

The Lone Star Connection

"let your light shine before others" (Matthew 5:16a)



November 2026

Monthly Newsletter

Vol. 4, Issue 11



Rev. Kelly Krieg
Junior Pastoral Counselor

Apart from Me, You Can Do Nothing

Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

These words are especially fitting for those who serve in the LWML. There is always much to do: meetings, decisions, budgets, events, mission grants, mission projects, communications, and encouragement. At times, the work can feel like a great machine that simply has to keep moving.

But Jesus gives us a different picture: I am the vine; you are the branches. The work of the church does not begin with us. It begins with Christ. It is easy to begin thinking about our goals, programs, resources, and plans. But Jesus begins with Himself. The Christian faith is not fundamentally about what we do for Jesus. It is first about what Jesus has done for us.

Christ first. Our service second. The Gospel comes before the good work.

Christian service becomes exhausting when we begin to believe everything depends on us. We can become discouraged when plans fail or when we cannot see the results of our work.

Jesus instead says, Abide in me. Our first calling is not productivity. It is to remain in Christ through His word and sacraments. We never want to become so busy doing things for Christ that we neglect receiving Christ.

Christian service matters. Mission support, prayer, giving, teaching, encouragement, and service to our neighbor all matter. But good works are the fruit of faith; they are not the root of our salvation. This gives us freedom to serve without despair. We can work faithfully and leave the results in God's hands.

Why? Because we are not the vine. Christ is. The greatest act of service was the cross, where He bore our sins, died for us, and rose again. That is the foundation beneath everything we do.

So let us remember: Christ first. Then His word. Then His gifts. Then our service. We receive not to earn God's favor, but because we already have His favor in Christ. Christ is the vine. We are His branches. And in Him, by His grace, He bears fruit through us. Amen

Happening Hub

2027:

January 15: Banner Designs Due to Wendy Hart

February 10-12: Executive Committee Meeting

February 12-14: Board of Directors and Zone

President Orientation,

Camp Lone Star

May 1: Doves Due for Convention Tote Bags

July 8 -11: LWML Convention, Oklahoma City, OK

2028:

June 8-10: District Convention, Dallas

Mite Report through September 2026

Mission Goal 2026-2028	\$419,406.00
Mites Received April - September 2026	\$74,853.90
Total Still Needed	\$344,552.10
Disbursed to Lutheran Women in Mission	\$12,152.49
Allocated for Mission Grants 2026-2028	\$225,000.00

Above numbers do not include \$1,570.00 received for & disbursed to Lutheran Women in Mission (national)

We make a Difference in People's Lives!



Front Row: Liz Burnett (LWML TX District VP of Gospel Outreach), Debbie Rich-ter (ECLC Director), Middle Row: Cheryl Lowe (Trinity LWML), Misty Ehlers (ECLC Teacher), Becky Korger (ECLC Board member), Rev. Larry Knobloch (Trinity's Pastor) Back Row: Amy Hickerson (ECLC Teacher), Cyndi Knoblock (Trinity LWML President), Carolyn Ross (ECLC Board member), Natalie Ed-wards (Trinity LWML Treasurer), Betty Ray (ECLC Board Chair)

****Mission Grant Paid!!!****

Liz Burnett, VP of Gospel Outreach, had the privilege of presenting Trinity Early Childhood Learning Center in Riesel, Texas, with a mission grant check for \$20,000 to help support their ministry as they share the gospel with God's children. They are using the money to redo the flooring in the Center. Please join us in praying for this mission grant recipient. Gracious Lord, we thank You for this mission grant that will provide new flooring for this Christ centered children's learning center. Bless this project so the renewed space becomes safer, brighter, and more welcoming for every child who learns and grows here. May each step taken on these new floors be guided by your love, surrounded by your protection, and filled with joy. Strengthen the ministry of all who serve in this place and let your light shine through every lesson shared. We offer this prayer in the love of Christ. Amen.

Girls Find New Life at Upbring

Every girl who arrives at Upbring New Life Children's Center brings a story that is still being written. New Life provides a safe, nurturing environment for girls ages 11 to 17 offering individualized care and support for the road ahead. New Life is a residential treatment facility that offers services which support and care for the whole person. Many girls will hear God's Word, receive Christian instructions, and grow in faith through the Gospel.

Spiritual Care Director, Mark Lara, offers a variety of services to the girls who come from many different spiritual backgrounds and many of whom are questioning and seeking answers. He has the opportunity to share God's Word and the Gospel. Eligible girls also join Wednesday night church groups, where they build friendships and experience Christian community beyond New Life's campus.

New Life is committed to: making God's Word available, providing Christian guidance, and sharing the Gospel so that the Holy Spirit may work faith through His Word. Through Encounter, a vacation Bible school-style experience, partner churches also spend time with girls on campus, sharing in fellowship and faith-centered activities. Through chapel, youth group, Bible study, and personal reading of scripture, the girls have opportunities to hear God's Word and to be strengthened in their faith. This group received a grant for \$10,000 from LWML Texas District this biennium to be used for essential materials and Bible study resources.



Prayer Services

Each year Lutheran Women in Mission publishes a prayer service. The 2026 Prayer Service was written by Rev. Barrie E. Henke. It takes the group through the acronym P.R.A.Y.E.R. — Praise, Remember, Ask, Yield, Excitement, Rejoice. The 2027 prayer service will be available in December. These resources are available on the national website (lwml.org). You can find the current prayer service under "News & Events." Because this resource is copyrighted, if you'd like to use it outside of an LWML event, you'll need permission. Permission is not required for LWML events.



It's Scholarship Time! Time to apply!

Do you know of a female member of your Texas District congregation studying at an LCMS University to become an LCMS full-time church worker? Encourage her to apply for an LWML Scholarship! LWML Scholarship Applications are available online and are due March 31, 2027. Visit lwmltxdist.org/about-us, click "Scholarships" and download the 2027 application. Completed applications must be received by March 31, 2027. Questions? Contact Judy Kunkel at scholarships@lwmltxdist.org.

Please take a minute and pray for the 2026 Scholarship Recipients— Teadora, Faith, Caroline, Lottie and Elizabeth as they study to become Lutheran teachers and musicians.

Left to Right: Michelle Heckmann (24-26 Scholarship Committee Chairman), Tiffany Harmon (Endowment Committee Chairman), Teadora Schwolert, Faith Keiper, Caroline Browning, Lottie Hamre, Judy Kunkel (24-26 Scholarship Committee Vice Chair/26-28 Chairman)

Convention Offering Recipients Send Thanks.

The offering checks were disbursed from Convention and we received Thank You Notes. Founder/President, Robert Dorrough, of the God of Hope Ministries, A Bridge of Hope from Prison to New Life stated that their ministry has opened a new men's dorm with 24 new inmates to start the program. Our donation helped the organization reach more inmates with the love and truth that Jesus Christ gives. Wellington Morris, Campus Pastor at University Lutheran Church at the University of Texas, also thanked us for our generous support of their campus ministry, stating that it will significantly aid in sharing the Gospel with students at the University of Texas.

Faith in Action

Putting our faith into action is not always easy. Sometimes we are tired. Some people are hard to love. So are we at times, but God never quits loving us. So, we serve others, not because we HAVE to, but because we WANT to. Once we received the free gift of grace that was secured for us through Jesus' death and resurrection, we began to overflow with thankfulness and a desire to serve others so that they too might find the wonderful gift that we have in Jesus. We love, because He first loved us. How could we possibly not share this good news?

FOLLOW US!



On the web:
www.lwmltxdist.org



On Facebook:
@Lutheran Women's Missionary League



On Instagram:
@lwmltexasdistrict



On YouTube:
@lwmltexasdistrict8339



Questions? Send an email to:
communication@lwmltxdist.org



Focus Corner

Proclaim Christ: Plan now to organize a group to sing Christmas carols at nursing homes or shelters.

Support Missions: Hold a design a mite box campaign to promote creative ways to collect mites.

Equip Women: Invite the women of your group to an LWML book talk, read Dedicated (available through CPH), and discuss how you can inspire one another to share God's grace through mission support.

Serve Others: Host a winter hat and mittens drive for a homeless shelter.



Endowments
Gifting Today To Bless Tomorrow

Send in your Mites!

Send to: LWML Texas District
Attn: Alissa Elley, Financial Secretary
PO Box 183
Seguin, TX 78156

From Around The District

Dorcas Circle, Immanuel, Giddings—Post Oak Zone

This group had Undie Sunday three Sundays in September. Thrivent Action Team Grants along with the participation of the congregation and the Dorcas Circle members yielded 1,259 pairs of children's underwear to be given to Orphan Grain Train (OGT)! Monetary donations received from Dorcas Circle members were also given to OGT to assist with shipping. One member, Eunice Hendrickson's family took it a step farther last year at Christmas. She explained, "with grandchildren getting older, gift giving became boring as gift cards were the main thing given. We decided that we would give each other children's underwear, socks, and stuffed animals. We had lots of laughs opening our "special" gifts and in the end OGT and destitute children gained!" What a great idea! Thanks for sharing.



Pictured:
Eunice's husband
with one of his
special stuffed
animal gifts!



left to right: Linda Gunter, Linda Snider, Nadine Christiansen and Carolyn Faske

These ladies are from **St. Paul, Bishop in the Coastal Bend Zone**. They made quilts for Orphan Grain Train and LWR. In September 50 quilts were sent to OGT and they continue to work every week to make quilts to send off. Great job ladies! What a blessing you are. Keep up the great work!!