

Capitol Zone Capsule

Second Quarter 2025

Capitol Zone Officers

Betsy Martino, President
Giovanna Turincio, VP of Christian Life & Gospel Outreach
Sherry Pettit, VP of Human Care & Organizational Resources
Patricia Willoughby, VP of Communication
Courtney Baxter, Secretary
Rosanne Capdeville, Treasurer
Sarah Johnson, ZYWR
Maddie Riquelmy, ZYWR
Rev. Eric Borchers, Pastoral Counselor

NATIONAL MITE GOAL FOR 2023-2025

Mite Goal for 2023-2025 Biennium: \$2,350,000

Amount Received: \$2,448,302.30

Amount **overage**: \$98,302.30

Amounts as of January 31, 2025

TEXAS MITE GOAL FOR 2024-2026

Mite Goal for 2024-2026 Biennium: \$403,000

Amount Received: \$191,364.86

Amount Needed: \$211,635.14

Amounts are through March 2025

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2025 LWML Convention



Join us at the Lutheran Women in Mission Convention

Date: June 26–29, 2025

Location: Omaha, Nebraska

Convention Center: CHI Health Center, 455 N 10th St, Omaha, NE, 68102

Theme: Growing in God's Grace

Scripture Verse: *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen (2 Peter 3:18).*

President: Eden Keefe

Goal Statement: Through Word and Sacrament, I will grow in grace to serve our Lord and proclaim His glory.

Objectives: Each convention attendee will be:

- Inspired to dig deeper in God's Word.
- Nurtured to share the love of Christ with enthusiasm.
- Encouraged to support missions and our mission goal with joy.

Notes from the Zone President

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Today is Monday of Holy Week. Yesterday, Palm Sunday, was a spiritual high at Hope Austin. The entire congregation processed in waving palm branches while a reader read passages from Zechariah and Psalm 118. We responded by singing "Ride on Ride on in Majesty," waving our palm branches throughout the whole hymn. All during the service, we stood and waved our palm branches while we sang praises and confessed our faith in the Apostles' Creed. What a way to begin Holy Week!

Today is Monday of Holy Week. And it has been a battle with dark forces most of the day. What happened to the mountaintop experience of yesterday? It seemed to have evaporated into thin air. Finally, tonight, I collapsed into my recliner with the timer set for 20 minutes. I closed my eyes and poured my heart out to the LORD. I begged for the Holy Spirit to intercede for me. I slept. When the timer went off, I immediately went to a pile of my brother's papers and looked through it carefully. There, I found the things I needed, which I had been diligently searching for all day. The things that had nothing to do with my brother, and yet they were in his papers. God hears us when we pray! God grants us mercy in everyday things as well as eternal things. God is faithful! All day, He was waiting for me to ask for His help. All day, He was calling me. Praise God, who is good, whose steadfast love and mercy are never-ending!

What about you, dear ladies? Have your spiritual highs ever collapsed into spiritual lows? I pray that you have also discovered and rediscovered how faithful our God is. He is always waiting for us to fall into His loving arms. He will always carry us through the tough times of insignificant everyday disappointments and the stressful times of life events that prostrate us.

May our faithful God lift you up all this Holy Week and bring you soaring as on wings of an eagle to the Spring Rally on April 27 at St. Paul Austin. May we rejoice in His goodness as we fellowship, worship and learn how God is working all throughout our Capitol Zone.

The National LWML Convention is June 26-29 in Omaha, Nebraska. The theme is Growing in God's Grace. It is not too late to register! <https://www.lwml.org/convention> has all the information you need.

Rejoicing in the LORD,
Betsy Martino
Capitol Zone President

From the VP of Communication

Next deadline for the Zone Capsule is **July 15, 2025**. Please email pictures and news from your groups to **czlwmlvpcomm@gmail.com**. The Capsule will go out around August 1st. Thank you in advance for your submissions. Below you will find some writing prompts to do a write-up about your experience at the National Convention and you're more than welcome to include pictures.

Writing Prompts

- A. Tell us about a Bible Study that spoke to your heart, who led the study, and what scripture references does he/she use.
- B. Tell us about a Mites in Action/Key Note Speaker that made a lasting impression, who was the speaker and what is his/her ministry.
- C. Tells us about your servant event experience; where did you go and whom did you serve. What impression did this experience leave you?
- D. Tell us about any connections you made there and how you might encourage other Lutheran Women in Mission to attend the next convention.
- E. If this was your first National, please tell us about your experience.

Gladly Serving the Lord Jesus,
Patricia Willoughby
VP of Communication

Important Dates to Remember

June 26-29, 2025	National Convention	Omaha, Nebraska
August 9, 2025	Prayer Service	Redeemer, Austin
October 5, 2025	Fall Rally	Bethany, Austin

Texas District Mission Grant Fully Funded

Shepherd's Canyon Retreat Ministry Scholarships --- \$15,000.00

Shepherd's Canyon Retreat offers a week-long counseling retreat for men and women in full-time ministry who are in various stages of burnout, stress, depression, compassion fatigue, and conflicts of all kinds. This mission grant will assist pastors, ministry workers, and spouses in attending a retreat in Arizona.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have blessed us with faithful pastors and ministry workers to care for Your children. But sometimes, Lord, Your shepherds can be burdened with overwhelming stress, depression, compassion fatigue, or burnout. Sometimes those who comfort and encourage need comfort and encouragement. Bless these mites used to support the ministry of Shepherd's Canyon Retreat and the scholarships that provide financial assistance for pastors, ministry workers, and spouses, to attend a week-long retreat to receive much needed counseling, hope, and healing. We thank You for the gift of our shepherds and pray Your blessing on their continued well-being for Jesus' sake. In His name we pray. Amen.

National Mission Grant Paid in Full

Orphan Grain Train Servant Center --- \$100,000.00

The original facility in Norfolk, Nebraska, is outdated and lacking adequate space to carry out their expanding work. They need to build an additional facility to increase their mission capacity and increase the safety level for volunteers. With an increased work area, larger groups of volunteers can work on donations received and the output of mercy meals can double to 10,000,000 meals annually. This grant will help OGT complete their building project.

You can learn more at <https://www.lwml.org/2023-2025-mission-grant-1>

2026 LWML Texas District Convention News:

Things are starting to ramp up on the convention front! We not only have a date:

LWML Texas District 44th Biennial Convention

June 11–13, 2026

Austin, Texas

Hilton Doubletree Hotel

and theme/scripture verse/goals and objectives:

Theme: Celebrate the Goodness of God

Scripture Verse: Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer (Romans 12:12).

Goal Statement: Empower Lutheran women to embody unwavering faith, abound in hope and patience and be fervently dedicated to prayer.

Objectives: The convention will provide opportunities for:

1. Sharing our hope in Christ joyfully with others.
2. Uplifting each other as the Holy Spirit enables us to be patient in tribulation.
3. Embracing the power of prayer through Bible studies, servant events, and speakers. (James 5:16).
4. Drawing strength from God's Word and knowing that God can do all and more than we can ask. (Ephesians 3:20).

But we also have an approved convention logo!



The central focus of this convention's logo is the cross; God's goodness is shown chiefly through the suffering and death of His Son, Jesus Christ. The rays emanating from the cross symbolize the spread of the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Therefore, we gather to celebrate God's goodness.

A motion was adopted to use "Goodness of God," listed in CCLI, as the theme song for this convention.

Additionally, the actual convention program details are starting to be formulated which includes the following:

Keynote Speaker - Noemi Guerra

Proclaimer- Newly Elected Texas District President

Songleader - Artha Weaver

Choir Director - Kathy Achterberg, Kathy will also accompany Artha if needed.

Organist for Worship - Jonathan Mueller

There are several program details still being vetted by the District EC which includes:

Mites in Action Speakers
Enrichment Session Leaders
Gifts from the Heart donations
Onsite Servant event options

Next Steps:

We recently got a preliminary layout of the hotel conference rooms for our convention needs, and the following big deliverable tasks are:

1. AV/Room needs: Each committee chairman is to determine their needs for rooms/chairs/layouts/AV needs, etc., and submit those details to Beverley Michalk, AV/Arrangements Chair, by July 1.
2. Convention Budget creation/submission: Each committee chairman must determine their budget needs for convention expenses and submit those to Sylvia Kokel, our host committee treasurer or Host Committee Chair, by August 1.
3. Budget Approval Meeting—Sylvia and I will meet with the District President and EC in August to review, finalize, and approve the submitted financial budgets.
4. Our next HC Planning meeting will be Zoom on June 5, 2025.

As you can tell, we are knee-deep in the planning process! We have MUCH more to go, but it is exciting to see how God is working out all the details.

Praise God for answering the two needs I had laid out in our last update!!

1. Mite in Action Chairman: I want to offer a special thanks to Liz Burnett. Although she is not technically in our zone, she agreed to help coordinate the Mite Walk activity for the convention and will come up with some fun and exciting activities for us to do to raise funds for mites.
2. Decorations Committee helpers - Nancy Butt from Good Shepherd and her group have volunteered to assist with the decorations committee, and we are looking forward to getting the ideas flowing on decorations and treat bags/favors for the convention delegates/District Board of Directors and EC. Thanks, Nancy and Good Shepherd ladies!

How can you help?

We will still have pending needs soon for pulling together the Onsite Mission Service activities and details once we get the finalized approved list back from the District EC. And that is not all; there are plenty of other things I am not mentioning here for everyone to get involved. If you are not already plugged in with us and working on something, please join the fun! Remember, many hands and feet make light work! And it is always more fun to work together. Ultimately, we are praying for the Mission Grant Recipients and District Officers that God plans to bring forth as part of this convention. We are the hands and feet, but we do it all for God's Glory and to Celebrate His Goodness!

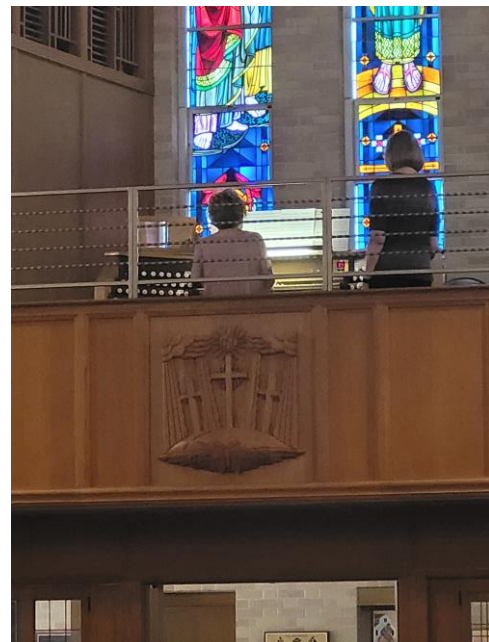
Laurie Bellard
2026 Host Committee Chairman

Spring Rally Pictures





Doris Reiwe played 'Now Thank We All Our God,' on the organ at St. Paul Fine Arts Academy Spring Recital. 5/3/25



Evangelism: What Does This Mean?

By Rev. Eric E. Borchers, LWML Zone Pastoral Counselor

Evangelism. Just the word can stir up images in our minds—perhaps of someone going door to door with a Bible tract in hand, or standing on a street corner with a Bible and a bullhorn. For some, it may even bring a feeling of anxiety, as if evangelism is a task for only the boldest and most extroverted among us.

But dear sisters in Christ, let me invite you to pause and ask that good old Lutheran question: *What does this mean?* What is evangelism, really? And how does it take shape in the everyday life of a faithful woman of God? At its core, evangelism means sharing the Good News—the Gospel—of Jesus Christ. It is proclaiming that the Son of God took on flesh, lived among us, died for the sins of the world, and rose again, bringing life and salvation to all who believe. This is the heartbeat of our faith, and it is *too good not to share*.

But how we share it? That's where we often get tripped up.

I don't believe that evangelism is necessarily about knocking on a stranger's door. That can be a version of evangelism, yes—but it's not the only one. And it's not even the most effective one for many of us.

I believe that the most powerful, most faithful kind of evangelism happens through *relationships*.

You see, evangelism is not first about technique or strategy. It's about love. It's about presence. It's about being the kind of friend, neighbor, co-worker, or family member who listens, cares, and lives in such a way that the light of Christ cannot help but shine through.

Jesus Himself often evangelized through relationships. He sat at tables. He walked along roads. He entered people's homes. He listened to their stories, met them where they were, and brought the hope of God's kingdom into their lives.

And you, dear women of the LWML, are already doing this.

Every time you care for a neighbor in need ... every time you bring a meal, send a card, pray with a friend, or invite someone to church ... every time you show up with love, speak with grace, and live with hope—you are bearing witness to Jesus. That's evangelism.

To evangelize doesn't mean you need a seminary degree or a soapbox. It means you know our Savior—and you're willing to be used by Him, wherever He's placed you.

So *what does this mean?*

It means you don't need to be anyone but yourself—a redeemed daughter of the King. It means trusting that God has given you relationships not by accident, but on purpose. And it means living each day ready to give a reason for the hope that is in you, with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15).

Evangelism isn't something we do apart from our lives—it's something we *live* through our lives. And in the hands of our gracious God, your life—your words, your love, your witness—can be the very means by which another person meets Jesus.

May the Lord bless you and keep you as you live and share the Gospel, one relationship at a time.

In Christ,

Rev. Eric E. Borchers

Rev. Eric E. Borchers

Pastor, Our Savior Lutheran, Austin TX
LWML Zone Pastoral Counselor

AROUND THE ZONE
Ladies of St. Paul, Austin

Dorcas LWML

At their last meeting, they prepared bouquets for their shut-ins. The ladies brought a bouquet, and we separated the flowers into colors along several tables. After a brief business meeting, breakfast, and devotional, we began building bouquets by picking up flowers of our favorite colors & choices. Someone bought drinking glasses from the thrift store that would fit in our car cup holders for easy transport later. We trimmed the flowers, added a little water, and then had each of the addresses for the shut-ins on little cards. There were 14 vases of flowers, and we had 16 ladies, so some paired up and delivered the bouquets along with the devotional we had heard that morning. We had a few visiting ladies, and they were also happy to participate. One member found that she shared a birthday with the gentleman she visited. We were reminded to bloom where we are planted while gracefully serving the Lord!

Submitted by Andrea Sellers, President





Joy LWML, Mission Liberty Hill

The Ladies at Mission Church, Liberty Hill, recently hosted a special guest speaker, Erland Schulze, development director, from Hope House, an extraordinary non-profit organization dedicated to providing long-term care and a loving home for profoundly disabled children. The presentation offered a heartfelt look into Hope House's mission. The organization's compassionate work continues to make a lasting impact on the lives of children with severe disabilities. The group was moved and inspired by the stories shared and came away with a deeper understanding of the incredible care and commitment behind the organization. We are so grateful to Erland for taking the time to share their heart and vision with us. The JOY LWML is thankful for the opportunity to learn more about how we can support Hope House and its ongoing mission of love and care.

Submitted by Lindsay Hunt, Secretary/Treasurer

