the Gulf Coast region who are recovering from natural disasters (i.e., hurricanes, tornados, storms, and/or flooding).



4. Financial Grant-In-Aid for Church Workers and Seminary Students \$5,000

Funds will support the LCMS Southern District Church Worker Student Endowment Fund. This will assist men and women in the Southern District in applying for financial aid to pursue their education to become full-time LCMS church workers.



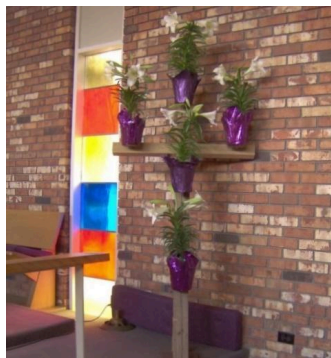
5. New Life Pregnancy Center \$5,000

Funds will purchase essential items for baby care. New Life Pregnancy Center will distribute items to those in need in Vernon Parish, LA.



6. St. Paul Lutheran of Hammond: Handicapped Access Doors \$5,000

Funds will purchase three (3) automatic door opening kits, including the cost of installation. The kits have two push-button activators to assist those who are handicapped to access the church.



ZONE NEWS

Northern Zone has had a very busy spring. We had our Rally on April 6 at Immanuel, Bossier City, with a theme of “Fruit of the Spirit”. Our pastoral counselor, Rev. Robert Portier, and his lovely wife, Gerda tied the theme into the sermon, the Christian Life presentation, and the Bible study. This certainly came into play as we made plans for the upcoming District Convention. As Christians, we are all given fruit of the spirit, and this was evident as we worked together to make the convention a success.

The Northern Zone had the privilege and responsibility of hosting the District Convention April 26-28. I cannot say enough about how awesome all the ladies (and gentlemen) who stepped up to the plate to make the convention a great success. We may be small in number, but with the Lord’s help, we made it.

But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law (Galatians 5:22).

Pat Brady
Northern Zone President

To our LWML Sisters from the Southern Zone...

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is vain; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised

(Proverbs 31:30).

Cross of Calvary-Baton Rouge joyously shares that they celebrated their spring quarterly meeting on Sunday, April 21, after the worship service. They had a baked potato bar with toppings of butter, sour cream, shredded cheese and bacon; and also enjoyed brownies and a chocolate Nutella dessert. They continued with their collection of foods for the LSU Food Pantry and began collecting for the Southern University Food Pantry. Their summer plans include collecting items to welcome college students when the fall semester begins. At their July meeting, they will gather these items and make Welcome Bags for the students.

Holy Trinity-Covington/New Life proudly announces that they hosted another Southern Zone Phil's Friends Workshop on April 6. Then in May, Buddy Lee gave the LWML ladies a tour of his farm, explaining the process of growing azaleas and how to cross-pollinate to make new varieties. Four prayer shawls were presented to those needing extra love and prayers. In completion of a couple of workshops, 123 journals were sent to Phil's Friends along with many other supplies that were made and donated. After Easter, the ladies had a Bible study, *"Good to Better to Best: A Victory Celebration."*



Redeemer-Mandeville humbly shares that they were busy collecting clothes and toiletries for the Samaritan Center.

St. James-Gonzales gladly shares that there may be some interest in joining the LWML group, which is reestablishing itself at Good Shepherd in Baton Rouge, since they share Pastor Paul Anderson. Surely all of our prayers are with them as they work through the process.

St. Paul-Hammond is excited to have had 8 congregational members *"Celebrate the Lord of the Nations"* while attending the 41st Biennial LWML LA-MS District Convention at the Hilton Garden Inn in Bossier City in April. Their delegates were Judy Hines and Rita Salathe; alternates were Gail Gerike and Zandra Hatch; and others attending were Laura Lips (Southern Zone President), Pastor Boldt (District Junior Pastoral Counselor) and guests Harold Hatch and Randy Lips. They were so proud to see Rita Salathe elected VP of Christian Life and Gail Gerike appointed as Archivist-Historian. Meanwhile, back at the congregation...the St. Paul Society, in recognition of Mother's Day, presented all of the mothers, other ladies of the congregation and female guests with a special gift; a purple-beaded bracelet with a cross. They will also present all of the fathers, other men of the congregation and male guests with a special gift on Father's Day. (I can't tell you what it is right now as it needs to be a surprise.)

Trinity-Baton Rouge enthusiastically shares that on May 18, they held an afternoon garden party for women of all ages. Food, fellowship and fun were the focus of the celebration, which included one table that had four generations in attendance: congratulations Sue (McAdams) and family.

Zion-Bogalusa proudly announces that they had a garage sale in May which made \$1,300. The customers (60 in all) were served hamburgers and hot dogs, made by the men of the congregation. They also presented all of the ladies with Mother's Day gifts.



May 2 - 4, 2025

2025 LWML Louisiana - Mississippi District Retreat

at

**Eagle Ridge Conference Center and Resort
Raymond, MS**

41st Biennial LWML LA-MS District Convention

Photo Gallery

