

MISSION SERVICE

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What does mission service include?**

Mission service includes everything we do as individuals or as an organization that demonstrates the love of Jesus to others. Our mission is service. Often this service involves food, clothing, quilts, or kits. However, lending an ear to a lonely person and caring for the sick involves hands-on caring assistance as well. Anytime we reach out in love to meet a need that God has brought to our attention; we're involved in mission service.

2. **Why is mission service important?**

God has used us to serve others in His name. As Lutheran Women in Mission we are to use our "gifts in ministry to the people of the world" whether they live next door or in India. Everything we do should point us forward reaching out in love.

3. **Which officer is responsible for mission service?**

Mission service is served by a chairman and a committee. At the district, as well as the national, level it is part of the Gospel Outreach Department and reports to the Vice President of Gospel Outreach. As organizations rethink their structure, someone, no matter what her title, who has a heart for those in need, should take the lead in keeping areas of service in front of the organization at all times.

4. **What are the responsibilities of the group mission service chairman?**

- Accept her election or appointment with joy and enthusiasm
- Help her group develop an active mission outreach
- Promote the LWR Ingathering and Stamporee Project
- Promote mission service ideas (see above ideas for zones)
- Keep mission service in front of the congregation, involving them as much as possible.

5. **What are the responsibilities and opportunities of the zone mission service chairman?**

- Have a genuine love for service
- Present mission service reports, displays or sketches at zone functions
- Consider ingatherings (Gifts from the Heart) to benefit area agencies at zone functions and present to the zone president for approval
- Keep zones informed of *Lutheran World Relief Bulletin* updates
- Promote mission service ideas for zone events (check out the mission service activity ideas at lwml.org/mission-service-activities)
- Share the *A Year's Worth of Mission Service Activities* calendar (found on the lwml.org website) with zone members.

6. Where can ideas for mission service or mission service activities be found?

There are many ideas on the *lwml.org* website under the service tab — mission service activities. Check out the *Sharing Jesus' Love in Action Calendar* monthly. Print out a year's worth of mission service activities at *lwml.org/posts/mission-servants-activities/mission-service-calendar*.

7. What is our involvement with the Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Ingathering?

LWML Texas District partners with LWR to conduct ingatherings each year. It is for all Texas Lutherans (LCMS, ELCA, WELS, etc.) to collect parish projects for Lutheran World Relief. The ingathering includes quilts, blankets, school kits, baby care kits, fabric kits, and personal care kits.

Complete information regarding assembling and packing these items can be found on the website *lwr.org/quilts-and-kits*. Brochures are also available free of charge on the website. Distributing them is an expense to LWR, so donations are encouraged. You may also call 1-800-LWR-LWR2 (1-800-597-5972) to request a copy of the *Quilt and Kit Ministry Guide*.

Collection sites occur in Houston, San Antonio/Seguin and Dallas/Plano. Dates vary from year to year to accommodate the site chairman. Specific information is included in the *Lutheran World Relief Bulletin* which is posted online in February each year at *lwmltxdist.org/mission-service*. Printed copies can be requested from the District Vice President of Gospel Outreach.

Call other churches in your area or the site chairman nearest you if you wish to combine loads. Many people find it to be a grand adventure to bring their boxes to the sites and help with loading the trailers. Volunteers are always welcome.

8. How do we pack the boxes for LWR?

- USE STRONG BOXES! Packed boxes should weigh no more than 30 pounds. The smaller and lighter the box the better.
- Please completely fill boxes or cut to fit packed goods (try sitting on the box, it should not collapse). Volunteers at the collection site will have to repack any box that is not full.
- Tape boxes securely with mailing tape all around the sides, corners, anything that is not closed. NO MASKING TAPE!
- Tape over any holes or openings on the box. Think like a BUG – if a BUG can get in tape it closed.
- Sort goods, packing only one type of item per box, counting the items and writing it on all sides of the box (example: 5-Quilts or 8-School Kits).
- Label the boxes according to the instructions in the *Lutheran World Relief Bulletin* and use the labels provided (available in this section and on the district website in February). It is very important that all sides of the boxes are labeled LWR in big block letters (volunteers at the collection site will have to do this if you do not).

9. How do we report our Lutheran World Relief projects?

The *Lutheran World Relief Report* form, provided in this manual and online, is to be completed by individuals, groups, and churches and taken to the collection site. Make three (3) copies – one to give to the site chairman, one to submit to your zone, and the other to be kept for your files.

10. What is the LWR's Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund?

Lutheran World Relief spends around \$1.3 million to operate this program, distributing about \$13 million worth of quilts and kits each year. The LWR Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund helps with those costs. Consider a monetary donation per item to assist with these costs. Go to lwr.org/donate/shipping_fund to see how much it costs to send kits and quilts. **Send donations directly to LWML Texas District Financial Secretary and mark for LWR.** DO NOT bring money to collection sites.

11. What is the Stamporee Project?

The Stamporee Project collects all types of cancelled postage (stamps) from groups, churches and individuals all over the United States. The Stamporee Coordinator has a knowledge of stamp collecting and organizes the project. She trains others in trimming and sorting cancelled stamps. She is responsible for the collection and sale of all stamps, as well as maintaining correspondence, data totals and directory of participants. Currently, the proceeds from the sale of stamps go to the LWR Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund to assist with the distribution of LWR kits and quilts.

Often, unused postage is donated with the cancelled stamps. The coordinator offers this postage at a reduced cost. Cards and envelopes are donated and then sold with postage on them. All proceeds from these sales go to the LWR Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund.

To learn more about how to participate in this project, see pages 5–6 in this section. The Stamporee Coordinator is also available to speak to groups about the program. Contact the District Vice President of Gospel Outreach or the Mission Service Committee Chairman for more information.

12. What is Orphan Grain Train?

Orphan Grain Train is a 501c3 nonprofit Christian volunteer network that shares personal and material resources with needy people in America and around the world. For more information, including collection sites in Texas, see page 4 of this section.

13. Further questions?

Contact the LWML Texas District Mission Service Committee Chairman at missionservice@lwmltxdist.org. She will be delighted to answer any of your questions or speak to your group!

Orphan Grain Train

Orphan Grain Train is a 501c3 nonprofit Christian volunteer network that shares personal and material resources with needy people in America and around the world. Orphan Grain Train volunteers gather donations of clothing, medical supplies, food, Christian literature, and other aid to meet real needs. The Orphan Grain Train movement is a loving response to Jesus Christ's example as a servant and His love for us.

For more information visit their website *ogt.org*.

For a complete list of items to donate or to donate monetarily, go to *ogt.org/donate*.

Recent *Orphan Grain Train Highland Lakes of Texas* newsletters can be viewed at *lwmltxdist.org/mission-service*.

Orphan Grain Train Donation Sites		
Location	OGT Highland Lakes of Texas Genesis Lutheran Church	Trinity Klein Lutheran Church
Address	15946 Hwy 29 Buchanan Dam, Texas 78609	5201 Spring Cypress Rd. Spring, Texas 77379-3438
Contact	Myrna Choitz: <i>OGT-HLTX@Outlook.com</i>	Jennifer Kiel or Neville Symons: 281-376-5773 (church)
Donations Accepted	Tuesday morning 9 a.m.–noon (year-round)	Monday - Friday 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. at the church office (year-round)
Volunteer Opportunity	Thursday to sort and pack items	Call for volunteer opportunities

Stamporee Project

Goal: To support Lutheran World Relief Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund, which provides funding for the shipping of quilts and kits to those in need around the world.

Participants: Anyone can contribute to the Stamporee Project by sending their used envelopes containing cancelled stamps or their trimmed cancelled stamps to the Stamporee Project Coordinator instead of discarding them. All LWML groups and LCMS congregations are encouraged to collect and save cancelled postage stamps.

Collection Information

1. Start saving all cancelled postage stamps.
2. Ask friends, co-workers, neighbors and relatives to save cancelled stamps to participate in your collection.
3. Contact anyone you know who might have access to a large volume of mail (e.g., business, company, school, office, etc.) and ask them to save envelopes with cancelled stamps for you.
4. **Buy and use commemorative stamps** instead of common stamps. These are usually honoring an individual, event, or thing instead of the ordinary stamps or the Forever Stamps. All postal employees know which stamps are commemorative if you ask for them. Remember that the recipient of your stamp may be saving them for our project, or you might request them to save the stamp for you!
5. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND STAMPS DIRECTLY TO A DEALER!!**
6. Learn to place your stamps on the envelope in the upper right-hand corner, allowing space on each edge for opening without damage to the stamp. When trimming, allow $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from each edge whenever possible.



7. Stamps need not be trimmed or removed from the envelopes, but if you would care to prepare them before sending, please follow these guidelines:
 - Trim from envelopes with at least $\frac{1}{4}$ inch around the stamp. The perforation is the most important aspect of the stamp and should not be cut, torn or altered in any way. If you leave more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, this creates too much weight which is the method of calculating the funds received.

- Sorting into categories is not necessary unless you have knowledge of stamp collecting.
 - Weighing is not necessary since packages will be combined as they are received by the coordinator.
 - **Do not soak stamps** from the envelope paper as the paper contributes towards the weight for selling purposes. However, if you do have stamps that have been previously soaked and removed, you may still send them – don't just discard them because of the pre-soaking – they are sorted and weighed in a different manner.
 - Damaged stamps are those that are torn, or the perforations have been destroyed are not acceptable, but if in doubt, send them to the Stamporee Coordinator for assessment.
8. It is not cost effective to mail the cancelled stamps but if you must, mail by standard post (formerly 4th class or parcel post). This classification is cheaper. Tell the postal clerk that the contents are “printed material” or “paper contents”.
IMPORTANT IF YOU MUST MAIL — request that the postal clerk affix commemorative or high-value stamps (e.g., 65¢, 85¢, \$1.05, \$2, \$3.85, etc.) or the postal clerk will use a *white metered mail label which is worth nothing to the project!* The stamps will bring funds to accomplish our goal.
9. Stamps may be delivered
- through your zone president — to District Board of Directors meetings, which usually occur in February of each year
 - to the LWML Texas District conventions — to the mission service area
 - and any contact you have who might be going to the Texas District LCMS office in Austin.

You are encouraged to use one of these options before spending money on postage to mail the stamps, money that could be used for the LWR's Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund! However, if none of these delivery options are viable, please contact Stamporee Project Coordinator Sara Frank by email:

saralfrank@yahoo.com (put LWML in subject line)

OR

Contact the Mission Service Committee Chairman at *missionservice@lwmltxdist.org*

DO NOT SEND STAMPS TO PO BOX 1354, KYLE, TX

Stamporee Project Coordinator Sara Frank is available to:

- answer any questions, just give her a call or send her an email
- give programs at zone events or group meetings
- establish training sessions for those interested in learning about the project.

**REMEMBER, just save stamps and use commemorative stamps!!
Your biggest contribution is to save and ask others to save.**