

Which Sheep are You?

I am so excited about our outdoor nativity scene! Last year, my sweet husband built the important part – Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus. This year he made the shepherds and the sheep. Now, let me tell you, the pattern supplied templates for four sheep. But they are so cute I asked my husband to make more. We now have FOURTEEN sheep in our yard! I asked him to paint one of them black. Don't ask me why. I just figured every flock needed a black sheep.



There's one of the white sheep who has wandered to the field across the street. You know which one THAT is, right? It's the sheep who has gone astray! I sent my sister a photo of the sheep across the street and said that #14 was going to be trouble. Her reply was perfect – "the Shepherd will find him".



What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray (Matthew 18:12-13).

Lately though, I've been overthinking the black sheep / white sheep identities. My first thought was simply the black sheep was the proverbial oddball. You know, that family member that marches to the beat of a different drummer, or the awkward person who doesn't quite fit in. But what if the black sheep is Judas, or the thief on the cross who didn't accept Jesus. That would mean the white sheep are those who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior and know they are washed clean in His blood.

On the other hand, even though we are washed in Jesus's blood, we continue to sin. So, maybe WE are the black sheep? We have the promise of receiving our (wooly?) white robes in Heaven.

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7:13-14).

That would mean the white sheep are those who have NOT heard the Good News. Or they've heard it and don't accept it. They don't know the way to salvation and are just going about their business. That means we black sheep need to get with it! We need to tell our family, friends, and neighbors about the Good Shepherd!

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" (Romans 10:13-15).

So, which sheep are you? At this point I don't think it matters a bit if you want to identify with the white or the black sheep! You are a child of God and have been washed in the blood of The Lamb. Just remember that you are called to reach out to those other sheep!

Blessings in the New Year!
President Candy
[Email](#)



I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also, he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true" (Revelation 21:1-5).



Greetings to all in this New Year...And as you read this portion of Scripture, chosen as we set out to reflect on the beginning of a new calendar year, I've specifically chosen these words of Holy Scripture from the last book of the Bible. All the above talk of "New"-ness...new heaven and earth, new Jerusalem, as we end these verses, we hear the Lord tell His people He's making "all things new".

And we've probable received some new things recently, haven't we??? They came to us wrapped in colorful paper, perhaps that paper hasn't even left our possession, still filling up our trashcans waiting to be hauled off by some big truck, out to some landfill (no, this isn't going to be a message about recycling, or any other Stewardship directed devotion). Nope, we've received these new things with the best of intentions from our family and friends because they either thought we would like them, or really needed them, or even better - both!

But really, I would like us to reflect upon a different "New" thing, something more in line with what the Lord was getting at in that last verse from the above citation. Jesus says He's "Making" (present tense) ALL THINGS new. He is, right now, in that process of making things. And what that is, is followers. He's growing His church, well, not He alone, since we Lutherans have a fairly good (at least I hope so) grasp on the Economy of God. You know, God the Father is creator, Jesus the Son is redeemer, and God the Holy Spirit is sanctifier, as The Triune God work together as One to do these things - Creating, Saving and Sanctifying those things that need to be created, redeemed, and sanctified...and those things that need God's things...US...the people whom God loves, we are those in need of the "New" life God wants His people to have.

So, in this "New" year, might we remember He who is of Old, who was, is, and will be, as we continue to live out lives in response to what's been done for us. We've been made new, by God, for a new life free from the burdens of our "Old" selves. We, God's people have this newness as a result of being brought into God's family by faith, faith in a God whose promises are true. Just as we've been reminded of in our recent celebration of the Lord's visit to His people as the Babe of Bethlehem, to the amazement of shepherds, and the seeking of Magi, and the sinister plans of a man who was afraid of "He who had been born, 'King of the Jews'". He, who was, is, and forever will be so much more. Now and forever...Amen.

Blessings to all,
Pastor Smith
Junior Pastoral Counselor
[Email](#)



Looking Ahead

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I enjoyed this past year, but I am looking forward to this coming year. All my committees will be busy this year working on different items for the district. The nominating committee will especially be busy looking for people to volunteer to run for the various offices up for election at the next district convention. We are looking for people to run for President, 1st Vice President, 3rd Vice President, Financial Secretary, Nominating Committee, and Pastoral Counselor.

There are a few reasons I think being an officer is such a rewarding experience. First, I have been able to meet a lot of great people who are working to spread God's message. Second, I have learned to lean on God's guidance even more as I have faced new challenges. Third, I am a very shy person but being first vice president has helped me to step out of my shell. I hope and pray that you will consider running for an office. I think you will find it just as rewarding as I have

I pray that everyone has an amazing year in 2023! May God bring you peace, joy, and renewal this new year!

But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)

Blessings.

Jane Hubsch,
1st. Vice President
[Email](#)



Joyful Anticipation

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given (Isaiah 9:6a)

My niece is expecting her first child, a son, in April. As you can imagine, my entire family is more than excited. When I read the above scripture verse on a Christmas card, I thought about my niece's joyful anticipation of welcoming her first born. I also thought about Mary, the mother of Jesus. As an unmarried, pregnant teenager, I'm sure her initial thoughts were more of fear than joyful anticipation. I imagine her fears were somewhat lessened when Joseph took her home as his wife after the angel of the Lord appeared to him, but I'm sure she was still uneasy since she was giving birth to the Son of God. I wonder when her anticipation of the birth became joyful.

As Christians, we should always be joyful because of what Jesus did for us. God sent Jesus to us to take the punishment for our sins so we could have a relationship with Him and because of Jesus' resurrection, we have eternal life once our earthly life is over. We may not be "joyfully anticipating" the end of our earthly life, but we can certainly be joyful knowing we will spend eternity with our Lord and Savior!

Payments for the Lutheran Woman's Quarterly from each group are due to the zone treasurer by January 15. Zone payments to the District Financial Secretary are due February 15. Each zone president and Quarterly chairman will receive a spreadsheet showing the number of subscriptions ordered by each group and the cost for each. Thank you for your assistance in closing the gap between requested subscriptions and total receipts. By encouraging payment early in the year, we can more easily match costs with receipts.

Joyfully anticipating a wonderful 2023!

Diane Reimold
2nd Vice President
[Email](#)



Oh Joy, Oh Rapture!



It's almost miracle! I have received the documents I need for the archives from almost every zone in the district, so thank you, thank you, thank you!

I am confident the one remaining zone will submit their information soon to give us 100% participation.

Judy Graham
District Archivist
[Email](#)

Mission Grant Committee Update

I am happy to report that we have paid two (2) additional grants for a total of \$11,000. We have paid a total of \$50,750.00 (48%) so far this biennium. This means we have \$54,250.00 (52%) of the \$105,000.00 remaining.

Mission Grants that were paid In November and December, 2022 are as follows:

November, 2022 - Pregnancy Resource Center Medical and Program Services - \$5,000.00

December, 2022 - Camp Trinity Camperships Camp Petit Jean - \$6,000.00

The table of Mission Grants can be found at www.midsouthlwml.org/grantinfo/grant%20table22.pdf

Serving our Lord with Gladness,

Sandra Arnold, Third Vice-President



[Email](#)

Leading by Sharing

Christmas is a time of sharing. I pray that all of you have found many ways you can share the same joy we personally have found in our LWML groups. Jesus is the reason for the season and there is no greater joy than that! Don't keep it a secret, share it!

There are so many ways to reach out to our communities to say I love you. Many ideas are found on the national website, www.lwml.org. Many you may have already checked them out but I bet there will be a few you who have not yet tried.

Please reach out to the Leader Development Committee, myself, Bonnie White, and Ruth Scheiderer to let us know what you might need to help you in reaching out to others. We always want to be a beacon and not hide our light. Let it shine for all to see!

One way to be a beacon is to join us for the quarterly Munch Bunch Zoom meeting on January 30th at 6:30 p.m. CST to hear from 3 of our Lutheran School educators. We have preschool to high school and beyond covered and hope to learn how we can help our schools in a way that is most needed. We want the light to shine for ALL our youth! Watch for the invitation to this zoom meeting and PLEASE, let every single person in your respective congregations know about it!

4th Vice President Leader Development Committee

Vicki Eubanks

[Email](#)



Ascension Lutheran-Edison School Partnership Mission Grant



Safety improvements to the school facility have been made which include new vinyl-wrapped playground fencing and fire alarm system up-



The **East TN Zone** held their Fall Rally at Christus Victor in Knoxville on November 5th. What a blessing that 65 were in attendance to enjoy the compelling speakers, delicious food, and fun fellowship. Thanks to Shannon Ondracka for the idea to head outside on that beautiful fall day and form a human "80" to commemorate LWML's 80 years!



Endowment Fund Update

Our next statement will be received mid-January and we pray there will be enough growth to offer funds for use. We will at least be able to offer \$310.87 that was left from the 2021 disbursement. But we continue to pray that the fund will grow and there will be more available.

Remember the endowment fund in your giving and help us to fund gifts for the benefit of the mission and ministry of the LWML-MSD through scholarship assistance and leadership development. Be searching for ideas to use these funds. The amount available for distribution will be announced early in 2023. Visit the Endowment Fund webpage at www.midsouthlwml.org/endowment-fund for more information.

Your Sister in Christ,
Mary C. Pruitt, Chairman,
LWML Mid-South District Endowment Committee



West Tennessee Zone Fall Rally

THEME: Good News? Thank God, Bad News? Fear Not and Pray (Isaiah 41:10)

DEVOTION: Pastor Eric Rudsenske based on Luke 24:39 Because of Jesus, our life has a purpose. We must be clothed in the Holy Spirit and have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

GUEST SPEAKER: April Thompson, TV News Anchor Channel 3. Ms. Thompson spoke about her years in the news industry and how especially the pandemic change things for reporting the news. There is a constant battle to balance the reporting of bad and good news. When there is bad news, fear not and pray. When there is good news, thank God. Just as she has news assignments daily, we are to see what assignment God is giving us each day. Slow down and listen to what He is directing you to do. In 1 Thessalonians 5:18, Paul tells us to give thanks in all things, not to thank God for evil, but to thank Him for being with us through the evil. Ms. Thompson works with numerous groups through her church and the community to teach, offer support, encourage and empower other to be the best they can be.

OFFERING: \$508.17 (\$380.94 Neighborhood Christian Center of Memphis, \$51.00 Mites, \$76.23 Zone for expenses).

INGATHERING: 96 packages of feminine hygiene products and \$40 for the Shelby County Education Foundation

OFFICERS ELECTED: President – Christine Acomb, Faith Collierville; Corresponding Secretary – Julie Tyler, Beautiful Savior Olive Branch; Pastoral Counselor – Rev. Eric Rudsenske, Concordia Jackson

ATTENDANCE: 40 members and 2 pastors





WooHoo!!

73 Personal Care Kits!!

Many thanks to our generous members at **Faith, Hot Springs** for contributing items to make the Lutheran World Relief personal care kits. A group of ladies assembled 73 kits on Oct 10th! The kits will go to LWR in November where they will wait to be distributed as needed for refugees or people in natural disasters. God's love is shown throughout the world by our work here."



Concordia is Ready

In October the ladies of **Concordia Lutheran in Jackson, TN** Purchased, assembled, wrapped and boxed personal care kits for Lutheran World Relief. A total of 25 kits were completed.



Grace Lutheran of Knoxville Quilting Group

The ladies of the **Grace Lutheran Church, Knoxville, TN** quilting group completed, packed and shipped 118 quilts to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) in 2022. The group also obtained their own "quilting room" at the church this year for storage of fabric, supplies and quilts in various stages. In addition to providing quilts to LWR, the group participates in providing "graduation quilts" for 8th graders at First Lutheran Church, Knoxville as well as providing baby blankets to a local charity that helps young mothers in distress.



The LWML held an Assembly of Leaders in St. Louis in October of 2022. One of the many amazing sessions available was about the LWML website and all the rich resources found on there. We know using a website full of information can be overwhelming, but we want to help change that. We will be picking sections within the website to look for hidden gems to help with your local LWML group or zone. We will be doing this through our Facebook page every 2nd Tuesday of the month. These little gems will also be found in our eNews and League Letter.

Hmmm, I just wonder where we will go on our first hunt.



Ascension Lutheran Edison School Partnership Receives Grant



On July 17, 2022, **Ascension Lutheran in Madison, TN** was presented a Mission Grant check for \$6,500 from Mid-South District's 3rd Vice-President Sandra Arnold. Receiving the check were Cherri Walker, Ascension LWML President and Pastor Greg Bauch.

The grant is for the Ascension Lutheran-Edison School Partnership Safety improvements for school facility.

Trinity HOPE Spiritual and Physical Food for Children in Haiti



On July 24, 2022, **Redeemer Lutheran in Nashville** received a Mission Grant check for \$6,500 from Mid-South District's 3rd Vice-President, Sandra Arnold. Receiving the check on behalf of Trinity HOPE Spiritual and Physical Food for Children In Haiti is Keith Logan, Co-Executive Director, and Candi Cook, Operations Manager, Trinity HOPE along with Geal Goldbeck, Redeemer's LWML President.

Serve the Lord with Gladness

The nominating committee is looking for you! Are you willing to serve the Lord on the Mid-South District LWML Board? It is a great way to be a part of Lutheran Women in Mission!

Two of the positions that will be selected in June 2024 for a four-year term are the President and Third Vice President. Some of the responsibilities for the Mid-South LWML President are to preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors and Executive Board, receive and approve payment of vouchers for payment of expenses, serve as ex-officio member of all departments and committees, be responsible for execution of passed resolutions, present a report of activities to the convention, and be a member of the national Presidents Assembly (voice and vote).

Some of the responsibilities for the Mid-South LWML Third Vice President are to fill in for the Presidents, serve as coordinator of the Department of Gospel Outreach and Mission Servants which includes the Mission Servants Committee and the Mission Grants Committee, chair the Mission Grants Committee, and present a report to the convention of all department activities.

Each potential candidate should have served as a voting member on a zone board of directors; such as serving as a zone officer, group president, or as an appointed committee chairman.

Be willing to say YES when you are called to serve the Lord!

If you have any questions, please contact one of us on the Nominating Committee.

Serving Joyfully,

Becky Grese, Chairman - [Email](#), Stephanie Rohrer, Rebecca Maplesden

East Tennessee Zone Retreat at Eagle Rock Camp.

On September 23-25, 2022 fifty-seven women from our East Tennessee Zone, Chattanooga, Alabama, Missouri, and Wisconsin retreated to the beautiful mountains of Tallassee, Tennessee and gathered for Bible study, fellowship and fun at Eagle Rock Camp.

Our topic was *Women of Valor*; "The Lord gives the command; the women who proclaim the good news of the gospel are a great host!" from Ps. 68:11. Our guest speaker was Kisha Gallagher, a Christian who has been studying the Hebraic roots of Christianity since 2004. She is a devout student of the Bible and has a passion to teach the Bible's ancient Hebraic richness into fresh insights that deepen and strengthen our faith.

During their weekend in the beautiful Smoky Mountains the ladies crafted bookmarks with a "Tzitzit tassels" and made 80 paperclip angels for the LWML "80 for 80" project. The angels will be gifted to the Fall Rally offering and in-gathering recipients. Evening vespers were led by Pastor Paul Becker from Concordia Lutheran, Kingsport with a sermon titled "Michael and the Angels".



A Room Full of 80's



The ladies of Grace, Knoxville, celebrated the 80th year of LWML by hosting an **80+ Christmas Brunch** on Dec. 10, 2022. Members of the congregation, men and women, who were 80 or more years old were sent a personal invitation. The room was decorated with Christmas balls in glass vases and small bags of Mandarin oranges and candy were prepared for favors. Egg casseroles, fruit, and sweet breads were served. Pastor Steve Skov, who just turned 80, gave a devotion on the "Blessings of aging." Three groups of children, who were practicing for their Christmas Program, sang for the group of 38 people attending. The event concluded with a presentation of the history of Mite Boxes and their use to gather funds and "Serve the Lord with Gladness."

Focus on Lutheran Schools

Join us as we visit with
Lutheran educators
from across the Mid-
South District

Tuesday, January 31, 2023
6:30 pm Central / 7:30 pm Eastern

[Click on this photo for joining instructions.](#)



Faithful Elves

Here at **Faith, Tullahoma**, we coordinate with a local school and supply the kids with Christmas gifts. Members of the congregation pick an Angel from the tree and purchase what is on the list, each child has 4 Angels: 1) pants and shirt; 2) shoes sock and underwear; 3) coat; 4) toy. After the items are procured, the LWML puts them in gift bags for parents to pick up. We had 5 families this year. Additionally, the LWML group had 2 children from the alternative school whose gifts are purchased through freewill offerings at our Advent meal and our Christmas party. Merry Christmas! Darlene Buckner, President.



Middle Tennessee Zone

The Middle Tennessee Zone Fall Rally was held on October 1, 2022, at Concordia Lutheran Church, Nashville, Tennessee. The theme was "Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord." based on Psalm 31:24.

We had a wonderful turnout with 56 ladies and gentlemen in attendance! Pastor Eric Phillips from Concordia led the worship service. Our guest speaker was Mike Cowles, Director of Major Gifts, Nashville Rescue Mission, a Christ-centered community dedicated to providing hope for today, hope for tomorrow and hope for eternity to the hungry, homeless and hurting.

A freewill offering and numerous basic clothing items were gathered for the Mission.

To close out the service and business meeting, Pastor Phillips installed our new President, Joilyn George, Vice President, Judy Gilbert and Pastoral Counselor, Pastor Greg Bauch. The LWML members of Concordia prepared and served lunch to end the program.




2023 Convention



Date: June 22–25, 2023

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Theme: Celebrate the Lord of the Nations



The Lutheran Women in Mission of the North Wisconsin, Northern Illinois, and South Wisconsin Districts invite you to the **LWML 40th Biennial Convention** in beautiful Milwaukee, Wisconsin June 22–25, 2023


Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage! The Lord looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man (Psalm 33:12–13).

Opportunities abound as we:

- † **Worship** together with our sisters and brothers in Christ!
- † **Share** the Good News with everyone the Lord places in our path.
- † **Fellowship** with good friends while meeting new ones.
- † **Enjoy** accomplishing God's work with LWML sisters and brothers in Christ!
- † **Bring** our family and friends to enjoy a city of many cultures.

Milwaukee, called the City of Steeple, is home to the Discovery World Science, Harley Davidson, and Milwaukee Art Museums; the Historic Trinity Lutheran Church, the Milwaukee County Zoo, the Historic Third Ward, and much more.

Come enjoy the cool breezes off Lake Michigan, June 22–25, 2023!



Click on the Invitation on the left to Enter the Convention Web Site.

Our Senses are a Gift from God

What a gift the 5 senses are to us! Sight (even though some of us may need corrective lenses to make it better), touch, smell, taste (this one too has degrees that vary in us all, either good or bad), and hearing (which also has some corrective measures that we might have to use).

We wake up each day to most of these senses working and never think a thing about them. UNTIL, there is a problem. This Christmas season, let us take a moment to thank God for these senses that we all are given no matter how good or bad they work.

Remember that chocolate bar commercial that I shared with you that utilized sign language by a couple of teens? Well, I also want to share about a deaf football team in California that recently won a championship game! How awesome is that! More and more is being shown in the news that involves sign language or being deaf or hard of hearing! This makes me happy as being deaf alienates you to some extent from a lot of social interaction. I love that attention to this disability is being shared on a wider scale.

My prayer is that we all share on a wide scale the love of God to our friends and neighbors that might not hear well or at all. Make them feel included by being present! A hug goes a LONG way!

Blessings to you all,
Mid South District Deaf Ministry Liaison
Vicki Eubanks

[Email](#)



Chattanooga Zone



The Chattanooga Zone LWML held their Fall Rally at First Lutheran Church in Cleveland Tennessee on September 17, 2022. Our Bible verse and theme were based on Philippians 4:6 - *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."* Our program

speaker was Beth Henderson, Director of Operations at New Hope Pregnancy Center in Cleveland TN. We had representatives from all five of our groups within the Chattanooga Zone with twenty one members present and two guests. The ingathering consisted of a very large and generous supply of baby clothing, diapers, wipes, lotions, and \$10 gift cards for new mothers. All donations went to New Hope Pregnancy Center. A generous offering was taken up for Mites and we continue to serve the Lord with Gladness!

Kim Nosis, Chattanooga Zone President.



East Tennessee Zone



A check for \$5,000 was presented to the Pregnancy Resource Center in Maryville TN on December 15th. These mites will be used for medical supplies such as pregnancy tests and ultrasounds. An early Christmas present for a much needed service in Blount County- thanks be to God! Pictured are Beth Ottinger, Development Director; Valerie Millsapps, CEO; and Teri Miller, East TN Zone President.

News from Concordia Seminary and International Student Grant

We received a report from Mr. Tom Evans, a grant writer at Concordia Seminary. In it he wrote about three of the international students that are benefiting from our Mission Grant for \$6,500. To read the complete report click on this link [Mission Grant Report to the LWML Mid-South District](#). Praise God for this blessing!

Save the Date!

Mark your calendar now! The dates and locations for our 2023 retreats are finalized.

The theme is "For Such a Time as This", a study of Esther.

Dates and locations are:

WEST – Mount Eagle Retreat Center, Clinton, AR – September 15-17

MIDDLE – Camp Garner Creek, Dickson, TN – September 22-24

EAST – Eagle Rock Camp, Tallassee, TN – October 6-8



Calling all Young Women!

There's still time to apply to be a Young Woman Representative at the 2023 LWML convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 22-25. Young women at LWML conventions are treated like royalty and have exclusive meetings with LWML officers and special guests. Our Mid-South District has budgeted for four young women to attend. Don't delay – get your application in now!

Link to use: https://www.midsouthlwml.org/web_documents/Mid-South%20District%20LWML%20YWR%20Application%20Process%20for%20National%20Conventions.pdf

Helpful Tips for Submitting Articles

We LOVE to hear from you! However, sometimes the information we receive needs a little tender loving care before being published. Help us out by following some simple guidelines listed

[At this link](#). If you have any questions about or suggestions for these guidelines, please contact us

using this link - www.midsouthlwml.org/contact-us

The **deadline** for the next issue: **March 20.**

webmaster@midsouthlwml.org