



Jersey Mission Light

Fall 2003

*Lutheran Women
in
Mission*

“Rescued and Valued” Set As November Retreat Theme

There is something indescribably special about a newly born baby. The new life is glowing with innocence and purity, love and complete trust. He/she hasn't experienced the tarnishing pressures and burdening load of living in a world tainted by sin. Sadly, and all too quickly, that will come. We all bear the scars and deformity wrought by difficult and damaging life experiences. Be it physically, emotionally or spiritually, sin has taken its toll. But, we have been rescued and made whole. God values us and loves us so much that He sent His Son to rescue us from sin and to heal us. Like the bent-over woman whom Jesus healed (Luke 13:10-17), we too have been healed and empowered to stand up straight again. Granted, we still live in a sinful world, and we still wrestle with our own sinful nature, yet we can stand and walk in the new life we have been given in Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. We are valued and rescued!

Join us on Saturday, November 15th at Cranes' Mill for our NJDLWML Fall Retreat: “Rescued and Valued.” We will journey together through a series of “Valued Moments” intended to encourage reflection and stimulate the application of God's healing Word in our lives, as well as challenge us to share it with others. So join us for a timely respite and retreat as we pray and meditate, sing and praise, enjoy fellowship and share with one another.

Mark your calendars now for November 15, from 8:45-4:00PM. Each year we grow in numbers and grow in spirit together. Hope to see you there. See the registration form included in this issue.



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National Mite Goals Selected

At the National convention in Oklahoma City this summer delegates adopted a mission goal of \$1,575,000, almost \$100,000 more than last biennium. The 14 projects to fund include: \$75,000 to allow international expansion for the Lutheran Adoption network; \$100,000 for the Mission to Southeast Alaska for VBS and Bible studies in remote areas; \$60,000 to support abandoned women and children in Latvia; \$100,000 to provide worship services and facilities for ministry to impoverished families in Guatemala City; \$75,000 to develop, produce and distribute materials for Lutheran Special Education; \$50,000 to provide Heart to Heart scholarships for ethnic women wishing to attend the 2005 LWML convention; \$100,000 as seed money to support The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod staff to provide assistance in Afghanistan.

The remaining goals include: \$60,000 to train evangelists and pastors to bring the Gospel to the people of Lazakhstan; \$70,000 to support non-resident LCMS missionaries in high-risk areas of the Southern Phillippines; \$71,000 to establish an outreach to immigrant Afghani women and children in Lansing & Grand Rapids, MI; \$54,000 to support the Concordia Day Care Center in Bangkok, Thailand; \$47,000 to respond to Mission Opportunities Short Term (MOST) ministries in a New Christians Project; \$100,000 to provide Bibles and training to ethnic children with Partners in Mission in the Minneapolis, MN area; and \$20,139.11 to help a storefront facility for the Beth El Messianic congregation in New York City.



FROM YOUR DISTRICT PRESIDENT

Two months later and I still have not come down from the “high” of the Oklahoma City convention. There are not enough words to describe it properly—inspiring, uplifting, joyful, energizing, mission-focused—are a few. Who can forget the opening communion service with 6,000 people singing “Lift High The Cross” as the cross was carried in. LWML President Virginia Von Seggern offered words of welcome followed by the call to worship given in Chickasaw, English, Spanish and American sign language. LCMS President the Rev. Dr. Gerald Kieschnick was the proclaimer.

Rev. Dien Taylor, who was the pianist and song leader, literally had people dancing in the aisles. Dr. Jotham Jhang, Director of the Center for Asian American Ministries, spoke of the changes in mission service as we try to reach the 97% of Asians in the U.S. that are unchurched. He also had a surprise guest—Professor Gao Zahn, who had been imprisoned in China on charges of espionage. She spoke of how God sustained her.

Delegates adopted a mission goal for the biennium of \$1,575,000 and chose 14 projects to fund with their mites. The new goal is nearly \$100,000 more than the \$1,478,056 contributed over the past two years.

“Lord of My Heart, Our Hope” was a very appropriate theme for this convention. Most of us went to the memorial at the former Federal Building which was bombed, killing 169 people in 1995. This is a very impressive memorial, done beautifully, but also heart breaking. It does make us realize that God is in charge. We need to be prepared at all times.

At this time plans for our District convention are in full swing. Keep May 14th & 15th free to attend. We have several speakers lined up—both inspirational and humorous. The Sheraton Parsippany Hotel has been reserved.

With the Lord in our hearts, we have hope—hope for peace, hope for the future, hope for meeting our mission goals, hope to someday be with Jesus. Have you shared that hope with anyone recently?

As we begin a new season in our societies, zones and district, let us work harder to fill our mission goals. Let us all pray that through Jesus, we will have a successful and exciting year.

Gladys Nesko
NJ District President

Mark Your Calendar!

October 5 - South Jersey at Luther Memorial in Blackwood

October 18th - Raritan Zone at Piscataway Residents Home

October 19th - Mid-Eastern Zone at Holy Trinity in Garfield

October 19th - Lakeland Zone at Our Savior, Perryville

October 19th - Northe Eastern Zone at Zion, Westwood

November 15th - District Retreat at Cranes Mill in West Caldwell

May 14th & 15th - District Convention at the Sheraton Parsippany Hotel in Parsippany



COUNSELOR’S CORNER

Summer is winding to a close. For many of us that means going back to school, starting new projects, putting our summer wardrobes away for another year (and hoping they will still fit next summer!) In our churches it is no different. The things we suspended for the summer months are back: Choir, Sunday School, Ladies’ Meetings, Bible Study.

The start-up of a new season is a good time for reflection. Why does a church exist in the first place? My congregation was founded over a hundred years ago by a group of people who wanted a Lutheran church in their community. St. John’s has seen many changes in her long history: new buildings, different pastors (with different styles of ministry), different challenges, successes, and some failures. We have striven to remain faithful to our Lutheran doctrines and practices, even in the face of a changing culture, a changing world, and a changing community.

But why do we, or any church that calls itself Christian, exist? The church is not merely a place to go for an hour on Sunday morning to make us feel good, to “recharge our spiritual batteries.” It is not a social club or civic organization. The church of Jesus Christ is here to **SPREAD THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE WORLD**. That is the primary mission and purpose of the church. Everything we do in our churches must have that goal in mind, or a church ceases to have a purpose.

Many churches are experiencing some financial problems at this time. Membership has declined in recent years. We have fewer children in our Sunday Schools every fall. This is due, in part, to some changes that are happening in many communities. But another reason for the decline is, I am sure, our failure, as individual members of the Body of Christ, as congregations, and perhaps on the part of us pastors, to keep the mission of the church foremost in our thoughts and prayers. As long as we place our own needs above the needs of others, we will continue to decline. The churches who are “successful” all have one thing in common: a zeal to spread the Gospel to their neighbors, whether they live across the street or across the globe.

The LWML has succeeded in keeping this goal alive. I am constantly amazed at how those pennies add up to millions of dollars on the national level. The women of the LWML do have missions in their hearts, and they “put their money where their mouth is.” As we once again “roll up our sleeves” in this new season, let us never forget the purpose and mission of the LWML and of the Church: to win souls for Jesus Christ.

Pastor Eric Ziegler, Junior Counselor

First Mite Grant Funded

Thank you to all the societies who have sent money in for mites. Project One and Two are funded. Project Three is for Concordia Seminary which we have collected \$3579.10 towards a \$5,537 grant. The next project is three \$1,000 Pastoral Leadership Scholarships.

If we keep on sending mite monies in as we have for the last year there is a possibility we will be able to meet our goal for this biennium. Once again, Thank you for making these projects a reality.

Finally there a few societies that have not paid for your quarterlies yet. This payment was due in January and the amount is nearly \$700. Please send in this money as soon as possible.





District News

A number of items were discussed at the district board meeting in September. The district is still looking for a historian. Maybe one of you out there would like to take charge of our "scrapbook". The job involves putting our records, pictures and memorabilia together.

All rallies beginning with spring 2004 will be held on different Sundays. We have too many rallies on the same day and this prevents many of us from going to another zone's rally. So it's first come, first served. Call Gladys Nesko with your proposed date and make sure you have an alternate date just in case.

Plans for the district convention are moving ahead at a brisk pace. Mark your calendar for May 14 & 15 and watch for more news about some exciting national speakers visiting our state.

Don't forget to get your grant projects sent in to Ruth Ann Krueger. The deadline is November 1!

ATTENTION ZONES! Please consider a special offering at your zone rally for mites. We are coming up on the end of our biennium and need to boost our giving.

Finally, consider having Jennifer Russell, our Young Women's Representative visit your society or your congregation. She is very enthusiastic and excited about LWML. Give her a call - her number's listed in our directory in this newsletter.

Zone In

Raritan Zone News - In October, the Raritan Valley Zone is changing their rally program to a service event. They are going to the LSM Piscataway home for women to help paint a room, do some yard clean-up and plant some fall flowers. One of the things the residents are looking forward to most is just talking with their visitors.

Susan Harnos, President Raritan Zone

Newsletter Available on the NET

There are still many societies we have not heard from yet about how you want to receive the newsletter. We can email it to your church or to one of your members to print and then distribute to each of your members. We could print and mail one copy to your society president to copy and distribute to your members. Or, if you can't afford either of these options, we can continue to mail copies to you as we have been. This last option would be primarily for our very small societies. We need to hear from you now. Each society president should call, fax or email Susan Donnelly at the address on the back of this newsletter.

NEW JERSEY DISTRICT OFFICERS

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Rescued and Valued

One-Day New Jersey District LWML Retreat

November 15, 2003
8:45 – 4:00 p.m.

Crane's Mill
459 Passaic Avenue
West Caldwell, NJ

Join us on Saturday, November 15th at Cranes' Mill for our NJDLWML Fall Retreat: "Rescued and Valued." We will journey together through a series of "Valued Moments" intended to encourage reflection and stimulate the application of God's healing Word in our lives, as well as challenge us to share it with others. So join us for a time respite and retreat as we pray and meditate, sing and praise, enjoy fellowship and share with one another.

Directions to Crane's Mill are printed below and on the back of this registration form. For more information on the Retreat; please call Gay VanEtten at 973-300-9627.

Directions to Cranes Mill in West Caldwell

From the Parkway take 280 West to Passaic Avenue northbound. You'll take a jughandle turn at this Exit 4, heading south on Eisenhower Parkway. Then take a left on Eagle Rock and another left on Passaic Avenue northbound. Continue north to 459 Passaic Avenue or Crane's Mill.

From Routes 80 or 46, take Rt. 46 eastbound on County Road 506 to south/right on Passaic Avenue to Crane's Mill.

Retreat Cost Per Person: \$20.00 Deadline: October 31, 2003

Make Check Payable to: **NJ District LMWL**

Mail to: Joan Ziegler
 52 Mayflower Street
 Clifton, NJ 07013

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Zone:

Church: