

ZONES

LWML Zones

A zone is a group of local LWML groups and individual members in the same geographic area united to promote the object of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League — mission education, mission inspiration, mission service, and mission grants.

Purpose

As women are affirmed in their relationship to God and develop a heart for mission, zones open an additional avenue for service and involvement by:

- Forging a link in the relationship of the local group to the district and LWML.
- Serving as a forum for disseminating information regarding LWML mission grants, resources, and programs.
- Providing opportunity for spiritual development and leader training.
- Offering Christian fellowship and mutual encouragement.
- Providing opportunity for sharing ideas among the groups.
- Offering programs through which women may participate in servant events and Gospel outreach activities.
- Supplying voting representation to LWML conventions.

Program

At least one zone event shall be held each year to conduct the business of the zone. Provide opportunities for sharing ideas among members and promoting Christian fellowship by holding at least two zone events annually.

All members of affiliated local LWML groups and individual members are invited to attend (guests are also encouraged to attend, including all congregations in the zone).

Voting privileges are determined by zone bylaws.

Zones are encouraged to grant voting privilege to individual members.

Each member LWML group has the privilege of hosting a rally or other zone meeting.

Programs are planned and conducted by zone officers and a host LWML group or as directed by the district. See *Event Tips* (page 14 in this section).

Retreats, workshops, servant events, mission service opportunities, Gospel outreach activities, and other programs may also be arranged. See *Creative Zone Events* (p.15).

Finances

Zones do not adopt mission grants. Through their voting delegates to district and LWML conventions, zones select the mission grants to be funded by LWML for the biennium. Therefore, the efforts of members at all levels of the organization must be concentrated

on meeting the commitments made to fund the various mission grants adopted in conventions.

Zones are encouraged to gather mite offerings at zone events.

Zones may collect registration fees and accept voluntary offerings at rallies or other zone functions to cover zone expenses such as:

- Convention costs for delegates.
- Honorariums for speakers, rental of audio-visual equipment, etc. for zone events.
- Printing, postage.
- District assessments.
- Reimbursement of expenses to officers and committee members, as permitted in the zone bylaws.

Every two years (odd-numbered year) the District Financial Secretary will send the travel fund assessment to the zone. The zone treasurer collects the assessment from each member of the zone (groups and individual members) and submits by March 31 to the District Financial Secretary. The travel fund provides for the voting delegation to the LWML convention to represent the zone membership.

When hosting special events such as prayer services, retreats, servant events, etc., zones may gather offerings for designated purposes. The zone pastoral counselor should be included in the selection of the recipient of such offerings or Gifts from the Heart to ensure that the beneficiary is not in conflict with the tenants and beliefs of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Organization/Structure

LWML districts organize member LWML groups into zones that conform to LCMS circuit lines as much as possible. (See *Lutheran Women's Missionary League Bylaws*, Article III, Section 1.) Zones structure themselves:

- To best meet the needs of the local groups they serve.
- In accordance with the limitations imposed by their geographic boundaries.
- To conform to the directives of their districts.
- To effectively promote the object of LWML — mission education, mission inspiration, mission service, and mission grants.

Officers

Zones generally have the following officers:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Pastoral Counselor

Additional officers should be elected or appointed to enable the zone to implement the programs dictated by its bylaws and the programs and object of the district and the LWML. Directives pertinent to each office begins on page 4 of this section.

Nominations

Unless the bylaws specify differently, the zone nominating committee should make every effort to secure as many qualified candidates for each office as possible. This allows the voting delegates the opportunity to select from a slate of capable individuals for each office, thus providing the best leadership for the organization.

Program Helps

Check with the LCMS and the LWML District for speakers in the zone's geographic area. The LWML District President and Vice President of Christian Life can provide a list of LWML speakers in Texas. A *Request for LWML Texas District Representative Visit* form is also located in this section.

Resources

Resources are available online as free downloadable files:

- Bible studies.
- Devotions.
- Creative ways to share the LWML pledge (responsive readings, skits, etc.).
- Retreat programs with various themes.
- Leader training materials.
- Servant event suggestions.
- Mission service opportunities.
- Audio/video materials.
- Sketches and skits.
- Cultural resources.
- PowerPoint presentations.
- Guidelines for officers and committees.
- Resources for teaching, planning, and organizational skills. and
- Departmental newsletters, and articles.
- Creative crafts and ideas.
- And so much more.

The *LWML Handbook* offers many helps pertinent for zone leaders; check out the sections on meeting helps and resources.

The *Planning Zone*, available as a free, downloadable resource on the LWML website, is helpful for planning zone events.

The *LWML Style Guide* provides guidelines for use of LWML terms in all publications.

All of these resources can be easily found by typing the title in the “search this site” window in the top corner of the website page. It is suggested you download a copy and keep it handy. They are updated frequently by LWML.

ZONE LEADERS

Directives for Zone Leaders

Each zone will have duties that are unique to that particular zone. These may be part of the bylaws, standing rules, or job description. The following directives are general in nature and will vary from zone to zone.

Zone President

1. Pray regularly for the spiritual welfare and God's guidance for the leaders and members of your zone.
2. Begin all planning and meetings with prayer, asking for the vision and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
3. Approve bills/vouchers for payment by zone treasurer.
4. Stay up to date on zone plans, making sure all plans are being carried out in a timely fashion.
5. Attend District Board of Directors meetings and report as requested or directed.
6. Serve as delegate to district and national LWML conventions, if so directed.
7. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
8. See *Guidelines for Office of Zone President* (pages 7–10 of this section) for a detailed outline of duties. See *Timeline for Zone Presidents* (page 11–12 of this section).

Zone Vice President

1. Pray regularly for the zone president and other leaders and members of the zone.
2. Preside over meetings in the absence of the president.
3. May co-sign zone checks.
4. May serve as bylaws chairman. If so, see that zone bylaws are reviewed at least every five years; and bring suggested amendments to the attention of the zone executive committee and/or board of directors. Follow zone/district bylaws for the amendment process.
5. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
6. Keep files in good order to be given to successor.

Zone Secretary

1. Pray regularly for the zone president and other leaders and members of the zone.
2. Use the correct format for recording minutes.
3. Attend and record minutes of all meetings of the zone (executive committee, board of directors, rallies, etc.).
4. Distribute minutes to group presidents, zone executive committee and District President.
5. Keep copies of all minutes in final approved/corrected form in permanent folder. Minutes are the official record of any group and are to be properly filed and kept.
6. Take care of zone correspondence in a timely manner.
7. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
8. Keep files in good order to be given to successor.

Zone Treasurer

1. Pray regularly for the zone president and other leaders and members of the zone.
2. Attend all meetings of the zone executive committee/board of directors and zone general meetings, giving financial reports as directed.
3. Keep accurate records of all incoming and outgoing funds of the zone.
4. Pay all bills of the zone in a timely manner, getting approval from president or according to the directives of the zone bylaws.
5. Submit travel fund assessment to District Financial Secretary in odd-numbered years.
6. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
7. Keep files in good order to be given to successor.

Zone Archivist-Historian

1. Pray regularly for the zone president and other leaders and members of the zone.
2. Attend or report to all meetings of the zone as directed.
3. Attend zone events such as rallies and retreats.
4. Be familiar with and collect/maintain zone historical records.
5. Encourage and assist group historians to maintain group historical records.
6. Submit zone/group historical reports/materials to District Archivist-Historian.
7. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
8. Keep files in good order to be given to successor.

Christian Growth Chairman or Vice President of Christian Life

1. Pray regularly for the zone president and other leaders and members of the zone.
2. Attend all meetings of the zone executive committee/board of directors.
3. Coordinate spiritual growth programming for zone events in cooperation with the zone executive committee/board of directors.
4. Attend zone events such as rallies and retreats.
5. Communicate frequently with and offer assistance to group Christian growth/life chairmen.
6. Promote and encourage use of Christian life resources (especially new) available from the LWML website.
7. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
8. Keep files in good order to be given to successor.

Public Relations Director or Vice President of Communication

1. Pray regularly for the zone president and other leaders and members of the zone.
2. Attend or report to all meetings of the zone as directed.
3. Attend zone events such as rallies and retreats.
4. Publish and distribute zone newsletter, communicating with group representatives regularly to gather information to be published.
5. Publicize zone events by distributing posters, bulletin inserts, church newsletter articles, etc. to groups within the zone and to local newspapers well in advance of the event.
6. Submit information and newsletters for the district website for the zone's page to the District Vice President of Communication.

7. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
8. Keep files in good order to be given to successors.

Mission Service Chairman or Vice President of Mission Service (Human Care)

1. Pray regularly for the zone president and other leaders and members of the zone.
2. Attend or report to meetings of the zone executive committee/board of directors as directed.
3. Attend zone events such as rallies and retreats.
4. Be aware of and communicate to groups of the zone mission service emphases of the LWML and the district.
5. Promote and encourage use of mission service resources available from LWML website.
6. Communicate frequently and assist group mission service/human care chairmen.
7. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
8. Keep files in good order to be given to successor.

Member Development Chairman or Vice President of Organizational Resources

1. Pray regularly for the zone president and other leaders and members of the zone.
2. Attend or report to meetings of the zone executive committee/board of directors as directed.
3. Attend zone events such as rallies and retreats.
4. Encourage and promote the organization of LWML groups in zone congregations who do not have an active group.
5. Research and share with groups ways to gain and maintain active members.
6. Encourage involvement of group members in zone events through attendance and/or participation.
7. Maintain a zone *Personnel Resource Form* file.
8. Maintain an enthusiastic, cooperative, joyful spirit.
9. Keep files in good order to be given to successor.

Zone Pastoral Counselor

1. Attend all meetings of the executive committee/board of directors of the zone.
2. Attend zone events such as rallies and retreats.
3. Give guidance and counsel to the president and other zone leaders as deemed helpful.
4. Be ready and willing to lead devotions, Bible studies or programs when asked to do so by the zone president or executive committee/board of directors.
5. Promote the LWML among the pastors and congregations of the zone.
6. Encourage other zone pastors to attend zone events.

All Officers

Be aware that the district newsletter, *The Lone Star Connection*, is published semi-annually and contains articles pertinent to the roles of various zone and group leaders. *The Lone Star Connection* is available by free email subscription and/or as a download on the district website *lwmltxdist.org*. Go to *lwml.org* for additional valuable tools from LWML.

Guidelines for Office of Zone President

The LWML zone president's position is extremely important to the entire LWML organization. She is the link between the LWML District and local groups. Many will look to her as an example of Christian leadership in LWML. As zone president, she is also a member of the LWML District Board of Directors (BOD). Her responsibilities include:

- A. Pray for the spiritual welfare and God's guidance for the leaders and members of your zone.
- B. Become familiar with the structure, purpose and program of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League on all levels — group, zone, district, and national by reviewing the following:
 - LWML District *Leader's Manual* including the bylaws and standing rules.
 - *LWML Handbook*, including the national LWML bylaws (*lwml.org*).
 - District and national LWML websites (*lwmltxdist.org* and *lwml.org*).
 - Current district and national mission grants (*lwmltxdist.org* and *lwml.org*).
- C. Operate as the liaison between the district and the zone.
 - Attend District Board of Directors meetings as directed.
 - Attend Zone Presidents Orientation (held every two years) .
 - Forward all district mailings (including *The Lone Star Connection*, *Items of Importance* from the District President, emails, etc.) as directed; keep zone and groups informed of district events/information.
 - Report to groups in person, if feasible, on national convention experience.
 - Submit reports to district as directed.
 - Notify District President of zone activities.
 - Invite a district representative to attend at least one zone activity every two years.
 - Distribute information received at the District BOD meetings promptly to all group presidents at a zone board or executive committee meeting. If distance is prohibitive to meeting, a newsletter format, email or phone call may be used.
- D. Preside at all business meetings of the zone.
 - Follow bylaws for setting meeting dates.
 - Prepare official calls and agendas for meetings.
 - Hold at least two (2) zone executive committee meetings annually.
 - Have at least one (1) zone event annually to conduct the business of the zone.
 - Verify that a zone nominating committee brings a ballot of officers in accordance with zone bylaws.
- E. Zone Events
 - Appoint a host (some zones rotate between groups) and work as a liaison between the host group, speakers, special guests, and pastors.
 - Approve all publicity for the event.

- Invite all groups, individual members, pastors, and any congregation in the zone as guests.
 - Plan the agenda including, call to order, roll call, minutes, officer/committee reports, business, and adjournment.
 - In consultation with the zone counselor, involve the host congregation's pastor in a significant way.
 - Include devotions, Bible study, League Pledge, mission awareness, and a mite offering.
 - May include Gifts from the Heart and/or servant activities.
 - Preside over the event/meeting.
 - Prepare and present an oral/written zone president's report.
 - Secure LCMS affiliated mission speakers when possible.
- F. Appoint committees according to bylaws, securing the necessary approval of zone executive committee/board of directors.
- Attempt to include as many groups in the zone as possible when considering personnel for appointments.
 - Inform District Vice President of Organizational Resources of the current name, address, phone number, and email addresses of zone president, Christian life chairman, leader development chairman, mission service chairman, treasurer, pastoral counselor, and young woman representative(s).
- G. Keep a current list of groups and officer contact information and promptly notify the Vice President of Organizational Resources of any changes.
- H. See that zone rally minutes are sent to the LWML District President and District Archivist-Historian.
- I. See that zone bylaws are updated at regular five-year intervals and encourage groups to keep their bylaws updated.
- A copy of all amendments to the bylaws for zones and groups is to be sent to the LWML District Structure Committee for approval.
 - The District Structure Committee needs the final copy of the most recently updated bylaws for district files.
- J. Keep zone history updated biennially and send to District Archivist-Historian.
- K. Update zone page on the district website, sending pertinent information to District Vice President of Communication.
- L. Encourage groups to order the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* for all members.
- M. Encourage zone and groups to share noteworthy happenings with *District News* Editor.

- N. Encourage groups to submit Mite Box offerings monthly to the District Financial Secretary. (See Financial Section for forms and other details.) Make Mite Boxes available at all zone events.
- O. Be responsible for the *Annual Membership Report* forms sent by the District Leader Development Chairman (usually in September), paying special attention to the deadline for returning forms. **IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THESE REPORTS ARE COMPLETED BY THE DATE SET** since other district officers and national LWML depend on this information.
- P. Certify delegates to the district convention and preside at convention caucus.
- The Credentials Chairman for the district convention will notify each group as to the number of delegates they are eligible to send to the convention. Encourage groups to send as many eligible delegates to the LWML District convention as possible.
 - Delegates to the district convention should be elected by March of even-numbered years to allow for the certification form to be forwarded by the requested date.
 - Certification of delegates to the LWML Texas District convention shall be accepted in the following manner:
 - Group presidents sign the delegate certification form(s) for their delegate(s) and alternate(s), certifying that they were elected to serve in this capacity. This certification form must be sent to the zone president. If a change or addition is necessary on-site at the convention, a signed certification form or written note from the group president must be presented to the Credentials Chairman.
 - Zone presidents vote as members of the District Board of Directors. The zone president signs the zone delegate form certifying that the zone alternate is an elected zone officer. If a change or addition is necessary on-site at the convention, a signed certification form or written note from the zone president must be presented to the Credentials Chairman.
 - The zone president will send a list of certified delegates with copies of the *Delegate Certification* forms to the Credentials Chairman.
 - Communicate to group delegates regarding their responsibilities and expectations.
 - Caucus – Zone presidents are to inform convention delegates in their zone when and where the caucus meeting will take place. The caucus is meant to convey any information which might assist them in serving as delegate at the district convention.
- Q. Communicate frequently (at least once each month) with zone's group presidents and individual members.
- Serve as a link between zone and groups/individual members; ask if they have any questions or if they need help with anything, monitor circumstances (attendance, enthusiasm, successes, challenges, etc.) and encourage group leaders in their offices.

- Encourage each group president to take an active part in zone executive committee/board of directors.
- Be sensitive to special gifts of the members and give opportunity to all to serve whenever possible.
- Enable each member of the zone to embrace ownership in the LWML organization.

R. Do **NOT** allow the zone to have mission grants. Zones may collect offerings to cover the following:

- Expenses involved at rallies, workshops, retreats.
- District convention expenses for zone president, zone pastoral counselor and zone young woman representative as designated by zone bylaws or standing rules.
- Expenses for zone operations like postage, printings, etc.
- Mileage and/or honorariums for speakers.
- Travel fund designated for delegate to travel and participate in the national LWML convention (the zone is responsible for collecting a per capita amount from each member as directed by district).

The zone president and treasurer should evaluate the treasury to determine if excess funds exist; if so, consider support of district mission goal.

S. Promote the LWML:

- Encourage the formation of new LWML groups and member participation in LWML activities.
- Handle all correspondence within three (3) days, if possible.
- Inform members of current LWML happenings by zone newsletters, other mailings, emails, phone calls or other method of communications.
- Arrange to have zone mailings, zone newsletters, etc. distributed to all congregations and pastors in the zone.
- Invite an LWML district representative to speak or bring greetings to zone functions at least once every two to four years.

T. Keep files in good order to be given to successor, assisting her during transition of office.

A note about group membership:

LWML members should only be counted as a member of one group, even though they may participate in the activities and programs of more than one group. For reporting purposes, an individual who is an LWML member in more than one group, is still only one person. Encourage groups who have situations like this, to work together at membership report time, to assure that members are not counted more than once.