

# Christmas hand-me-downs

**By Rev. Dustin Beck Jr.**  
LWML Pastoral Counselor



I know what you're probably thinking ... You read the headline and thought, "Hand-me-downs for Christmas? He's out of his mind." If one of my kids opened a present on Christmas morning that belonged to one of their siblings just days earlier, I think they would say the exact same thing!

No, the hand-me-downs that I'm talking about are those things that are handed down to us for which we give thanks. I cherish the memories (and the recipe) for those Christmas cookies that we made every year with my Gran. I will always remember traveling in the 15-passenger van with the church choir as we sang carols at the homes of our shut-ins. Some of the ornaments that are on our tree every year were handed down to us by people who have been called home to Jesus.

But here's the thing: the act of "handing down" is exactly what God created His Church to do. The whispered promise that began the very day that Adam and Eve fell into sin has been passed down from parents to children, from grandparents to cookie taste-testing kids, from those who know ... to those who don't. And their voices join together in a chorus of the faithful — a cloud of witnesses whose sweet song is better than any gift under the tree (new or gently used). It's this song of praise that carries the very name of Jesus into our ears and into our hearts. The Holy Spirit plants that Word and hands down the gift of faith — a heart that trusts in Jesus for salvation and a mouth that confesses His saving name.

But the hand-me-downs of Christmas don't stop with us. Your voice is joined into the chorus of saints and archangels. Your heart is filled to the brim with the love of Christ — and that love overflows



into the lives of your family and friends, your neighbors and even your enemies.

Paul closes 2 Corinthians 5 with:

We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

How will you "hand down" the great news of Jesus during these Advent, Christmas and Epiphany days? It's a "hand-me-down" that everyone can use!

*Rev. Beck serves as pastor of Holy Cross, Warda.*

## IT'S TIME TO APPLY!

Do you know of a female member of your Texas District congregation studying to become an LCMS full-time professional church worker at an LCMS college or university? If so, it's time to encourage her to apply for a Texas District LWML scholarship for the 2023-24 school year!

For eligibility requirements and to apply, visit [lwmltxdist.org](http://lwmltxdist.org). Go to "Committees," choose "Scholarships" from the drop-down menu, and download the 2023 scholarship application packet.

For more information, contact Melissa Houchin, Scholarship Committee chairman, at [scholarship@lwmltxdist.org](mailto:scholarship@lwmltxdist.org). Completed application packets must be sent or emailed to Melissa time-stamped or postmarked by March 31.



On Oct. 9, Alive in Christ celebrated LWML Sunday. Pictured are, from left, Vicar Bobby and Judy Roever, Jaunell Roever, Dolline Budke, Grace Shugrue and Rev. Carroll Kohl. Missing are Donna Dorey and Shylee Reid.

**STAY  
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Send LWML news and photos to the District News editor at [districtnews@lwmltxdist.org](mailto:districtnews@lwmltxdist.org)

- [lwmltxdist.org](http://lwmltxdist.org)
- [facebook.com/LWMLTexas](https://facebook.com/LWMLTexas)

**Mission Grant spotlight**

# Hope for a new beginning

## LINC Austin Outreach

is a very active mobile outreach and navigation agency in the Austin/Travis County area. In the last two years, LINC has partnered with city and county agencies to house more than 150 individuals. LINC's model of relationship, care and compassion — in the name of Jesus — has proven so effective that agencies all over Austin have requested LINC's help in training their staff in homeless outreach.

LINC Austin Outreach has a unique and thoughtful way of serving the individuals experiencing homelessness. LINC focuses on each individual, considering the client's pain and the road they have walked, and does their best to provide hope and love and point them to Jesus. The first and foremost goal is to build a relationship with those they serve, to offer empathy and care.

The LWML Texas District mission grant of \$10,000 will provide funding to continue mobile street outreach. LINC Austin Outreach offers hope for a new beginning by helping clients overcome major obstacles to housing and employment by attaining identification, and walking with



**Welcome home!** LINC stood by this client's side as he now has an apartment to call home.

clients as they prepare for housing. Upon housing, LINC provides basic housewarming items and stocks the pantry. This mission grant will allow LINC to do the work Jesus has called them to do.

LINC Austin Outreach advocates for their clients in a deep and meaningful way, creating an impact not just in their ministry, but also for other outreach services dedi-

cated to helping those experiencing homelessness. They have created partnerships and networks with local businesses, other outreach centers, churches, policy makers, nonprofits, hospitals and the Austin Police Department (APD), specifically the mental health unit. They have partnered with APD in hosting pop-up clinics that provide whole-patient care, which includes meeting basic needs, case work and medical assistance as needed.

Homelessness is a complicated topic. Despite the challenges, LINC Austin Outreach and its dedicated leaders wake up every morning with a tender and compassionate heart toward those who are unsheltered in Austin. Their mission is to build a strong community in the Austin area by developing authentic relationships and providing holistic care for those who are hurting and need the healing love and hope of Jesus Christ.

In a recent thank-you note for their first mission payment, Haleh Kersten, LINC executive director, shared that the mission grant had already helped LINC to house a young woman who has been homeless for more than 10 years. The mission grant allowed LINC to purchase household items and provide rental assistance for Angel. LWML mites have given Angel hope for the future and a place to call home.

As we prepare this Advent season to celebrate the awe-filled birth of our Savior, may the light of hope we are assured of through Him bring you peace and joy now and into the new year. On behalf of the LWML Texas District Executive Committee, may this time be blessed in fellowship with the Lord, family and friends. Keep feeding those mite boxes, mite purses or the mite cups as we, His beloved children, strive to boldly live out the mission to which we have pledged.

## 2022-24 Mite Goal: \$390,000

Mites received through Sept. 30:  
\$79,178 (\$310,823 still needed)

Mission Grants paid through Sept. 30:  
\$31,750

**Send your mite offerings** along with a remittance form to: LWML Texas District  
Attn: Kathy Walther, Financial Secretary,  
P.O. Box 124, Giddings, TX 78942