

League Letter

First Quarter 2024

LWML Mid-South District



Even when the path seems dark,
shine on!

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Shine On!

A message from District President, Candy Habich

Just two simple words but what comes to your mind? As Christians maybe the first thing we remember, because it's one of the first songs we learned in Sunday school, is "This Little Gospel Light of Mine." I'm guessing you know all the verses and all the actions too! Based on the verses from Matthew 5 below, we are reminded to shine brightly as examples before others.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:14-16).

However, there are times when we don't feel like shining. We're tired, we're worried, and we just want to hide. The verses below from Philippians 2 encourage us to "shine as lights in the world" and not to grumble or argue. At times like this we need to turn to God's Word to be reminded of who we are and WHOSE we are.

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain (Philippians 2:14-16).

Another thing in the verse above is the part about us being "in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation." Some things never change, do they? This reminds us that we must sometimes shine our light as a spotlight, pointing out and speaking out about the wrongs we see. We must pray for the courage to speak the truth in love.

But what if we just don't know what to do? Psalm 119:105 reminds us that God's Word is our light and our lamp. It illuminates our lives and gives us direction. That's why we

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Shine On!, *continued from page 1*

turn to scripture in times of need as well as times of celebration. In addition to God's Word we can also give thanks for the support of our pastors and Christian friends.

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path
(Psalm 119:105).

And most important is the source of our light. As Jesus says in John 8:12, all we must do is follow Him.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12).

So, during this winter season of darkness, my prayer for all of us is that we will never ever let our Gospel lights go out. That we will shine brightly as the love of Jesus warms us from within. And that we will share that warmth, light, faith, and hope with those around us. Amen.

Shine On!
President Candy

Merry Christmas from the Department of Administration!

Where has 2023 gone? I am amazed at how the older I get the faster time seems to fly! The district convention will be here before we know it. All my committee members have been hard at work but will be even busier after the start of the new year. The Structure Committee is busy working on updating the bylaws and district directives. The Nominating Committee is hard at work on finding a few more people to run for offices. The Finance Committee is working on the budget for the next biennium.

While it has been a busy year, I hope everyone takes the next few weeks to celebrate Jesus' birth and spend time with family. I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16).

Sincerely,
Jane Hubsch, First Vice President



Returning God's Blessings

Learning to acknowledge the abundance of God's blessings to us is the beginning step of putting together the gift plan within our overall estate plans.

Holiday gatherings are a good time to be in conversation with your children about your wishes regarding charitable gift planning when God calls you home. If you have a will and a plan in place, do they know about it? Do they know your thoughts that God is the ultimate source of all good things? Have you included a Family Blessing or Christian Preamble with your will?

If you need help getting a Charitable Gift Plan in place or to include a Family Blessing or Preamble, Linda Gage, one of LWML's Gift Planning Counselors, can help you organize your thoughts and get started. Contact Linda at linda.gage@lfnd.org or call her at 800-741-4138. Diane Reimold has gone through this process and is available to answer any questions you may have. She can be reached at giftsoflove@midsouthlwml.org or at 901-679-0626.



Being Prepared

by Diane Reimold, Second Vice President

Are you glad Christmas is over? During December, we are supposed to be preparing for Christmas—specifically the birth of Jesus. But I’m sure you were—as I was—preparing for the secular celebration of Christmas. So, were you adequately prepared when December 25 arrived? Now that January and the beginning of a new year is here, we start preparing for something else—gathering documents so we can fill out our form 1040 for the IRS! UGH!

During our lives, we are always “preparing” for something. In 2024, some of you may be preparing for the graduation of a child or grandchild. Others may have a wedding coming up or the birth of a grandchild or great-grandchild. Some of you may be preparing for a “trip of a lifetime.” The ladies of the West TN Zone and I are busy preparing for the LWML Mid-South District Convention in Memphis June 7–9, 2024!

The most important item we have been prepared for though is our good works to do for God.

For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10, NIV).

There are times we don’t feel prepared to be the hands and feet of Jesus—doing good deeds in His name. Scripture tells us though that God HAS good works He has planned for us—all we need to do is trust Him that He will give us the ability to do these good works. So many of the LWML women are involved in our church’s ministry. Women have always been an integral part of the church—both in Jesus’ time and now. If you aren’t involved, maybe 2024 is the year

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17			
21	22	23	24			
28	29	30	31			

February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		



Dates to remember! January 15, 2024, Quarterly payments due; February 15, 2024, Zone payments due. And, mark your calendar for the District Convention in Memphis, June 7–9, 2024.

to change that. Find an area where your hands and feet are needed knowing God will bless your efforts. Our churches—and LWML—need all her members to join together to spread the Gospel—and that includes YOU!!

To prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:12, NIV).

Payments for the Lutheran Women’s Quarterly from each group are due to your zone treasurer by January 15, 2024. Zone payments to the district financial secretary are due February 15, 2024. Each zone president and Quarterly chairman will receive a spreadsheet showing the number of subscriptions ordered by each group and the cost for each group. Thank you in advance for making these payments on time.

God’s continued blessings to you and have a wonderful Epiphany season!!

*Serving the Lord with gladness,
Diane Reimold
Second Vice President*

Keep sending
in those mites!



Find the
Grant Table here:



[midsouthlwml.org/
grantinfo/MissionGrantsTable.pdf](https://midsouthlwml.org/grantinfo/MissionGrantsTable.pdf)

Mission Grant Committee Update

This past quarter we have paid the following grants:

- Concordia Seminary Ft. Wayne Financial Support for the Food Co-op to purchase food: \$2,500
- Financial Aid for Professional Church Workers (Last two installments): \$12,500

This means that we have paid all grants that were selected at the 27th biennial convention. Praise God!

Remaining grants will be reviewed in vote sequence order to establish whether we may be able to fund some of them. Submitters may be contacted to update the status of the original request. For any grants still viable, the board of directors may approve some or all the requested funds.

In January, the Mission Grant committee will be reviewing the Mission Grant applications that have been submitted for the 28th biennial convention. During this process we will be preparing the Mission Grant Ballot. Keep the committee in your prayers as we go through this process.

*Serving our Lord with Gladness
Sandra Arnold, Third Vice-President*

The Light of the World

As the days get shorter, we recognize the need for light. Praise God for sending Jesus, the Light of the World. As we celebrate His first coming and look forward to His second coming, let us be joyfully serving in His kingdom.

The nominating committee is filling the ballot for officers to be elected at the LWML Mid-South District convention next June. The positions to be filled are President, First Vice President, Third Vice President, Financial Secretary, Nominating Committee (3 members), and Pastoral Counselor. If you would like to serve, or know of someone who would like to serve, please contact us.

The responsibilities for each position are listed in the District Directives and By-Laws which can be found on the Mid-South LWML website (www.midsouthlwml.org) under the ABOUT tab. Each potential candidate for a district position should have served as a voting member on a zone board of directors. Each position is a four-year term except for the nominating committee, which is a two-year term.

*Serving in His Light,
Nominating Committee 2022-2024*

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Making Things New

A message from Rev. Joshua Ralston, Senior Pastoral Counselor

The beginning of a New Year presents a unique opportunity. It inspires hope of a new beginning — a re-start, a re-fresh. An optimistic feeling infects the air. That feeling is the feeling of hope. A hope that lies in a resolution that's made to oneself. Each year, people make new resolutions to improve areas of their lives. Or, at the very least, the old resolutions from last year are dusted off, and recycled for this year. The hope of these resolutions is that they will make us better people.

Hope is such a transitory thing. Especially when it involves human endeavors. We can hope in ourselves — which infects the New Year air, as we try to make new of something old. However, when sinful man gets a hold of something and tries to breathe life into it, it ultimately fails.

You can see this phenomenon in New Year's resolutions, as people desire to achieve good things. For example, the top two New Year's resolutions are improved fitness and improved finances. Improved fitness points to the dissatisfaction with their health. It's a praise-worthy goal! But hope in improved health is transitory. Why? Human life always ends in death. As St. Paul says, "The wages of sin is death." A similar feeling is at play with the desire to improve finances. There is a dissatisfaction with what they have, either for themselves, or for their inheritance to their family. As a result, they want to change some of their financial habits for the better. Again, this is a praise-worthy goal! But setting our hope in improved finances is transitory. Hope ebbs and flows based on the fleeting nature of this world and the false promises it presents.

As Luther would commonly allude to, mankind's natural religion is works-righteousness. We believe we can make

ourselves better. Perhaps there's some truth to that temporally. But Satan deceives everyone — even Lutheran church-going types — into thinking that the good changes we make help us achieve a higher status and favor with God.

There's nothing wrong with New Year's resolutions — to discipline the flesh is admirable! But there is something wrong with putting hope in one-self. Because when left to our own imaginations and efforts, we receive death. We certainly can't manufacture favor with God. Luther teaches us from the third article of the Apostle's Creed that new life comes solely through Christ, by the power of the

Holy Spirit without any merit or worthiness in me. He teaches, "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."

Even though we may engage in New Year's resolutions this year (and a lot of good can come from these efforts!), let us always recall the fact that our Father will make us a "new creation" that will not fail. He will make us better than we could make ourselves. Better yet, He freely gives us this through simple means—water, bread, wine—and attaches Christ's promises to them. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the triune God smooths His children with His love. This is truly something in which Christian hope should rest! Not just for the temporal nature of the "now" or the "new year goal," but for the enduring quality of the eternity God sets before our eyes every year!

God's richest blessings to you this year as God's promises in Word and Sacrament enrich you!



News & Updates



Endowment Fund Update

Our next quarterly statement will be received mid-January and we pray there will be enough growth to offer funds for use. We will at least be able to offer \$110.87 that was left from the 2021 disbursement. Remember the endowment fund in your giving and help us to fund gifts for the benefit of the mission and ministry of the LWML Mid-South District through scholarship assistance and leader development training. Be thinking about how you might be able to use these funds. The amount available for distribution will be announced early in 2024. Visit the Endowment Fund webpage at www.midsouthlwml.org/endowment-fund for more information.

Your Sister in Christ,
Mary C. Pruitt, Chairman, LWML Mid-South
District Endowment Fund Committee



Be a Prayer Warrior!

Don't forget that we have a district prayer chain! No prayer request is too small or too big for our Great God; and don't feel like you need to be eloquent. Just provide the who and the what and let the Holy Spirit take it from there.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words (Romans 8:26).

You can sign up by simply emailing our prayer chain coordinator at lwmlmsdprayer@gmail.com. If you have prayer requests, you can send them to the same address. Be sure to check out the guidelines at www.midsouthlwml.org/web_documents/LWML-MSD-Prayer-Chain-Guidelines.pdf.

LWML Prayer Service Available



The 2024 LWML prayer service is available and it's wonderful! Written by Rev. Michael Mattil, the service focuses on Grace, Mercy, and Peace. Rev. Mattil served as a national LWML Pastoral Counselor from 2007–2011. He has also served as a Texas District LWML Pastoral Counselor, a Circuit Counselor, and as a District Area Vice-President. You can find all the details along with downloads for bulletins, logos, and PowerPoint at www.lwml.org/prayer-service.

Zones in Action

News, reports, and activities from the
10 Zones of the LWML Mid-South District

Trinity Lutheran, North Little Rock Supporting Veterans

The LWML at Trinity Lutheran, North Little Rock recently held two collections for the Veteran's Hospital in North Little Rock. The first collection was for socks with a goal of 80 pairs. The goal was greatly exceeded with 180 pairs collected. The second collection was for large bottles of body wash with 85 bottles collected. Volunteer office personnel at the hospital were overwhelmed with the generous donations — especially since they had no body wash on hand at the time. This LWML group has also adopted the practice of having a “noisy” Sunday on the first Sunday of each month. Donations make quite a clatter when dropped into the metal container — hence the “noisy” Sunday name. Mission funds have increased since this practice was adopted and the ladies highly recommend trying it out! Their next project is to publish an 80th anniversary cookbook titled *Recipes From Our Flock*.



Sock Collection for the North Little Rock VA Hospital. From left to right: Karen Koehler, Becky Beard, JoAnne Dempsey, Dana Morton, Marilyn Stewart, Carol Oram, Dana Zimmerman, Leona Heerboth, Esther Mahnken.



Unique Opportunity to Serve Now Available!

The position of webmaster is now open for volunteers to apply, as our current webmaster is “aging out” and retiring. This is an appointed position reporting to the Media and Marketing Committee Chairman.

The position does not require a deep knowledge of HTML, but some knowledge will be useful. You will be working with templates provided by our website provider, OurChurch.com (OCC). You will be working with webpages and slide rotators adding/removing text and graphics. The software used by OCC is a modified version of Word Press known as Word Press Made Easy (WP-EZ).

The WP-EZ training center provides “how to” video training via the OCC web site. The videos are arranged in groups and your progress is monitored. The current webmaster will be available for as long as you feel you need a backup.

If you are interested, please contact President Candy at president@mid-southlwml.org.

Zones in Action continued

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Memphis — joyfully serving!



Immanuel Memphis' LWML has been very busy! They assembled 35 school kits for Lutheran World Relief (far left); had an ice cream social to thank the congregation for their generous donations on Second Sunday mites collections (left); and had a booth of baked goods and homemade items at Faith Collierville's Merry Market on Saturday, November 11, 2023. Serve the Lord with Gladness!



The Paducah Zone Fall Rally — “In Christ We Have Hope and a Future”

The Paducah Zone Fall Rally was held November 4, 2023 at Grace Lutheran Church in Clarksville, Tennessee. Thirty-five women attended the event. Pastor Fistler led the worship service, and the rally theme was based on Jeremiah 31:31–34, “In Christ We Have Hope and a Future.” Mid-South District’s Disaster Response Coordinator, Jan Simko, shared thought-provoking information on preparedness.



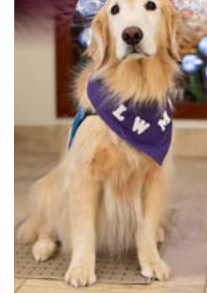
Pastor Fistler’s Faith In Action Team, with its powerful tools, stands ready for deployment under the guidance of the Mid-South District’s Disaster Response.

LWML Sunday at Christ the King, Memphis

The ladies of Christ the King Lutheran Church in Memphis, Tennessee, celebrated LWML Sunday recently, raising money to help fund seminary costs for those pursuing careers as pastors. Last year's funds allowed us to help five students by giving them much needed financial assistance. Students are chosen, after much discussion, from either of the seminaries, based on need. The CTK women participated in the services taking part in ushering, speaking, leading the children's message, and the music. And **Job the Comfort Dog** came to church in full support, sporting his fancy purple LWML bandana! We thank all who donated to make a difference in the lives of our future pastors.



PHOTOS: CAROLINE JOHNSON



LEARN MORE
ABOUT JOB THE
COMFORT DOG.

LWML Mid-South District 2024 Convention

Get ready for the LWML Mid-South District convention, June 7-9, 2024, in Memphis, Tennessee! The theme is Holy Spirit, Flow Through Me based on Revelation 22:1-2a. The West Tennessee Zone host committee is well into the planning. Here are some key items you'll want to know:

- The location for business sessions and opening worship is Christ the King Lutheran Church. The church is just a 5-minute drive from where we'll be staying.
- Our housing, Saturday evening banquet, and Sunday morning closing praise service will be at the Hilton Memphis which is conveniently located at exit 15A off Interstate 240 West.

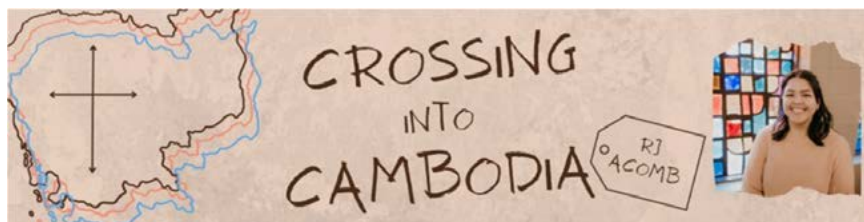
- The keynote speaker will be Kaye Wolff, former LWML Vice President of Special Focus Ministries.

- Our "humorous interrupter" and banquet entertainer will be Wendy Fluegge, a popular favorite!

Registration information will soon be available at www.midsouthlwml.org/district-convention. And, for the first time, we are offering online registration! Watch for more information and the link to the online registration around January 8.

Get this date on your calendar now! You do not want to miss this convention!!!





A report from RJ Acomb, a missionary with Stronghold Cambodia, who receives support from LWML at Faith Lutheran, Memphis, in the West Tennessee Zone. Learn more of Stronghold Cambodia's mission's history [here](#), and details of the ministry [here](#).

On October 26, 2023, at 8:30 AM, we held our building dedication. We invited the students and their families, the chief of the village, the local superintendent, and the chief of Kampot City.

This was an amazing opportunity to not only celebrate Stronghold Cambodia's ministry and ownership of a building, but also to share the Gospel with everyone there!

It was definitely an incredible moment to witness the impact of Stronghold's consistent presence and love. Through years of teaching and dwelling, God has given growth to the seeds planted in each of these students' hearts. I got goosebumps listening to their prayers.

- Pray for spiritual boldness as I adjust to a new culture and community
- Praise for Maria, Diane and Tim Esala, Naomi and Jesse as they help me adjust
- Praise to God for Stronghold Cambodia's ministry and new building
- Pray for discernment as we seek out a Youth Pastor for next year
- Pray for me as I battle feelings of loneliness and loss.



1 Corinthians 3:6 Moment

During Pathfinder's Youth Mini-Retreat for the 7th-12th graders, they asked, "What is something you love about Jesus?" Here were a few of the students' answers:

- "What I love about Jesus is He is the answer to my prayers"
- "He teaches me to do good things"
- "He takes all our sins"
- "Wherever we go, when we are scared, He is with me"

Photos: (above left) Building dedication; (top) RJ Acomb with some of the ministry's young participants.



Website:

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