

The Lone Star Connection



April 2026

Monthly Newsletter

Vol. 4, Issue 4



As we prepare for the upcoming LWML Texas District Convention, we give thanks for the women who have prayerfully allowed their names to stand for office. That takes courage. Each nominee brings unique gifts, a servant's heart, and a commitment to sharing Christ's love. Their biographies, available on the website, reflect years of faithful service to Lutheran Women in Mission, their congregations, and their communities. Please keep these women in your prayers as we seek the Lord's guidance for those who will lead us in the next biennium.

Have you seen the list of proposed Mission Grants? Oh my! There is such diversity! All these ministries are so deserving. These ministries reflect the many ways God's goodness is being proclaimed throughout Texas and beyond. From local outreach efforts to international mission partnerships, each proposal represents a meaningful opportunity to support Gospel-centered work. We seek God's guidance as we thoughtfully and prayerfully choose the ministries that will be supported through the mites we offer in faith.

May we look for the abundant ways God is at work and trust that He will continue to move among us. May we celebrate the opportunities He gives us to care for others in His name. And may we do so as we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.



Texas District LCMS President John Braunersreuther was presented with a mission grant payment by Patti Samsel, Vice President of Gospel Outreach. The mission grant of \$60,000 funded Seminarian Scholarships for Texas Students.

For many years, Lutheran Women in Mission, Texas District, have blessed seminary students with generous scholarships. Christ commands His people to make disciples of all nations, and LCMS seminary graduates answer that call by bringing the Gospel to all people. The encouragement these scholarships offer is immeasurable. Knowing the Church stands behind them strengthens each student's heart as they prepare for ministry. This mission grant has eased financial pressures, supported scholarships, and helped Texas District seminarians focus more fully on their calling.

Giftgiving Today to Bless Tomorrow – Making a Forever Gift Story

My husband and I come from very small families and we have no children, therefore no heirs. God has been very good to us. He has also blessed our giving throughout our marriage. Our church and the ministries we have been called to serve in have stood in for the lack of close family, so we were moved to pledge the eventual remainder of our earthly wealth to those groups through a trust set up many years ago. The LWML Texas District Endowments will eventually benefit from one of my personal investments.

Are you also interested in *Giftgiving Today to Bless Tomorrow*? Please visit lwmltxdist.org/endowments.

2026 Key Dates

April 31

Last day for convention early registration

May 1

Delegate forms due to zone presidents

May 1–8

Late registration for convention

June 11–13

Texas District 44th Biennial Convention — Austin



Endowments
Giftgiving Today To Bless Tomorrow

View the current mite and mission grant information on the district website, lwmltxdist.org.

2026–2028 Proposed Mission Grants	
Youth Gospel Outreach — Glocal Mission, Houston, Texas	\$6,000
Christian Family Discipleship — Concordia Center for the Family, Ann Arbor, Michigan	\$10,000
Spanish Resources — Lutheran Heritage Foundation, Macomb, Michigan	\$12,500
Community Gospel Outreach — Redeemer Lutheran, Lubbock, Texas	\$20,000
Sharing Our Savior, One Meal at a Time — Forged by Fire Services, Mandeville, Louisiana	\$7,500
ASL Jesus Signs Workshops — Texas	\$15,000
Deploying Lutherans Doing Life Together — Baylor University, Waco, Texas	\$20,000
Generating Power of Christ — Camp Blessing Texas, Brenham, Texas	\$8,000
Interactive Classroom Displays — St. Paul Lutheran, Vernon, Texas	\$25,000
Spiritual Care — Upbring, Canyon Lake, Texas	\$10,000
Together We Go, Together We Grow — Expansion Mission Network, Rockwall, Texas	\$24,000
Learning Center Flooring — Trinity Lutheran, Riesel, Texas	\$20,000
Bridge to Belonging — Camp Lone Star, La Grange, Texas	\$20,000
Mobile Ministry Van — Bryan-College Station, Texas	\$20,000
Feet on the Ground — MOST Ministries, Ann Arbor, Michigan	\$12,000
Tailgate Outreach — Lutheran Student Center, Lubbock, Texas	\$15,000
Reaching Forward — Bethesda Lutheran Disability Ministries, Whitehall, Wisconsin	\$5,000
#Shine San Benito Mission — The Table Lutheran Church, San Benito, Texas	\$15,500
Proposed Mission Grants	\$265,500
Seminarian Scholarships for Texas Students	\$50,000
Total requested	\$315,500

Slate of Candidates

2026 LWML Texas District Convention

Vice President of Gospel Outreach

Elizabeth Burnett, Bluebonnet Zone
Debra Heckmann, Sunshine Zone

Vice President of Communication

Cindy Carter, Dal-North Zone
Wendy Hart, Trinity Zone

Recording Secretary

Pam Jeske, White Oak Zone
Lisa Snow, Heart of Texas Zone

Treasurer

Terry Frazier, Bluebonnet Zone
Sharon Stoerkel, Bayou City Zone

Pastoral Counselor

Rev. Kelly Krieg, Bluebonnet Zone
Rev. Russell Etzel, White Oak Zone

Nominating Committee

Heather Barratt, Golden Harvest Zone
Nancy Beckom, Post Oak Zone
Mandy Halbert, White Oak Zone
Amy Heard, Panhandle Zone
Melissa Houchin, Sunshine Zone
Frances Molitor, Bluebonnet Zone
Rosie Schoenfeld, Bluebonnet Zone

Full bios for the candidates are on the website and can be accessed by clicking on their picture.

Humorous Interrupters for the Austin Convention




Abby Goehring became involved with LWML in 2008 as a Young Woman Representative (YWR) for the Coastal Bend Zone and has since joyfully served at the zone, district, and national levels. She made her humorous interrupter debut in 2018 at the LWML Texas District Convention in Waco, where she delighted audiences while portraying Katie Luther. In 2021, Abby was honored to be invited by her friend and mentor, Jan Struck, to join her on the national stage.

By day, Abby is an elementary school teacher—an occupation that allows her to refine her acting skills daily in front of a very honest audience. Her classroom is also her mission field, where she is able to share God's love through encouragement, laughter, and meaningful relationships with her students. Abby's favorite Bible verse, *Romans 12:12*, reflects her heart for joyful service and faithful perseverance.



Christine Spofford is a devoted wife, mother of two, and proud Nana whose LWML journey began at age sixteen through the influence of her grandmother and mother. She has served at the group, zone, and district levels, valuing the encouragement, service, and sisterhood that define the LWML.


Christine has recently enjoyed bringing humor to LWML events, performing as *Anita Mites* with Abby Goehring and later joining Jan Struck and Abby on stage as *Paula*. She currently serves as the District Committee on Young Women Chairman and delights in supporting younger women in their service. Outside of LWML, she enjoys theater, movies, reading, and pickleball.



Be watching Facebook for weekly Countdown to Convention information posts. Each week will be information about the upcoming convention in Austin, June 11–13.

Recognitions for the Convention Host Committee are also being posted on Facebook. These ladies have been working hard to make this an uplifting convention for you. If you know any of the volunteers or see them at the convention, be sure to tell them how much they are appreciated.

Celebrate the Goodness of God
Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer (Romans 12:12).



LWML Texas District 44th Biennial Convention
June 11–13, 2026
DoubleTree by Hilton Austin
Austin, Texas

Focus Corner

Proclaim Christ

Carry a few small crosses or little figures of Jesus with you. When you finish shopping or dining, offer one to the cashier or server and simply ask, "How can I pray for you?" It's a meaningful way to share Christ's love in everyday moments.

Support Missions

Host a small fundraiser to help support our mission grants. Possible ideas include a Mother-Daughter Tea, Bunco night, Rocking for Mites, or Moving 4 Mites. Each event can be simple to organize and still make a real impact.

Equip Women

Invite your group members to explore the Help menu in Microsoft Word or Excel and learn three new features. Ask them to share what they discovered at the next meeting. Encourage those who have a laptop to bring it so they can demonstrate their new skills and help others learn as well.

Serve Others

Choose one person each week to intentionally encourage — a text, a call or a short prayer.

From Around the District

Capitol Zone

Thirteen ladies of St. Paul Dorcas, Austin and guests gathered on Saturday morning, March 7, for a breakfast, devotional, a short business meeting — gotta share details of the upcoming convention! — then bouquet making, and finally the delivery to our homebound members.

You could do this too. Here's how we did it.

Pre-work:

- Gather the list of homebound members from church office.
- Put each address on a 3x5 card. I also looked up each address and added the major intersections near the person's home for ease of those doing the delivery knowing the general area they were headed.
- Purchase enough glass drinking glasses from a thrift store that will also fit into the cupholder of a car (this keeps the flowers from spilling during transport); bonus is that they do not need to match as they will be going to separate locations.
- Decide on a hostess and devotional leader.
- Devotional leader prints copies, enough for attendees and homebound members.
- Call each homebound member, leave a message if necessary, and let them know someone would like to stop by and drop a little bouquet for them with the date and approximate time.

Morning of:

- Each lady brings a bouquet of flowers from the grocery store or Costco/Sam's Club. I did bring a extras to make sure the bouquets were full. These were spread across two 8' tables.
- As ladies arrive, sort flowers by color ROYGBIV for the win.
- Mix flower food packets with water and fill about 1" worth into each glass (fill with more water at destination).
- Serve breakfast, read devotional as a group, have a short business meeting, if necessary.
- Build your bouquets! Walk around the table and select 6–8 stems from the available flowers, adding in extra as the supply allows.
- Arrange bouquet in your hand.
- Hold flowers next to the glass 'vase' and trim the bottom of the stems so that they will fit into the selected glass.
- Add flowers.
- Place all the bouquets on a table, gather the ladies for a picture.
- Closing and sending prayer that these flowers would be a blessing to those receiving them.
- Deliver to each homebound member, either in single visits or paired up.
- Upon arrival, share the devotional, flowers, a few words, and depart for home or next visit.
- Rejoice in serving the Lord with gladness!

