



BARB'S BLURBS

Saving the best GIFT 'til last! – "He is HOLY, He is LOVE, HE is HERE!"

In my first year of writing articles for NID Bits, I have followed the 2015 NID theme: "God-given Gifts" by sharing some gifts cherished by me: God's love, Sharing God's love and Remembering God's love. These topics have been foremost in my mind, as this past year I have had the privilege of visiting zone rallies, attending LWML events, working closely with our Executive Committee and Zone Presidents, and meeting and networking with LWML women around the country. The sentiment shown to me has encouraged me in my role as LWML NID President! I have truly felt the affection from my LWML sisters and am thankful for bestowing on me the gift of their love.

With the Christmas season soon upon us, we will be consumed with buying gifts for our families and friends. We will be searching the internet, combing through catalogs, and strolling the malls for just the right gifts to display our love for the special people in our lives. Then, we will spend hours wrapping those gifts with fancy paper and pretty bows – we will want to present the gifts in their best packaging! We will anxiously look forward to when our gifts are opened. Will there be oohs and aahs? Will there be exclamations of "This is what I always wanted!"? Will there be a smile, a thank-you, or a hug in return?

I wonder if God had these queries and concerns when He sent us the baby Jesus on that first Christmas so long ago. Do you think He wondered if His people would ooh and aah? If you ponder the Holy birth, the packaging was pretty simple but, oh, so very beautiful – "the most precious gift of Christmas arrived in a very small bundle with no bow". But just dwell on the enormity of that gift!! Our God gave us the gift of Jesus to be the Savior of all mankind. In His Word, we read, *"But, when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons."* (Galatians 4:4) Indeed, *"He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."* (1 John 2:2)

The promise of a Savior was fulfilled on a chilly, dark night – no dazzling decorations –just the magnificent creation of stars and moon. And no expensive gift wrap – just a simple wooden manger filled with the warmth of a newborn infant wrapped in swaddling clothes. This little baby – loved by His Father – given to us to be the light of the world – Jesus Christ, the best GIFT of all!!

"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" 2 Corinthians 9:15
"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God." 1 John 3:1



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PASTOR'S PAGE

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. (Philippians 4:4 – ESV)

It was Paul's second missionary journey. Not all had gone well. He and his right hand man, Barnabas, had parted company. Paul wanted to preach in what is modern day Turkey. The Holy Spirit forbade him to speak God's word there. What was going on? Paul was supposed to be Christ's great ambassador.

We don't always know what is going on. But God does. His plans often are not our plans. But His plans are the plans that bring joy and fulfillment.

Paul was given a vision to go over into Europe, into Macedonia. He came to Philippi, a leading city that was also a Roman colony. His normal pattern of mission work was to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath. But there weren't enough Jews in Philippi to form a synagogue. It was reported to Paul that some women gathered by the river for Sabbath prayers. There Paul met a successful business woman named Lydia. "The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul" (Acts 16:14). She was baptized. And being a woman of influence, her household likewise was baptized. Then she offered Paul her home as a gathering place for new believers to meet, hear the word of the Lord, pray, and commune at His Table. It wasn't the way Paul envisioned ministry. But the Lord sure did form a sturdy congregation known for its generosity!

It was at Philippi that a slave girl possessed by some demon greatly annoyed Paul. Yes, the mature Christian Paul was annoyed! She brought her owners a handy profit through her fortune-telling. Every time her paths crossed with Paul, she would cry: "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation" (Acts 16:17). Paul had it with her. He commanded the spirit in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. It departed her. Paul's impatience cost him. Her owners, robbed of their profits through her fortune-telling, roused up the public against Paul, had him beaten and thrown into prison. It was not what Paul envisioned for his life. But Paul would later say "I will rejoice" (Philippians 1:18). It was in that jail Paul prayed and sang hymns. And it was in that jail that the jailor and his entire household came to faith in Jesus Christ through Paul's testimony. It wasn't Paul's plan for ministry. But it was the Lord's plan and His plan bears fruit. "Rejoice in the Lord" (Philippians 3:1).

We may easily become annoyed or discouraged by what we see in the church and discover going on in our lives. We don't always get to see God's plans. We know the Holy Spirit has given us the gain of Christ. We know we have a righteousness which comes through faith in Christ. We know the power of His resurrection (see Philippians 3:8-11). And when we submit to His plans, though we cannot understand them, we end up with His joy and His fulfillment.

So, Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice (Philippians 4:4).

Pastor Gerhard Mau, Senior Pastoral Advisor for LWML NID

NOTE: Philippians 4:4 is the basis of the LWML NID theme for the year 2016 and our District Convention next September.

SPOTLIGHT ON MISSION GRANTS

#7 - Lutheran Indian Ministries: Christ's Kingdom – Every Native American Tribe, \$3050 – PAID

Mission statement: Lutheran Indian Ministries shares the Gospel of Jesus Christ with Native American Nations, encouraging them to proclaim Christ's Kingdom to their own and to others. God's grace compels us to help build the capacity of Native Americans to impact their communities for the sake of Christ's Kingdom.

Cathy Benzler (Cherokee), first commissioned Native American deaconess in the LCMS, and her husband, Tom (Ioway), licensed deacon, work with elders on the Lower Elwha Reservation. They reach out to other Native American tribes on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington through works of mercy, spiritual care, and teaching of the Christian faith. Since the seventh grant chosen was only partially funded, they carefully selected the how to use the money for critical items. The first purchase was an electronic tablet for use in presentations as Kathy and Tom travel about training Native Americans to expand their outreach. More of the money was used to construct a storage shed to expand their Hope House facility, providing space for monthly food collections. The loft area stores quilts and winter wear, and space below allows for a much needed refrigerator for fresh fruits and vegetables.



“The building came at a perfect time [this summer] since launching our Backpack Drive to collect 500 new backpacks for our Native youth,” says Cathy. The drive exceeded their goal as they collected more than 750 backpacks.

We give thanks to our Heavenly Father for the blessing of mites to fund this grant and ask His continued blessing on the outreach to native people.

LOOKING FOR THE PRAYER PAGE? Due to a computer glitch beyond our control, the DECEMBER PRAYER PAGE could not be included in this issue. But, fear not, you can find it on the website, www.lwmlnid.org.
Thanks for your understanding.

CORRECTION: Lois Prokosch, who was featured on the Voice of Care story in the Fall NID-Bits, is Zone 8 president not Zone 13.

GRANT UPDATE

<u>GRANT</u>	<u>AMOUNT PAID</u>	<u>REMAINING</u>
#1 St. Matthew \$22,000	\$14, 904	\$7,096
#2 CTSFW Food Co-op \$10,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
#3 Voice of Hope \$10,000	\$ 2,664	\$ 7,336
#4 Phil's Friends \$22,000	\$12,500	\$9,500
#5 Voice of Care \$22,000	\$16,074	\$5,926
#6 Trinity/Hope, Haiti \$5,000	\$ 5,000	paid in full
#7 Indian Ministry \$3,050	\$ 3,050	paid in full
TOTAL:	\$59,192	\$34,858

Although no monetary amounts have been suggested, we pray for the generous support of mites on a regular basis.

Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For whatever measure you deal out to others, it will be dealt to you in return. Luke 6:38

Mail your mites to: LWML NID PO Box 175 Westmont IL 60559

ORDERING LUTHERAN WOMEN'S QUARTERLIES FOR 2016-2017

Beginning with the 2016 summer edition of the Lutheran Women's Quarterly, the final step in revising the procedure for ordering the Quarterly goes into effect. During January 2016, all congregations currently receiving subscriptions of the Quarterly will be sent an invoice listing the number of subscriptions they received in 2015-2016. The total number of subscriptions can be increased or decreased on that invoice.

The **invoice with PAYMENT** for the number of subscriptions requested must be returned to the address listed on the invoice **NO later than March 15, 2016**. The Northern Illinois District LWML is invoiced for the number of subscriptions requested by the societies in the District and is required to make decreases to the number of subscriptions per society each year in March.

If the invoice with payment is not returned by the March 15 deadline, your society will be shown as zero on the subscription listing sent to St Louis.

Jan Gerzevske, corresponding secretary, will be emailing an invoice to your society in January. If you have not received the invoice from her by January 30th, please call her at 630-294-5014 or email her at correspondingsecretary@lwmlnid.org so she can forward another copy to your society.

Thanks to everyone for the prompt payments you remitted for the 2015-2016 Quarterly subscriptions you requested back in February and March of this year.

“REPENT THEN REJOICE” AT LWML NID LENTEN INSPIRATION

With Easter being so early this year, Diane Kettelson and the ladies of our LWML NID Christian Life Committee have been busy planning the 2016 Lenten Inspiration. Trinity, Tinley Park will host the event on Saturday, March 5. The day will begin with registration and morning coffee at 8:30. The program, starting at 9:30, will feature Bible study, Communion, lunch, and guest speaker Jo Rodenburg. The Bible study will be led by Trinity’s Associate Pastor, Rev. Richard Schauer, as well as our LWML NID Pastoral Counselors—Rev. Gerhard Mau and Rev. Jay Klein.

To register, you may fill out the form on the next page or find the form on our website (lwmlnid.org). The cost of \$15 includes morning coffee and lunch. The registration deadline is February 29.



Our guest speaker, Jo Rodenburg, is an operatic mezzo-soprano who is a member of Trinity. She serves that congregation as choir director and instructor. The theme of her message is “How Can I Keep From Singing?”. Here is what Jo says: “If you are familiar with this beautiful tribute in song to our mighty God’s perfect timing and His watchful presence in all of our worldly affairs, then likely you understand acceptance and peace. It took me some time to arrive at that conclusion.

It seems I was always destined to sing. As a child, I sang myself to sleep each night and sang all the way to school in the morning. My mother was a pianist and organist in the Christian Reformed church where her father was pastor. My mother was a stay-at-home mom of eight children, and taught all of us piano, music theory, and so on. She also taught my sister Amy and me violin. We were a ‘musical family’. To this day, when we get together as siblings, we all haul out the stringed instruments and the singing begins. It is as lovely as it sounds. (So, if your children and grandchildren complain about the burden and pain of practicing a boring musical instrument, ignore them. They will thank you eventually.)

But, somehow, although I had a wonderful Christian education and was taught to use my voice for praising God, I developed problems with my voice when I was 20 years old, and those problems baffled me for years, until I was in my 40’s. Surgery, medicines, and therapies offered little relief. I sought the very best voice teachers and coaches, but always fought the same issues. Professionally, I suffered silently, as I was still getting singing engagements very regularly. (In the singing world, one must always project confidence and perfection. To admit a vocal flaw or to display a flaw is career death!)

Even after all the teachers, doctors, therapists, and specialists gave me the best scientific medicine and protocol, I could not sing as freely as I could when I was 17 year old.

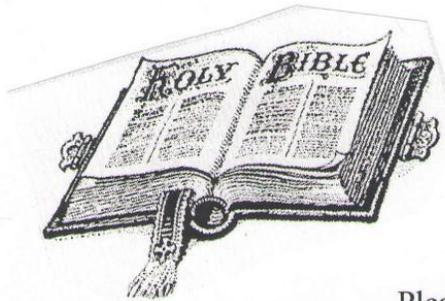
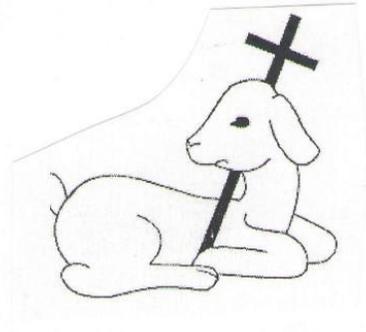
Then began the search for true freedom, not only of the voice, but the freedom granted by our Maker who designs our gifts and bestows them. This is true freedom. This is the journey I wish to share with you: how our God is present in all our comings and goings, no matter how baffled or distressed we find ourselves.

I have been blessed to perform in opera, concert music, oratorio, and operetta, and have sung in venues all over the United States and Europe, led by the Lord’s hand. So, how can I keep from singing?”

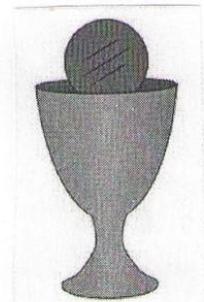
LWML NID Lenten Inspiration. . . .

“Repent then Rejoice”

Saturday, March 5, 2016
Registration: 8:30 Program: 9:30



Trinity Lutheran Church
6850 W. 159th Street
Tinley Park, IL 60477
(708) 532-9395



Please join us for a day of inspiration and fellowship.
Communion will be given at the Inspiration

Guest Speaker: Jo Rodenburg, member of Trinity, Choir Director, Instructor
Bible Study by: Rev. Richard Schauer, Associate Pastor at Trinity
Rev. Gerhard Mau, NID Counselor
Rev. Jay Klein, NID Counselor

Cost: \$15.00 which includes morning coffee and lunch
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 29, 2016

Please make your check or money order for \$15.00 payable to LWML NID and send to:

Linda Burns
6921 W. 156th Place
Oak Forest, IL 60452
(708) 444-4756

(Please detach and return this portion) (one person per registration form)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Congregation _____

CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS DELIVERED!

City Limits Ministry, founded 20 years ago by Rev. Tim Thomas and his wife, Sharon, serves children and families in the Chicagoland area. Their "Christmas Stocking" ministry targets children that would otherwise not receive anything for Christmas. The stockings contain some items for basic needs PLUS small fun item items and candies. Many, many items were donated by those attending our LWML NID Fall Gathering in September, and the ladies of Zone 25 filled the stockings at their Fall Workshop in October.



Carol Karris, LWML NID Vice President of Human Care, reports that 100 Christmas Stockings were delivered to the ministry's storage facility in Lansing, IL after the Zone Workshop. They will be distributed to children at schools in Ford Heights and Englewood. While sorting the items at the Zone workshop, the ladies found that many items were too large to fit in the stockings. Those gifts are being donated to the Englewood Police Department. The police there have said that many children from domestic situations (abuse, etc.) find themselves at their police station during the holidays, and they will be very glad to have the gifts on hand to distribute to these kids so they are not forgotten at Christmastime.



Carol and her committee would like to say THANK YOU to the LWML NID ladies for their generous support of this project, donating the "too many to count" gifts & toys to stuff into the stockings. We also appreciate the Zone 25 members who helped cut & sew, sort & fill, and made and attached Christian themed cards to each stocking at their Fall Workshop.

“As you did it to one of the least of these...” Matthew 25:40



TELL ME ABOUT.....THE COMMITTEE ON YOUNG WOMEN

LWML NID is thrilled to have young women that actively participate in LWML events. Several young women enjoyed attending the recent District Fall Gathering. They treasured spending time with their sisters in Christ of all ages and enjoyed the time they got to spend with each other. The speaker touched on topics that related to women of all ages. The young women felt like they were making a difference as they helped with the ingathering. The lunch menu also offered choices that appealed to them. They were appreciative of all the special touches that went into planning the day.

LWML NID is just one part of the big picture of LWML. There are thousands of women all across the United States that make up this group. On the national level, women work hard to create resources to strengthen our local and district groups. One of these resources is “Does Your LWML Welcome Young Women?”. This resource gives you a tool to identify areas that may need strengthening to make your group more welcoming. You will also find exercises to help you grow in these areas. You can find this resource by going to lwml.org and using the search engine. NOW IS THE TIME to be ready to welcome more young women to participate with you in your societies and zones.

Recently, seventy women worked together in committees in St. Louis to plan the new biennium. One of these committees is the Committee on Young Women. The committee members come from varied backgrounds. There is a funeral director, a deaconess married to a seminary student, and a stay at home mom that lives on a farm. But most importantly, these women love Jesus and they have a passion for LWML. They are planning some very exciting programming for the YWR’s at the 2017 Salt Lake City convention. Plans for baseball shirts and a Facebook page for Young Women in Mission are in the works. Stay tuned for further updates.

NOW IS THE TIME... to be an active member of LWML. NOW IS THE TIME... to involve your Christian sisters of all ages. NOW IS THE TIME... to “serve the Lord with gladness” in LWML.



Kirsten Smith, Stephanie Polvi, and Sydney Alexander at the District Fall Gathering



LWML National Committee on Young Women (L to R)
Sherrie Smith (NID), Melissa Brock, Molly Dixon, Deaconess Jennette Heller

Find us on the Web: www.lwmlnid.org

Like us on Facebook!

ZONED IN!

"News from Around the District"

Our ladies were very busy this fall with a variety of projects. Have your societies and/or zones been finding ways to "serve the Lord with gladness"? If you need a new idea, read on.

Zone 1 met for their Fall Workshop on September 26th. They made 23 fleece blankets for the Bethel Layette ministry.....and they have their Zone 1 convention banner already completed!!!

In September, 18 ladies from Zone 9 made pillowcase dresses for Little Girls in Africa at St. John's, Schaumburg. The church has a dedicated sewing room with 4 sewing machines. About 40 dresses were completed, with some being displayed at St. Luke, Itasca, on LWML Sunday.



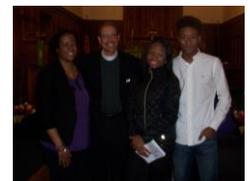
Ladies from Immanuel, Belvidere (Zone 12), recently met to decorate and assemble sensory books for the Walter Lawson Children's Home in Loves Park. Walter Lawson is a residential facility for non-ambulatory individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. The books will be a Christmas gift from the ladies of Immanuel's Care Ministry team who visit there regularly.



The Fall Workshop of Zones 19 & 20 which was held on October 10th at Grace in Willow Springs. Their theme was "Living an Abundant Life", based on John 10:10, and used the acronym FALL: Fellowship in Christ, Abiding in Christ, Leaning on Christ, Living in Christ, throughout their devotion with Pastor Austra. The ladies filled 29 bags with gifts for children of abused families.



Zion Lutheran Church on 109th Street in Chicago was the site of the Zone 21 Fall Rally on Sunday, October 26. Their theme was "Fanning the Flame", based on 2 Timothy 1:6. 42 were in attendance; they were treated to a delicious lunch and a delightful afternoon of fellowship. Lori Trinche from Lutherans For Life was their featured speaker. Also attending was Sydney Alexander, one of our YWRs for 2015, and her friends.



SAVE THE DATE!

2016 LWML Northern Illinois District Convention

September 23-25, 2016

Belvedere Events & Banquets, Elk Grove Village IL

(Rooms will be available at the Country Inn & Suites connected to the Events Center by a walkway)

Theme: Rejoice, Rejoice (Philippians 4:4)

Speakers include Rev. Victor Belton and Jan Struck

LWML MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is to assist each woman of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.

LWML NID COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE



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