

## Mission Grant spotlight

# Serving children with autism

By Patti Samsel

Vice-President of Gospel Outreach

Let It Shine Enrichment Academy in Austin was established by Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM) in partnership with Bethany Lutheran Church, Austin, as a preschool to serve children on the autism spectrum in a caring Christian environment. Since its inception, the school continues to see growth in attendance and a desire for services.

Let It Shine is a multi-sensory, holistic preschool program for children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder, and also includes children with developmental delays, difficulties with socialization, and/or sensory processing deficits. Small class sizes allow teachers to give individualized attention and help children learn at their level. These children are often turned away or removed from standard early-learning centers.

In addition to the structured curriculum and therapies, students attend chapel weekly, engaging in Christian songs and Bible stories. Teresa Danner, occupational therapist and Let it Shine director, shared that a parent was amazed and overjoyed that her child was singing Bible songs learned in chapel.

With the first installment of their mission grant for the 2022-24 biennium, Let It Shine Enrichment Academy was able to award scholarships to students. Future installments will be used to purchase classroom materials and resources to meet students' unique needs, and provide teacher training. Staff wish to thank the Texas District for their continued monetary support and prayers.



Teresa Danner (center), Let It Shine Enrichment Academy director, is pictured with academy teachers, who are excited to work with these special children and give them a loving, welcoming, structured environment where they can learn, grow and thrive.



A child participates in therapeutic listening to promote regulation and auditory processing while completing a craft.



While gaining strength and endurance, a child uses his walker to play in the gym and kick the ball to a peer.

## District offering scholarships for church-work students

Who doesn't need help paying college tuition bills? If you know of a female member in your Texas District congregation studying to become a full-time LCMS professional church worker at an LCMS college or university, we have a wonderful opportunity for her. The Texas District LWML Scholarship Endowment Fund Committee will award scholarships for the 2023-24 school year to eligible applicants.

Visit [lwmltxdist.org](http://lwmltxdist.org) for eligibility requirements and to

apply. From the menu bar click "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.

**Table Talk**



Grab a cup of coffee or tea, and let us visit a moment.

# WE ARE ‘BOLD IN HOPE’

I am truly excited about the revised primary focus for the 2022-24 biennium, *Bold in Hope*. If you have not seen it yet, please visit *lwmltxdist.org*. You will find the logo and initiative for the remaining months of the biennium on the homepage.

I have become so drawn to the revised LWML mission statement, and I also aspired to bring that to the forefront of our district activities. The focus on hope sustained and reassured us over the past two years as our lives tumbled around in that “new normal” that none of us genuinely liked. Thanks be to our merciful Father — normality appears to be on the rebound.

The world is on the move again. As congregations have returned to worshipping together, and many of the pre-pandemic activities re-

turn and flourish, we are being called into action and that is where the “bold” comes in. The Lord is providing opportunities for us to proclaim Christ, support missions, honor God and serve others. Let us be bold in these actions, staying true to the Word of God and the doctrine in which LWML has been planted, yet willingly open our hearts and minds to new or different initiatives in meeting the goals of this focus.

Are you ready and willing to be *Bold in Hope*? There will be opportunities over the remaining months of this biennium for discussions, in which I encourage all of you to look for and participate. We may not be able to figure it all out, but you have all been invited to sit at the table.

**Frances Molitor**  
LWML Texas District President

# Plan for convention

The LWML 40th Biennial Convention is scheduled for June 22–25 in Milwaukee. Now is a good time to make plans to attend. Register, find a travel buddy and make those hotel reservations.

Join your Texas District delegates to “Celebrate the Lord of the Nations.” Information can be found in the winter issue of *Lutheran Woman’s Quarterly* or at *lwml.org/2023-convention*. Looking forward to seeing you there!

# Equip, encourage, invite YOUNG WOMEN

When will it be my time? Children often ask this question, curious when they will get to the next step of “growing up” so they can feel like a big kid. So I ask you, when will it be their time? Do you have young ladies involved in your group? How about teens? We often express frustration when we invite young women into our groups and are turned down due to schedules or family obligations. What if we made the involvement in LWML routine at a young age?

Young girls are seeking approval from anyone and anything during their formative years. Let’s be that encouraging group that welcomes them in and trains them up in the ways of the LWML. Give them the opportunity to understand our mission and help them to live it out in their schools, homes and on the practice fields.

When the girls get involved at a young age, they will be excited about climbing the ranks of the LWML. They will form the friendships with others that will result in leadership roles as they mature. Not only will our groups flourish with young faces, but they will also bring fresh perspectives and new ideas to the group. Keep an open mind and see where each young person can take your group.

Our groups meet at various times on various days with a variety of activities. Make your young ladies/teens group something that works for your congregation. Don’t worry about what another zone is doing. Reach out, connect and get started on including all ages into your group.

**By Amanda Hankemeier**  
Chairman, Committee on Young Women

## GREAT IS HIS Faithfulness!



Totals as of November 30, 2022

<b>2022–2024 Mite Goal</b>	<b>\$390,000</b>
<b>Mites Received</b>	<b>\$118,305</b>
<b>Total Mites Still Needed</b>	<b>\$271,695</b>
<b>Mission Grants Paid</b>	<b>\$50,282</b>

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