

TEEN LWML

Girls Embracing Mission Service (GEMS)

History of Teen LWML

LWML YOUth in Mission (Teen LWML) was officially recognized as part of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League at the 2005 LWML Convention in Tampa, Florida, to identify teen groups. Beginning with the 2006 convention held in Beaumont, LWML Texas District participated in the program with good results. In 2014, at the LWML Texas District Convention in Frisco, the Teen LWML Committee adopted *Girls Embracing Mission Service* (GEMS) as the teens' new identification in Texas.

LWML YOUth in Mission

The objectives of LWML YOUth in Mission are:

- Suggest ideas as to how to make YOUth feel as though they are valued members of the body of Christ and the LWML.
- Connect YOUth with the big picture of LWML and its mission.
- Equip mentors with resources to engage youth in opportunities for spiritual growth, mission, and service.
- Provide ideas for YOUth in Mission activities that encompass multiple generations.

Resources are available at lwml.org/youth. They include: *Planning for a YOUth in Mission meeting, How to start a YOUth in Mission group and Servant event ideas*. Teen groups are encouraged to register with LWML at VPSM@lwml.org.

Process for registering a Teen LWML group in the Texas District

- The sponsoring group or individual sends a *Letter of Intent* (see page 3) to the LWML Texas District Vice President of Organizational Resources.
- The LWML Texas District Vice President of Organizational Resources notifies the District President and sends a welcome letter to the group sponsor.
- The LWML Texas District Vice President of Organizational Resources makes contact with the group sponsor and organizes contact information for future communication. The District President sends a welcome letter.

Teen groups may have a name that does not include "LWML" or "GEMS", but in order to be classified as a Teen LWML Group in the Texas District, registration is a requirement. Contact the District Vice President of Organizational Resources at organizationalresources@lwmltxdist.org.

Requirements to form a group

- Teen ladies through the age of 17 who are interested in growing in their relationship with their Lord through Bible studies, prayer, fellowship, and service
- A current LWML group or individual LWML member, age 21 or older, who is willing to sponsor (mentor) the group
- A signed photo release form on file for all teen members.

Disclaimer

It is the policy of LWML Texas District that the local sponsoring group or individual comply with the local congregation's policy on background checks and sexual misconduct prevention and complete any forms required by the congregation for adults working with youth.

Membership

- The LWML Texas District suggests the age span for membership of 13–17. Individual groups may establish age guidelines for their group through the age of 17.
- At the age of 18, a young lady is no longer eligible to be a member of the Texas District's Teen LWML program. She may continue her membership in LWML through a group or individual membership provided she is a communicant member of an LCMS congregation. High school seniors who began the school year at age 17 may continue membership until high school graduation.

Meetings/Activities

- The structure of each group and how, when, and where the group meets is decided by its' teen members with the approval of their sponsor (mentor).
- Group organization and activities should be consistent with the purposes and practices of the LWML.
- The adult sponsor (mentor) or an approved substitute must be present at each meeting or sponsored activity.
- We recommend that permission slips/medical authorizations for each teen member be kept on file in case of an emergency or in the event it is necessary to contact a parent/guardian.
- Teen LWML activities are planned for district conventions and all teens are encouraged to attend. Please note an adult sponsor must attend for every four teens registered.

Finances

- LWML (national and district) mission grants and programs are supported by voluntary offerings obtained through the Mite Box. Members of teen groups are encouraged to use the Mite Box available through Concordia Publishing House (www.cph.org) or make their own offering collection container using the *Girls Embracing Mission Service* teen mite wrap found in this section and available from the teen page on the LWML Texas District website lwmltxdist.org/teens-lwml-gems.
- Groups may otherwise choose their own methods of raising funds, keeping in mind that the primary purpose of the *Girls Embracing Mission Service* is to serve others.

Teen LWML Letter of Intent

On this date _____
(day) (month) (year)

Individual LWML Member _____

or

LWML Group _____

has requested the opportunity to sponsor a Teen LWML group.

Church Name _____

Church physical address _____

(City) (State) (ZIP Code)

Church mailing address _____
(if different from physical address)

(City) (State) (ZIP Code)

Person to contact _____
(LWML Sponsor)

(Address)

(City) (State) (ZIP Code)

(Telephone Number) (Email)

(Signature of Pastor or Congregational President)

(Signature of Sponsor)

Send this form to: LWML Texas District
Vice President of Organizational Resources
Email: organizationalresources@lwmltxdist.org
For a mailing address, contact the VP by email or your zone president.
New Teen LWML groups will receive a welcome letter and an acknowledgement from the LWML District
Vice President of Organizational Resources.