LWML Pacific Southwest District

Summer 2026

WOMEN OF THE WORD

As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.

CONVENTION THANKS!

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Philippians 4:8

Behind the scenes before and during convention were incredible women and men who selected the venue, invited exhibitors, prepared the Pre-Convention sessions, organized and ensured quick registration, decorated the stage and tables, made partipants feel welcome, ensured items were each in their proper place, planned the worship services, guided the Mission Walk, organized activities and events for young women and Heart to Heart Sisters, and led the post-convention tour. It was a true joy working "alongside" each Host Committee Chair and seeing how God used their talents (and those of their committee members) to create the opportuntiy to allow each of us to think on "these things" leading us to focus on Christ, the "Whoever".

I want to thank the Host Convention Committee for all their time and effort in putting together an outstanding and memorable 2026 convention. Special thanks to Nila and Michelle for leading, guiding, and encouraging their committees through all the ups and downs that come with putting together such a big event.

With gratitude,
President Nancy
LWML Pacific Southwest District





I look forward to working "alongside" each of you as we continue to serve the Lord each in our own way and as God calls us.
In Christ,
Michelle Jenks
VP of Organizational Resources



2026 PSD CONVENTION MEMORIES



June 5-7, 2026
At the Warner Center Marriott in Woodland Hills, California
The Theme was "Whatever..." and is based on
Philippians 4:8: *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*

What a blessing it was to spend time together in Woodland Hills, California with 228 Lutheran Women in Mission (and a few men) to focus on the theme "Whatever" based on Philippians 4:8.

There were so many highlights to "think" about from this convention. Here are a few of my favorites:

- Sitting in on Deb Burma's Pre-Convention Session, Serving Side by Side, Leaning on Jesus Together where we learned we are all "alongsiders" serving Christ together.
- Hearing the "lovely" message of the Gospel in our convention music starting with the hymns during the incredible Opening Worship Service and continuing with the musical selections led by Kedma Wenz and Perry Voogt during our convention session and Closing Worship Service, the entertainment by Kedma on Saturday evening, and the beautiful choir selection on Sunday morning.
- Learning during our Bible studies to practice "whatever" and then to fix our thoughts upon Jesus who is our "Whoever".
- Listening to our mission speakers and Gifts From the Heart recipients who shared what is happening with their missionary work: children in Africa learning about the hope we have in Christ; men and women serving church workers who need a listening ear; organizations helping women who are pregnant or have gone through difficult life experiences; Braille Bibles providing life-saving Word of God to those with visual impairments. Thank God for the giving hearts of the women of the LWML who have supported and continue to support these and other ministries!
- Laughing out loud at our humorous interruptors "Zappa, not a Rappa" and Morgan who taught us the importance of supporting each other and supporting missions.
- Being blessed with incredible messages from Rev. Dr. Mike Gibson who had us think about "whatever" from the perspective of all ages and stages in life during our Opening Worship Service and Rev. Mike Hall who encouraged us to think and practice "these" things as we left convention.
- Spending time with incredible mission minded women and men.

All in all, convention gave us time to reflect on the fact that "whatever" comes into our lives, we are to fix our eyes on Jesus and take what we have learned and received and heard and seen and turn it into action as partners in the Gospel with one another.
Submitted by Michelle Jenks

CONVENTION››› JOYS















FRIENDSHIPS









A new group from Mesquite



MISSIONS











Of the 12 or so ladies that have been in Nila's Zoom Bible study for the past 5 years, six of us were at the Convention!

SPIRITUAL GROWTH









ENCOURAGEMENT

Zone 5 Centinela Valley Sisters







Zone 31/32:
front row left: Barbara Coverdale, Elaine Voight, Maureen Smith, Jacqui Bransdon
Back row left: Johanna Safarik, Sharon Urbank, Sharon Hecht, Nancy Heredia, Linda Olson



FINISHING THE JOB!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve and share our Stitchin' (for) Mission. What was begun at the convention servant event continued at our Trinity Simi workshop on Monday, finishing up what was begun. Tuesday afternoon the van was loaded and Wednesday it set off for the mission in Tijuana. Your work blessed 21 people just 5 days later. Thank you, Lord, for your provisions of opportunity, material good and wonderful servants who care for others.

submitted by Cheryl Freet







Lutheran Women in Mission

Servant Leader CHATS

Share the Obvious

Have you ever received an invitation with some of the information missing?

You are invited to fellowship on Saturday. There will be fun for all!

'Fellowship' may be on the calendar every month. It is always in the church bulletin, everyone knows they are welcome, right? Wrong! Share the obvious for those who don't know.

All are invited — families, singles, young, and old — to the church fellowship hall on the second Saturday each month from 4–7 p.m. After a short Bible study, board games and crafts will fill the evening. Supper will be served at 5:30. Come and stay as long as you are able.

Just as it is important to share all of the 'invitation' details, it is also important to take time to share the details about your Lutheran Women in Mission group. Do you have a monthly 'mites' collection at your church? Take time to share about mite offerings and what mite offerings have done and continue to do — support missions. Have you shared this information in the past? That's great, but it is probably time to share it again!

Spotlight the Mission Grants our mite offerings support. Share the different grants both in your district and the national grants. Create a bulletin board or share the grant thermometer. Don't forget to share the joy when grants are funded. Be the person who reports on the results of prayer, not just prayer requests. Celebrate the accomplishments! To God be the Glory!

If it seems to you "everyone should know this," take a step back and figure out what you assume everyone knows and share the obvious again and again as you encourage others to join you in serving the Lord with gladness!

Brought to you by the 2025–2027 LWML Leader Development and Support Committee

Cinda Poppe, Chairman; Sara Huwaldt, Cindy Jordan, Crystal MIller, Jennifer Olen, Arlene Naasz, Vice President of Organizational Resources, Advisory

For More Servant Leader Chats and to Subscibe, click:
https://www.lwml.org/developing-leaders

DISTRICT
NEWS & EVENTS

FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Whatever! (Philippians 4:8) Have you been reflecting on our time together in convention in Woodland Hills June 5-7? We were blessed to have an awesome opening Worship Service with communion, two gifted Bible study leaders, lovely singing, a fun 80's themed banquet, and of course the necessary business of a convention. The Host Committee blessed us with an outstanding convention. Here are some numbers for which to thank God:

$5,008.19 Friday Worship Service offering for District Misson Grants

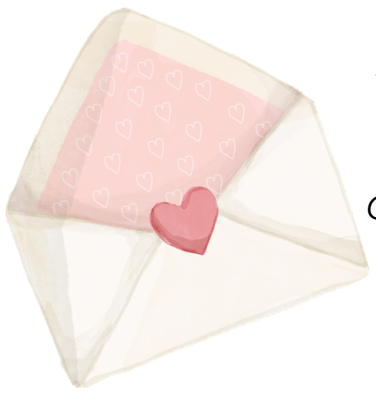
$5,370.21 raised by our Mission Walk for District Mission Grants

$3,250.00 donated for Coffee Sponsorships by individuals, groups and zones

We have 16 new District Mission Grants for which to pray and support. How will you and your group support these gospel outreach endeavors? Do you need Children's Mite Boxes for your Sunday school or children's ministry? How do your church Bible classes support missions? What new way will your group promote mission outreach? Ask God to show you how to walk alongside a short-term missionary. Most importantly, pray!
Thank you for your heartfelt gifts for mission outreach to a world that needs to hear about Jesus and the true story of redemption.

Endowment Corner

Thank you to everyone who supported the Special Gift Fund to fund scholarships for the 2025 Retreat and the 2026 District Convention, as well as one Heart to Heart Sister and one Young Woman Representative to go to Omaha convention in 2025. These three events impacted 53 people from our district. I'm sharing just one of the thank you notes received:



Dear Barbara Virus and LWML PSD Donors, Thank you very much for the generous scholarship to the LWML PSD Convention (2026). I am excited to attend the Convention for the very first time learning about LWML. Again, thank you. God bless you all!

Financial Secretary's Report Continued

The Norma Dean Mackey Special Gift Fund was established in February 1999 from an estate gift to LWML PSD. In February 2024, the Executive Committee voted that 100% of the interest earned from the fund to be available for mission work. Look around for opportunities to share Christ using a grant from this fund.

The PSD Endowment was established in 2024. The income from this endowment will provide scholarships equally for LWML PSD events and LCMS seminary and deaconess students from LCMS PSD congregations. We have received a total of $60,300 in direct gifts for the endowment and a small amount of interest. Because of the Linda Koch Love In Deed Perpetual Giving Fund, we have already provided $245.75 to the PSD LCMS Scholarship Fund and $1,273.10 was designated for scholarships awarded by the Special Gift Fund during the past biennium.

Praising God for the faithfulness of His servants,
Barb Virus, Endowment Chairman



Rene said to her good friend Violet, "I really don't like the idea of sharing much about my personal life with other people. I am very private. That's why I haven't moved forward with my estate plan revisions after Peter died. I just don't want to tell everyone what I am thinking about, and what I am planning to do.

Violet responded, "Didn't you go to the doctor last month, to deal with your fear that you might have cancer?"

"Well yes, I did. What is your point?"

"My point is that you openly shared your fears with your doctor, talked about some very personal symptoms and allowed the doctor to run tests. I am so thankful you got a good report. Seeking the help of someone who will care about you, who understands how to get you organized, who can keep you on track, and who can share a wealth of information about how to achieve your goals is the same thing. It's good to be assisted by someone who has compassion and experience. I worked with the LWML Gift Planning Counselor after a presentation they did at our LWML Convention. They were very helpful. I had some work to do, but because of the counselor we dug in, I made some decisions, I completed work with my attorney, and now I have peace of mind knowing I have a good plan in place."

Your LWML Gift Planning Counselor can help you as well with their care, organizational skills, and charitable gift planning expertise. To get started, contact Sarah Seying for more information.
Email: Sarah.Seying@LFND.org
Phone: 800-741-4138 lwmlgiftplan.org

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Financial Secretary's Report Continued

We want to thank Linda Koch for many years of service as LWML Gift Planning Advocate in the Pacific Southwest District, particularly in the San Diego area. She is retiring from active service this year and will continue to encourage all of us in this area. Barb Virus continues to serve as Gift Planning Advocate for our district. She is available to make presentations for your zone or group event. Contact her at bvirus@juno.com or call/text 714-801-5252.

Send Mite Box offerings
or request vouchers and mite boxes:
Barb Virus
542 E. Lomita Ave.,
Orange, CA 92867-6848

Serving Joyfully,
Barb Virus
714-801-5252
bvirus@juno.com





FROM THE DISTRICT PLANNER

I have been appointed as your District Planner for this biennium. Many of you already know me from my past District positions of Vice President-Christian Life and as a member of the Nominating Committee.
I will be finding and highlighting various mission service activities relevant to each season of the year, which can be found on the LWML website (www.lwml.org).
Always remember to keep our mission statement front and center at all your meetings and events. "As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others."

Barbara Wade

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18







Heart to Heart ...Sharing God's Love

At the June convention Shari Pica invited me to speak at their LWML potluck luncheon. I gave a Heart to Heart (H2H) presentation to the LWML group at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Downey on June 20, 2026.

The presentation was well received. I shared how I became involved with LWML and how I came to serve as the H2H Chairperson.

The focus of my presentation was the importance of building relationships with one another by encouraging multicultural women to become involved in LWML and encouraging our existing LWML members to warmly welcome women from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Together, we can continue building God's kingdom as sisters in Christ.

Your Sister in Christ,
Maria Espinoza





Do You Know a Family having their Fourth or More Child?

Although our world might tell us otherwise, children truly are a blessing. Therefore, Lutherans For Life celebrates children, especially those families with a lot of them! LAMBs celebrate families that are awaiting the birth of their fourth or more child by gifting them with a homemade blanket.

Do you know such a family in your congregation? Each blanket is made with love and shipped directly to the expectant mother anywhere within the continental United States as well as Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico.

Fill out the form at the link below, and the Miami Valley Life Chapter of Lutherans for Life will send a blanket made with love directly to this expectant mother in the United States. No strings attached!

https://lutheransforlife.org/article/bless-a-family-with-a-blanket-of-love/

Lutherans For Life (LAMBs)

LAMBs (Lutherans Assembling Mercy Blankets) is a grassroots project of local Life Chapters and volunteers who hand-make or assemble blankets. Blankets are given to families celebrating the birth of a child, serving as a tangible reminder of God's love and the value of human life.

You can find the exact guidelines and LAMBs Form on the Lutherans For Life national website.

lutherans for life.org/lambs-lutherans-assembling-mercy-blankets.

ZONE NEWS & EVENTS

Desert Redrock- Zones 31/32





April showers brought May flowers and 45 ladies together to enjoy our Zone 31/32 Spring Tea held Saturday, May 2, at First Good Shepherd, Las Vegas. The tea was preceded by the LWML Prayer Service. Pastor Mau lead this wonderfully written service. The interactive part of the service was to write a prayer concern and bring it to the altar, depositing it into a closed box, signifying 'Releasing the concern to God'. Praise, Remember, Ask, Yield, Excitement, Rejoice was a beautiful way to start our Spring Tea. May I be so bold as to recommend to Zone Presidents that they consider combining the Prayer Service with an event, whether Fall or Spring Celebrations. No one was frowning the rest of the day we had together!

Our speaker was Stacy Chapter, Community Liaison Manager from Project 150 of greater Las Vegas. She shed light on the trials disadvantaged high school-aged kids are dealing with on a daily basis. Our offering and donations of personal hygiene/food items were dedicated by Pastor Mau before we presented them to Project 150.





Saturday, October 17, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Kingman, AZ, will host our Fall Celebration. Arrangements are already in the making for a patriotic day! Our business meeting will include election of officers. May God bless us with willing hearts to serve the Lord with gladness.

Submitted by Elaine Voight, President Zone 31/32

From top: prayer service, ladies from the Las Vegas Area, Mesquite Lutheran, and Good Shepherd Lutheran

Sunshine Zone- 23/24

A Different Sort of Spring Celebration!
On April 26, 2026, at Redeemer by the Sea, Carlsbad, Lutheran Women in Mission from Sunshine Zone 23/24 decided to support the PSD Lutheran Laymen's League Sunshine Zone by attending their spring event. We were a Thrivent Action Team, providing bags of rice and beans to support the Mil Generaciones ministry in Tijuana, who prepared a delicious tostada lunch. After lunch the participants were treated to a fast-paced program highlighting local missionaries, including prayers for each of them. The LWML gals set up a table displaying Mite boxes and the 2026-2028 list of grants to be funded. This event helped strengthen the partnership between Lutheran Laymen's League, Lutheran Women in Mission, and Mission Society San Diego. Collaboration rocks!



Redeemer By The Sea partnering with Lutheran Hour Ministries

High Desert Zone- 28

Planning a celebration can feel overwhelming; however, LWML provides a wealth of information to help you navigate the process smoothly. Having successfully held our spring celebration last May, I highly recommend that people review the National LWML online Zone Event Tips. These tips on getting your event planners (I call them activity coordinators), guest speakers, and event timeline in place as soon as possible are especially helpful. Just remember this is a joyful time to share with your sisters in Christ – and with that, all will go well.
submitted by Cheri Eby, President, Zone 28 and LWML Shepherd of the Hills Church, Prescott, AZ.







Spring Celebration, Zone 28

Celebrate 80 years of the the PSD!

In 1946 Women of Southern California met at St. John's to organize the district's Lutheran Women's Missionary League. The first convention was held in June 1946 in Long Beach, California, with 400 in attendance, and the Southern California District became the 26th district of the LWML. In 1955, Phoenix held their first zone rally, with over 100 attendees from eight desert congregations. Southern Nevada was welcomed into the Southern California District in 1968.

The Pacific Southwest District now includes Southern California, Southern Nevada, and Arizona. Over the 80 years many new changes have been added to the Pacific Southwest District, but one thing that remains the same is Lutheran Women in Mission love to support missions.

In thankfulness and celebration of our 80 years as the LWML, Pacific Southwest District, we encourage you to put God's love into action by collecting 80 items that can be donated to a mission in your community. This can be done as an individual, a group, or a zone. This challenge will go on all year. Remember to take a picture of your donation as an individual, group, or zone with the recipient of your 80's gift and send it to Brenda Hood for publication (james67brenda@gmail.com) Thank you!

Mesquite Lutheran's 80!

Mesquite Lutheran Women's Auxiliary collected snacks for our church's childcare and preschool. We also got school supplies for the local 1st grade elementary class. We decided we would also deliver coloring sheets to Mesa Valley Estates, a local retirement village.





Maureen Smith, LWA President, along with teacher Julie Kuran

Ascension Lutheran's 80!

July 12, 17 LWML ladies from Ascension Lutheran Church in Apple Valley, California, gathered around to raise $100 dollars for the 80th anniversary of LWML with purple $5 dollar bills. Great job, ladies, and continue to contribute your mites monthly for District to be able to dispense all monies for grants. Thanks again for a great job and God's Blessings. submitted by Eunice Harris



Peace Lutheran- Zone 19

We are Peace Lutheran Church, Palm Desert, California. For three weeks in May our LWML project was collecting diapers for a local organization called "Birth Choice of the Desert". They help young women and their babies in need. Their focus is Choosing Life! In total, more than 1,300 diapers were collected. To God be the Glory. submitted by Tami Gelesko



BIRTH CHOICE OF THE DESERT

Our mission at Birth Choice is to support people facing pregnancy, parenting and reproductive health

Coming Up!!

Lutheran Women in Mission

Transformed in CHRIST

Romans 12:2

42ND BIENNIAL CONVENTION
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

July 8–11, 2027

Convention Theme:
Transformed in Christ

2027 Convention Objectives:
Eachconvention attendeewill be:

- Inspired to proclaim Christ and study God's Word.
- Transformed and equipped by Christ to serve Him.
- Encouraged to support missions throughout the world.

Scripture Verse:
Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2).

Convention Goal Statement:
God's renewing Spirit transforms us to proclaim Christ, support missions, and serve Him and Him alone.

For more information, visit *lwml.org/convention*

Women of the Word Summer 2026

Women of the Word (WOW) is published quarterly.

Brenda Hood, Editor and Layout
Pastor Sean Pica, Doctrinal Review
Nancy Heredia, Nila Rodriguez, Linda Koch, and Kathy Baumhofer, Copy Readers

Send submissions to james67brenda@gmail.com
Send copy in the body of emails and attach photos separately.
Fall Submission Deadline is October 15, 2026.
Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/psdlwml: post pictures and make comments but remember not to tag photos.

Soli Deo Gloria

