



Jersey Mission Light

Winter 2004

*Lutheran Women
in
Mission*

“Jesus is the Light of the World” Set as NJ Convention Theme

The NJ District convention scheduled for May 14-15 will have as its theme the bible verse of John 8:12, “Jesus is the Light of the World” and will be held at the Sheraton Tara Hotel in Parsippany. Look for mailings to your society president. Also we are making available a gift certificate you can buy to give to a deserving member or even your pastor. This will be convention to remember - one that is packed with inspirational speakers.

Dr. Jotham Johann Jhang is Executive Director for CAME (Center for Asian Missions and Evangelism). CAME is a mission society of the LCMS, based in Alexandria, VA. He will be our first speaker Friday morning. Since CAME’s initiation in 1998, Dr. Jhang has assisted in starting 53 missions for Asians. He also serves as Facilitator for Asian Mission, North America with LCMS World Mission. He received his education from Juilliard Music School, NY, NY; Concordia, Bronxville and Boston College School of Law. He is currently enrolled in the DELTO program at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne to become an ordained pastor in the LCMS.

The Reverend Dien A. Taylor, pastor, Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bronx, NY, will be the song leader. He graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He is finishing course work for a PH.D. from Fordham University’s Graduated School of Religion. He has been organist and music director at area Lutheran parishes and was choir director for the Cross Cultural Gatherings of the LCMS National Youth Gathering in San Antonio, Atlanta and New Orleans.

Each society is urged to invite their pastor (and pay for, if possible) to the convention to hear Pastor Jhang speak on Friday and to the luncheon following. Pastor Jhang is an exciting speaker and your pastor would surely enjoy his message.



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GIFT CERTIFICATE TOWARDS THE LWML NJ DISTRICT CONVENTION

TO:

FROM: _____

AMOUNT: _____

17th Biennial Convention
New Jersey District LWML
May 14-15, 2004
“Jesus is the Light of the World”





FROM YOUR DISTRICT PRESIDENT - GLADYS NESKO

The Christmas tree is gone and all the decorations are put away for another year. Have you noticed how bare everything looks? Some of us feel "down" after all the excitement. However all Christians should keep rejoicing knowing that our Savior is born, what a wonderful feeling. We can go about our daily and sometimes boring daily routines because God loved us enough to send us a Savior.

Now that the festivities are over, it is back to work and planning for our upcoming convention. The Lakeland zone is very busy with all the little details that make the time so enjoyable for us. Remember the theme, "Jesus is the Light of the World". Registration forms will soon be out. Try to attend--you won't be disappointed. We have some excellent speakers, a song leader, a beautiful hotel and all your Sisters in Christ. We open with a Communion Service. The committees guarantee an inspirational, educational, fun time for everyone.

Instead of rambling on, I would like to share this message, which I recently received.

God's ABC's

Although things are not perfect
Because of trial or pain
Continue on thanksgiving
Do not begin to blame
Even when times are hard
Fierce winds are bound to blow
God is forever able
Hold on to what you know
Imagine life without His love
Joy would cease to be
Keep thanking Him for all the things
Love imparts to you
Move out of "Camp Complaining"
No weapon that is known
On earth can yield the power
Praise can do alone
Quit looking at the future
Redeem the time at hand
Start everyday with worship
To "thank" is a command
Until we see Him coming
Victorious in the sky
We'll run the race with gratitude Exalting God most high
Yes, there'll be good times and yes, some will be bad, but...
Zion waits in glory. Where none are ever sad!

Mite Grant Update

Thank you to all the societies who have sent money in for mites. We are about half way through grant #5 which is \$2,000 for Holy Cross Lutheran School in Bordentown to implement the new Voyages religious education program.

We have three grants remaining: Tri-State Lutheran Fellowship for \$1,000; Sunday School material for Europe for \$2,500 and Lutheran Bible Translators National Co-Worker Training Scholarships for \$463. 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 is grossly overdue and the amount is nearly \$735. Joan has sent out notices to these societies. PLEASE PAY NOW!

**COUNSELOR'S CORNER**

“Lord, I Believe! Help Me Overcome My Doubts!”

On a recent service/mission trip to the Dominican Republic I had an opportunity to speak with one of the college students who'd volunteered. She had converted to Islam from Christianity. She'd been baptized and raised as a very active Christian in a mainline Protestant denomination. But, because of some questions and increasing doubts, combined with a growing dissatisfaction over the way many Christians failed to live out their faith, she turned to the Islam religion. She no longer accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior. She still held him in high regard as someone blessed by God, or as a prophet, but not God's Messiah. She remains in my prayers, of course, and I hope we can talk some more, but she seems very firm in her new found faith and piety.

This past Sunday, the Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany (Super Bowl Sunday), the appointed Gospel Lesson pictures Jesus back in his home-town of Nazareth. It was the Sabbath, and he goes to the synagogue where he reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah and boldly proclaims that what they had heard was being fulfilled right then and there as they listened to him! [You may want to pause for a moment and go to the Gospel of St. Luke, the fourth chapter, and read from verse 14 thru verse 32.] Even though his words first sounded good to them, questions and doubts arose. Perhaps if Jesus performed a few of the kinds of miracles they'd heard he'd performed in other towns, they might be convinced to believe. But Jesus makes it very clear that no such miracles were going to be performed for them. He even warns them against not believing him just because they knew him as Joseph's son, a hometown prophet. Sadly, the people were unable to accept either their need for healing or that Jesus truly was the promised Messiah. They do not believe in him or his words, and even try to throw him off a cliff.

Do you suppose you would have believed Jesus if you were a contemporary of his and from his hometown? Do you think you might have had some questions and doubts, and desired some sort of miraculous proof? When I explored this text with the people of my congregation I told them that only the day before I had received a special invitation to fly down to Houston that Sunday afternoon and watch the Super Bowl game with the President of the United States. Do you know that not one person believed me! No one thought it was remotely possible. You'd have thought that I was asking them to believe that I was the Savior of the universe.

Although I'd like to think differently, I suspect I might have doubted that Jesus was the long awaited fulfillment of the promise of a Messiah too. As a student of the Bible, I've often thought it would have been special to have lived at the time of Jesus, to meet him and speak with him. Anymore I think it's even more special that I believe in him and his Word, and that I will be with him in eternity! By the power of the Holy Spirit I have remained in the faith into which I was baptized for half a century now. Praise God! I don't have answers to all my questions, but I have no doubts who my Lord and Savior is. I'm sure that you, the women of the NJD-LWML, know exactly what I mean and share the same joy and conviction. Thanks be to God, we believe! Let our prayers for one another be that the Lord keep us ever faithful and true, and that we never fall from the faith we have been called into. Let us also pray for those who are questioning and searching, for those who may even have some doubts, that the Holy Spirit guide, call and keep them in the one true faith. I would ask you also to join me in praying for the college girl I mentioned earlier, who has walked away from her Christian faith to the deception of Islam, that she return to the one and only hope, namely Jesus. Let us join in praying with the father of the demon possessed boy whom Jesus healed, “Lord, I do believe; help me overcome my doubts.” (Mark 9:24)

Pastor Dennis J. Krueger



District News

A number of items were discussed at the district board meeting in January. 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. We are also looking for a parliamentarian.

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.

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.

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 e-mail 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 your now. Each society president should call, fax or e-mail Susan Donnelly at the address on the back of this newsletter.

2004-2006 Mission Grants Proposed

The district has reviewed and proposed seven grants for the upcoming biennium. They include grants such as "Seed Money for New Churches in New Jersey to a grant for CAME, the Lutheran Center for Asian American Missions and Evangelism. The seven grants total \$25,000 and will be voted on at the May convention.

You will receive a packet in the mail from the Lakeland Zone, host of the convention, detailing these grants. Be sure to review them with your society members, vote and them in order of preference and provide your delegate with your choices. The delegates will then vote on them at the convention.

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