

The Voice of Service

Volume 52, Issue 4

Lutheran Women's Missionary League Oklahoma District

Winter 2019



"Serve the Lord with Gladness"
Ps.100:2

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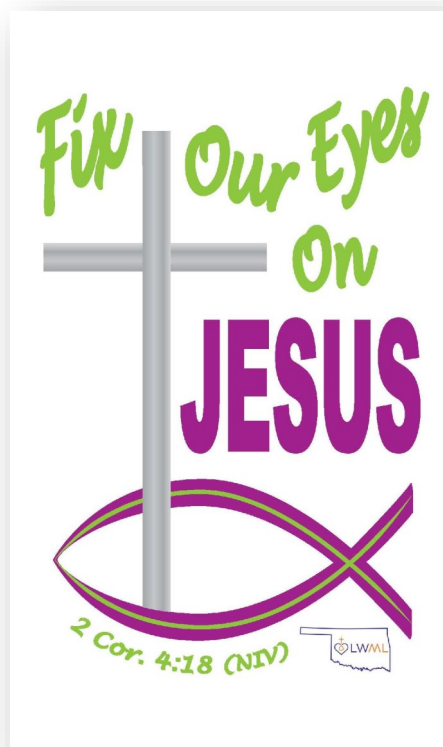
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LWML Oklahoma District Convention 2020



All women of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod are cordially invited to attend and celebrate our LWML Oklahoma District's 56th Convention. Plan to join your sisters in Christ during April 17-18, 2020, at the Hilton Garden Inn, Edmond, Oklahoma. Hostesses for our convention are the LWML women of the Enid Zone.

For 20/20 Vision, we:

- Fix our eyes
- Focus our faith
- Follow Jesus

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal (2 Cor 4:18 NIV).

Highlights of the convention planned so far include worship with Holy Communion, Keynote Speaker Jan Struck, Bible Study Leader Deaconess Betty Knapp, and Mission Speakers LWML Past President Patti Ross and Deaconess Grace Rao. Gifts from the Heart will be collected for two organizations from the Enid area: Journey House Pregnancy Resource Center and Forgotten Ministries. Clerical items and Visa gift cards will be collected for seminary students at both Ft. Wayne and St. Louis. Servant activities and interest sessions are thoughtfully being planned.

Look for the registration form and all convention information in the Spring 2020 edition of *The Voice of Service*, to be published in early 2020. Join your LWML sisters in work, laughter, and joyful celebration as we *Fix our Eyes on Jesus!*

Submitted by Delia Collard, Chairman,
District Convention Planning Committee

In Joyful Service



Dianna Just,
President

Be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality (Romans 12:11b-13).

Go! Tell! Serve Joyfully!

Thanks, Giving and Generosity

During our recent "Treasured" Fall Retreat we shared time with one another and our Savior. We studied the scriptures that remind us we are treasured jewels, and God will continue His transformation of us. Deuteronomy 14:2 led us to realize that each of us is His treasured possession: "...the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession." We were reminded that we are not chosen because we are valuable. We are valuable because we are chosen. In session two, we learned that the transformation of a diamond takes time, pressure, and heat. The third and fourth sessions focused on the four qualities of the diamond: cut, color, carat, and clarity. The scriptures led to discussion and reflection into our own lives.

One of the last scriptures we studied was Matthew 5:14-16: *You are the light of the world . . . let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.* Many of us will be heavily involved with celebrations during the upcoming holiday season. I pray we take every opportunity to "shine" for our Lord.

As we approach the end of our Oklahoma District biennium, we need to remember to continue giving our mites. Mite offerings are still needed to fund some of the grants. Being generous is even better than giving. It is giving that is prompted by love. Generosity's best example comes from God. Pray about how you can show generosity. Many opportunities will arise during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays.

Go! Tell! Serve Joyfully!
Dianna Just

FOOD FOR THE SOUL

For many decades, making quilts has been a major project of Lutheran women. Our mothers, grandmothers, and great grandmothers sewed, tied, and hemmed quilts to provide warmth to people near and far.

At Messiah, Oklahoma City, on October 7, thousands of gifts were loaded into the Lutheran World Relief truck. Among them were 1,371 quilts made by women all over Oklahoma. Many other quilts have been given to Orphan Grain Train, various agencies, and individuals around the state. God has used many willing hands and loving hearts to make these gifts possible.

Those quilts and the many, many pieces of fabric in them are a reminder of St. Paul's words to the Corinthians. He wrote, *The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body* (1 Corinthians 12:12). He continued by reminding his readers that each part of the body has a specific function, and all work together to form just one body.

Quilters use many pieces of fabric to complete a quilt—dark and light, patterned and plain, maybe even old and new. We might compare them to the body of Christ, the Church. It, too, is composed of many parts. As a part of the Church, each of us has a role to play. No, that's not the way to state it! Each of us has roles to play, ways to minister, ways to serve.

God has gifted each of us in special ways, and our thanks to Him is displayed in service to Him. What will that be? We can find many opportunities in our homes, within our congregations, in our workplaces, in the world. Some opportunities are hands-on service and others involve monetary gifts (Think mites!). We pray for God's guidance and blessing on all that we do. Not a day goes by but what we have work to do for Him.

Submitted by Myrna Lou Meyer,
Member, Christian Life Committee



**Ladies Night Out
Dinner and Fellowship
With Bible study author
Donna Pyle**

**Saturday evening,
February 15, 2020**

**Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Edmond, Oklahoma**

\$20 – time to be announced

Pastoral Insights

The Best Things in Life...



Rev. Martin Herzberg,
Pastoral Counselor

One of my seminary professors was very fond of beginning a statement, then pausing half way into it to say, "Finish the sentence." The responses were usually humorous, and sometimes it took a while for us to focus again. That's what got me thinking about this particular message: The Best things in life...finish the sentence. There are plenty of ways to answer this question, but I would say "...are worth waiting for and often not what you expected." This is the thought I'd like to share with you as we prepare for Advent. By the time of Jesus' birth, people had been waiting thousands of years for the Messiah to come. They had expectations. They had ideas. They thought they knew for what it was they were waiting. And then...

⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. (Luke 2:4-12 KJV)

This wasn't what was expected. This isn't what was planned for. This isn't even what was wanted. But God knew better. This was the best thing. This was the perfect gift of God given for the life of the world. So as we wait for whatever it is that we think we need or want, remember that the best things in life are worth the wait and often show up in packages that we don't expect.

Pastor Martin Herzberg, Junior Pastoral Counselor

In Fervent Gratitude

Lately, the beginning of our LWML pledge has been rolling through my brain on repeat. That repetition is so appropriate in this month of Thanksgiving. We give thanks primarily because of our Savior's dying love and His blood bought gift of redemption. And that truth informs our gratitude in so many other areas.

In October, we had the joy of welcoming our first grandson, in fervent gratitude. That same month many of our congregations celebrated Pastor Appreciation month, in fervent gratitude. Many of us pulled out our red clothes to remember Reformation, in fervent gratitude. All Saint's Day was an opportunity to remember the saints that have gone before us, in fervent gratitude. And every day we have a chance to thank God for our brothers and sisters in Christ, in fervent gratitude.

Due to the foresight of the Oklahoma District LWML, we have a Special Gifts Fund. Gifts to the Fund can celebrate our current and even past leaders by designating that gift in honor or memory of your LWML sisters, in fervent gratitude.

Brochures that describe the Fund are available from the Special Gifts Chairman. If you have questions, please contact Sherrie Schroeder, at oklwmlsg@gmail.com. Gifts may be sent to Oklahoma District LWML Financial Secretary Katie Schroeder P. O. Box 573, Okarche OK 73762-0573.

Submitted by Sherrie Schroeder, Special Gifts Chairman

Giving Tuesday

December 3, 2019

*you can **DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT** when you donate to the LWML Mission Goal, thanks to two anonymous donors who will match up to \$20,000!*

DONATE online on Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2019 to DOUBLE your impact!

www.lwml.org/givingtuesday

Around the District



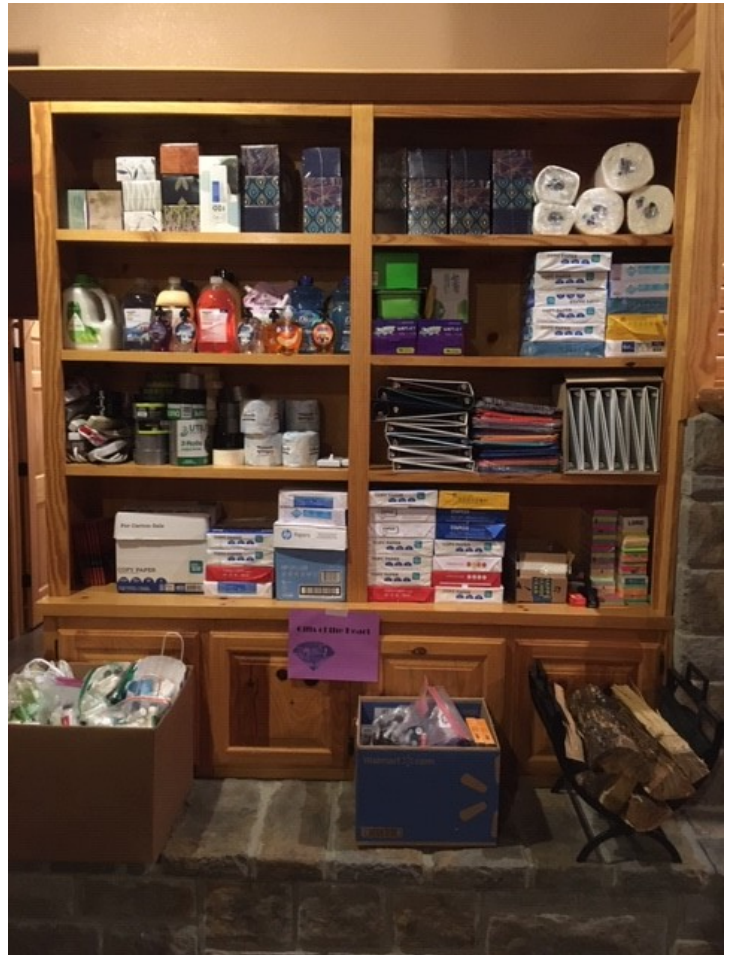
*for Gifts from the
Heart for Camp
Lutherhoma*

WOW! The generous women of the Oklahoma District donated a plethora of items for Camp Lutherhoma during their recent Fall Retreat. Items were collected as the retreat participants registered. The following is a list of items (pictured at right):

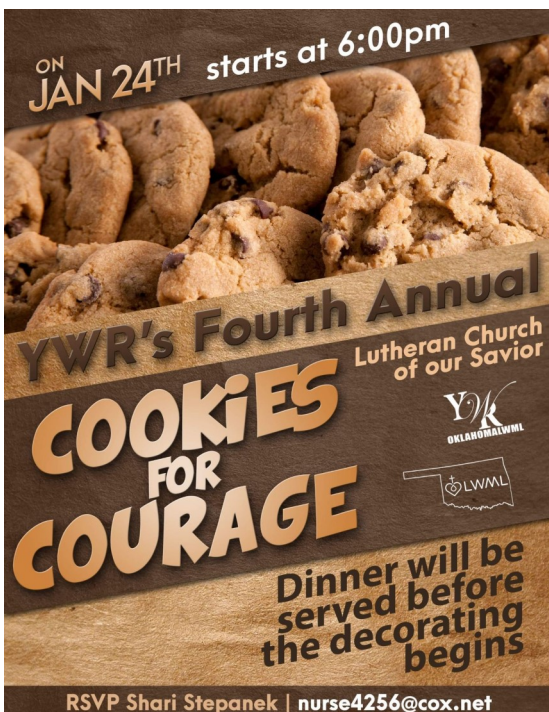
- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 31 boxes Kleenex | 5 rolls paper towels |
| 6 boxes Swiffer products | 42 reams paper |
| 11 power strips | 21 rolls of Duct tape |
| 14 rolls of masking tape | 7 rolls of toilet paper |
| 25 3-ring binders | 2 lighted switches |
| 70 folders | 150 pads of Post-It-Notes |
| 3 thumb drives | 1 package binder clips |
| 1 package push pins | 4 rolls scotch tape |
| 3 staplers | 1 box staples |
| 314 pens | 147 sharpies |
| 66 Expo markers | 11 highlighters |
| 19 large containers of hand soap | |
| 6 small containers of hand soap | |
| 1 big box of hotel amenities | |

Not counting the hotel amenities, the total came to 961 items. Much thanks goes to our district's YWRs, Hannah and Elizabeth Michael, for counting the items. Thank you for the generosity of the LWML women. You were Treasures and were wearing your Jesus Bling.

Submitted by Betty Reichert, District Parliamentarian



Above: Gift from the Heart items collected for Camp Lutherhoma during LWML Oklahoma District Fall Retreat.



Get Baking for LWML Oklahoma's Fourth Annual Cookies for Courage

Cookies for Courage was started four years ago as a servant activity for our district's young women as a way of forming friendships while working on a worthy project. This year's *Cookies for Courage* will be held at Lutheran Church of Our Savior, 6501 NW 23rd, Bethany, on Friday, January 24, starting at 6 pm. Participants are asked to bring baked, unfrosted cookies to decorate with others. A special recipe from the Roggow family has been well received as a frosting for the cookies that are decorated. After the cookies are frosted, they will be gathered onto plates and into containers. A thank you card will be attached to each for policemen, firemen and first responders who will receive them. The young women will return to their communities and deliver the plates and containers to their local agencies. LWML members will distribute cookies to the Bethany area. This is a district event, and all young women ages 18-35 are invited to attend. The LWML group at Our Savior is anxious to serve attendees dinner prior to the decorating. Anyone coming from out of town who wishes to spend the night in the Oklahoma City area should contact Shari Stepanek (405-388-5668) for a room to stay. For any questions, contact Shari Stepanek.

Submitted by Shari Stepanek, Chairman
Committee on Young Women

Oklahoma District Steps up for LWR Collections

Messiah Hosts First Oklahoma District LWR Collection Site

"Our site in Wichita has become overwhelmed with the amount of LWR (Lutheran World Relief) donations that are being delivered from Oklahoma for our pickup date each October...I believe that it would be beneficial for Oklahoma to create their own LWR pickup site," read the email to President Dianna Just. For years, every fall, the LWML Oklahoma District gathered their school, baby, hygiene, and sewing kits, blankets, and soap and trucked them to Wichita, Kansas, to be loaded onto the LWR truck located there. The truck would then travel to LWR's central location in Minneapolis. From there, items were sent to countries

where they were most needed. To get to Wichita was no small feat as many women and men travelled for miles to get their items to Kansas. Yet, we did it.

This past year Oklahoma was challenged to find and coordinate our own site. Several people considered this task, but a storage area and parking to unload the items became an issue. Kelly Baker, Messiah, Oklahoma City, stepped up to the plate and said, "We would love to do it! We are centrally located, have a large parking area right off a main highway and have a love for missions." LWR was notified, and they agreed with the plan. Kelly coordinated with LWR, LWML members and the trucking company, and the date was set for October 7 from 9 am until noon. Messiah members provided water to any volunteer attending and served lunch at noon for those volunteers still remaining at the end. What a treat!

Karen, the coordinator from Wichita, had told Kelly that we might expect 5,000 to 7,000 pounds of items collected for our truck. We surpassed that! We collected 11,410 pounds of items in 613



Above: Groups dropped off donated items during the Oklahoma District's first LWR collection held at Messiah, Oklahoma City, on the morning of October 7.

boxes during our three-hour collection! Items were brought by car, truck, U-Haul, and van. Churches outside of the LCMS also contributed kits and blankets.

Following are the district totals of donated items:

- Quilts 1,371
- School Kits 1,458
- Baby Kits 243
- Hygiene Kits 823
- Sewing Kits 159
- Fleece Blankets 18
- Soap 169 pounds

Thank you to everyone who participated to make our first Oklahoma LWR collection a whopping success. We thank husbands, pastors, sons, and daughters who also helped with packing the truck or transporting items from various zones.

Submitted by Beverly Bahr, Vice President of Gospel Outreach



LWML members served lunch to volunteers who worked through the morning. Pictured in back are Denise Spilman, Cathy Burner, Barbara Krei and Shari Reeves. Sitting in front are Sabrina Davy, Sherly Henshel and Michele Swisher.



Oklahoma LWR Coordinator Kelly Baker (at right) checked donations with volunteers.



Jeremy Davy, Ella Davy and Pastor Fred Meunchow loaded the LWR truck.



Randy Baker assisted in filling the truck to the red line seen on the right wall.

Around the Mission Field

Lutheran Women in Mission to Guatemala: MOST Ministries Eyeglass Clinic

"Who? Me? You want me to do what? Why, I don't even speak Spanish!" I had been asked by Patti Ross, then LWML President and member of Christ the Redeemer, Tulsa, to consider a mission trip with Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST). She had traveled on several and thought the best one for a first timer was an eyeglass team. I thought about it. Life got in the way, and I put it off. Fast forward to last summer when our current LWML Oklahoma District President Dianna Just remarked to me, "Bev, I think you need to go on a mission trip as part of your role as Vice President of Gospel Outreach for the LWML." Later, MOST Ministries circulated an announcement stating that their September eyeglass team was short two to three people and would need to be cancelled if enough people did not volunteer to go. Uh oh. Was God talking to me? I prayed about it and this time felt that God wanted me to participate. I visited with Sarah DePriest at the MOST Ministries booth while at the LWML Convention in Mobile. I told her that I would volunteer. Another member of LWML from Idaho, Eileen, also volunteered at the convention, and the trip was a go.

Nine people from eight states made up this team. That was quite a challenge for the team leader, Cheri, to organize and review pre-trip instructions! Technology allowed us to hold a phone conference the week before leaving, and Cheri was able to cover all the essential information for traveling and give us an overview of what to expect. Fortunately, seven of the people were experienced in mission trips of all kinds.

Who participates in these teams? While in the past high school or college-aged students would often make up the teams, the last decade has seen more retired baby boomers volunteering. The age range of our members was 49 to 77. Our team consisted of two retired nurses, one retired Lutheran teacher, one retired medical technician, one architect, one retired bank CEO, one retired insurance agent, and one retired owner of a construction company. Our team leader, Cheri, was a former Lutheran, and had just finished studying for the ministry. At the time of the trip, she was waiting for an assignment. Our group was a diversified but cohesive team. The experienced members were excellent mentors to Eileen and me, the "newbies" of the team.

Our eyeglass team was scheduled to run the clinic from a Lutheran Church in Quetzaltenango, the second largest city in Guatemala. The city is located west of Guatemala City, about a four-hour drive in the mountains. The countryside is beautiful, especially in September during the country's rainy season. At an altitude of 6,000 feet, the air was drier and cooler than on the plains. This made the climate more desirable for work. Rev. Chan, Pastor of the church who was sponsoring the clinic, had not yet hosted an eyeglass team. He was so excited, gracious and happy



Above: MOST mission team, some of whom were LWML members, screen people of the community of Quetzaltenango for eyeglasses.

to have us. The women from his church served us homemade meals for lunch every day. Fortunately, we had interpreters with us. The local congregation spoke only Spanish, and our team was limited in that language.

The eyeglass clinic was set up to accommodate five stations:

- Station 1—Registration and sharing of the Gospel message (done by locals from their congregation).
- Station 2—A nursing station to assess the particular eye difficulties people perceived they had. Here assessments of the eyes were conducted. Most problems seen were pterygiums, cataracts, infections, and hemorrhages. At this station, teaching about sunglass protection, cleanliness and realistic expectations of new glasses was accomplished.
- Station 3—The "Flippers." People's eyes were tested for distance and reading using flippers with different diopter readings. A diopter value that worked for them was assigned at this station.
- Station 4—Disbursement of glasses. Each person was given three pair of glasses to try for each problem designated (distance or reading). Each pair was 0.25 diopters apart. People tried them on and determined which was the clearest for them.
- Station 5—This was the fitting station. The lenses were cleaned and the nostril and ear pieces were fitted to their face shape. Hot sand in a crock pot melted the plastic for bending of the ear pieces. Each person was given an eyeglass holder and allowed to choose a pair of sunglasses.

Our team saw a total of 452 people in the three days of clinic and distributed more than 550 pair of eyeglasses. Over 300 pair of sunglasses arrived with volunteers, and all were given away. Distributing eyeglasses doesn't seem that earth shattering of a task. For many of these people,

Most Ministries Eyeglass Clinic: Guatemala

however, it meant changes in lifestyles. I spoke with one little boy who was held back in school and failed two grades because he couldn't see the board or reading books. His parents had no money to buy glasses. Many people had glasses previously. The glasses had broken, so the people had been without them for a number of years. Some of the older people couldn't see well enough to walk without help. One man practiced walking by himself in the parish hall with his newfound eyesight. Many women had relied on sewing for an income. As they reached their 40s, it became difficult to thread the needle and sew, so they lost their income. Now they could return to their occupation.

Most Ministries is one of many organizations that sponsor mission trips to various countries. The LWML has embraced them as one of several recognized service

Many countries do not have the resources that we have in America. If you have an opportunity for sharing with the people of these countries, and if you desire to spread the Gospel message by helping people in some of these countries, consider a mission trip. You can visit mostministries.org for their new schedule for 2020 and consider one of their many trips. Matthew 25:40 says, "And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'"

Submitted by Beverly Bahr, Vice President of Gospel Outreach

Remember to Recycle



Recycling is still functioning within the Oklahoma District. It needs our assistance, though. Please share in your congregations that we collect printer inkjet cartridges. These smaller cartridges are found in most home printers. Most of the name brand inkjets can be recycled. These include Hewlett Packard, Dell, Canon, and Samsung. When your group has collected at least 20 cartridges, contact Marguerite Christman (MChrist721@aol.com, 405-737-8289) for a pre-paid UPS shipping label. LWML also collects used cell phones, pagers, digital cameras, e-Readers, iPods, iPads, and tablets. As you collect these, add them to cartons to be shipped to the recycling company.

The LWML Oklahoma District recycling program began in November 2004. Since then, we have been blessed to collect \$84,559 from this effort. This is a huge amount of funding that has helped in our district in many ways.

Of those gross proceeds, 25% (\$21,139) has been sent to the LWML office as contribution to the mission goal, 10% (\$8,456) has been sent to our district's Special Gifts Fund, and 65% (\$55,263) has paid for leader development expenses in our district. Because of the Recycling Fund, all mite offerings collected and sent to the district are used to pay toward the mission grants that have been selected for the biennium rather than fund any administrative expenses of the organization. As you can see, our district needs your assistance to keep this recycling program going. Every little bit helps and increases when others in the district do likewise.

Please publicize in your congregation that we collect these recyclable items. Besides helping our Recycling Fund, our efforts impact the environment as we keep these items out of our landfills. Thanks for all your support.

Submitted by Marguerite Christman, Recycling Manager

Remember to Recycle

Inkjet cartridges, cell phones & accessories, GPS & radar detectors, calculators, eBook readers, iPods/MP3 players Digital/video cameras, PDAs, iPads/tablets, Video game & consoles



Members of the community of Quetzaltenango wait patiently for their turn at new eyesight.

organizations (RSOs) that are supported through mission grants. While attending some of the conferences at the LWML Convention in Mobile, several speakers felt that MOST Ministries had a reputation for safety of their team members. Despite the goal of the ministry, safety of its people takes priority.

I was only one part of a much larger team that made the eyeglass clinic happen. MOST Ministries relies on thousands of contributors like you to donate pre-worn glasses. MOST works hand in hand with the Lions Club for eyeglass trips, too. When glasses are donated, they are sent to Michigan for cleaning and testing for a prescription and then labeled. This work is done by volunteers, also. Nonprescription sunglasses are accepted. Each team will take with them to their destination about 800 pair of prescription eyeglasses and 300-400 nonprescription sunglasses. Volunteers also make Gospel bead bracelets, used to tell the Gospel message to those without knowledge of Christ. When the clinic closes, the pastor is given the registration forms so that he can visit the many people who just learned about Christ.

District Mission Grants for 2018-2020



GRANT		AMOUNT	PAID
1	OK District Ministerial Students	\$12,000	\$6,000
2	OK District Professional Church Workers' Scholarships	\$12,000	\$12,000
3	Equipment for Redeemer Lutheran Church, Claremore, OK	\$7,000	\$7,000
4	MEND Medical Clinic and Pregnancy Resource Center, Tulsa, OK	\$5,000	\$2,500
5	Canoes for Lutherhaven Retreat Center, Knowles, OK	\$2,000	\$2,000
6	Lutheran Braille Workers, Inc., Tulsa and Edmond, OK	\$5,000	\$5,000
7	Financial Assistance for Concordia Theological Seminary Food and Clothing Co-op, Ft. Wayne, IN	\$5,000	\$5,000
8	Trinity Hope Haitian Feeding Program, Lutheran Churches in Haiti	\$5,000	\$5,000
9	Assistance for LWML Members' Mission Trip, OK District	\$6,000	\$3,000
10	Holy Cow Smokers Disaster Relief Ministry, Lamb of God Lutheran Church, Flower Mound, TX	\$5,000	\$5,000
11	Mission Central Support for Missionary Expenses, Mapleton, IA	\$10,000	\$10,000
12	Funds for iPads and Software for Underprivileged Students, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Midwest City, OK	\$4,000	\$4,000
13	Lutherans for Life Post-Abortion Crisis Hotline Expansion, Nevada, IA	\$4,000	\$4,000
14	Good Samaritan Fund, Lutheran Senior Citizens, Inc., Oklahoma City, OK	\$5,000	\$5,000
15	Family Promise of Lawton, OK	\$2,550	\$2,550
16	Outdoor Adult and Family Campfire Ring, Camp Lutheroma, Tahlequah, OK	\$4,500	\$4,500
17	After School Tutoring and Outreach, Trinity Lutheran Church, McAlester, OK (*discon'd due to alt. funding)	\$3,000	\$66.98*
18	Summer Heights Day Camp, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Oklahoma City, OK	\$2,100	\$2,100
19	Bibles for Bethany, Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Oklahoma City, OK	\$500	\$500
20	Ends of the Earth Team Member Support, MOST Ministries, Ann Arbor, MI	\$4,950	\$4,950
TOTAL		\$104,600	\$94,167

District Board

Oklahoma District President	Dianna Just
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Young Women Chairman	Shari Stepanek
Teen LWML Coordinator	Shawna Duwald
Planning Facilitator	Delia Collard



Mission Statement

The mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is to assist each woman of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.