



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Yesterday, Today and Forever!

What a joy to come together in Orange, California to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the Pacific Southwest District LWML at St. John's Lutheran Church! It was a time to reflect on the LWML ministry over the past seventy years and connect with friends who shared in this ministry. It was a time

to celebrate the "today" events with worship services, Bible study, singing praises, fellowship and hugs! Finally, it was a time to look to the "forever" as we voted on mission grants and officers.

I enjoyed some time looking at scrapbooks of past conventions and activities. Looking at the ladies who served during our yesterday era, I smiled at seeing them at convention dressed in their best dresses, high heels, pearl necklaces, gloves and hats. Today, it's not uncommon to see ladies in casual clothes — some in dresses and others in slacks and shirts. But, I saw one woman wearing a hat but no one wearing gloves. However, the common thread from

yesterday to today is the mission of LWML. Yesterday and today, time is spent in the word of God with church services, Bible study, and inspirational speakers. Yesterday and today, we faithfully collect our mites and use them to spread the word of God, alleviate pain and suffering, and support workers in the mission field. What a joy and blessing to serve in the LWML ministry!

Sharon Norris Elliott reminded us that change is a constant in our lives. We can always depend on the fact that the one thing that won't change is that there will always be change! We know the "forever" will bring us change. While we may do some things differently, change our appearance and styles of communication, we will not change our focus on His word and missions in the LWML!

I look forward to the opportunities for growth and change in the next four years. Together, we will embrace changes and opportunities to do the work our Lord has challenged us to do. I am grateful to those who led the way in the past, look forward to serving today, and pray for the generation that will continue the forever!

Bonnie Karch, President
LWML Pacific Southwest District



My final WOW

My final act as Counselor for the Pacific Southwest District LWML was to install the new officers for the new term, thus officially ending my own. It was, without a doubt, a surreal moment for me. I felt the moment as bittersweet. I am encouraged by those elected to serve. I believe they will carry on the work

and serve the people well. But it was time for me to move on. My service was complete. I did enjoy my role in this wonderfully committed and passionate organization comprised of really great people. I loved getting to know these women and hearing their stories. I have to be honest though, I won't miss the drives to Ontario.

Four years. Was it really four years? Didn't I just

a little while ago take the oath of my office? Four years ... sounds like such a long time. Many pastors don't stay in their parishes for four years, especially their first calls. These past four years have flown by. Thank you, ladies, for placing your vote my way those four years ago. Thank you, Lord, for allowing me to serve, to grow, to learn and to love. Grant me these same blessings as I travel where You lead me. My prayer for my brothers who now serve in this role is that they too will have the blessings that I have received.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and grant you all peace for the journey ahead.

God bless you all,
Pastor Bill



Facts and Figures 2016 District Convention

360

Friday Communion
Service Attendance

\$3,920.70

Friday Evening Offering for
Multi Cultural Mini Grants

42

Number of
Mission Walkers

\$5,412

Mission Walk
Pledges for Mites

100

Number of Mission
Walk T Shirts sold

10

Number of YWRs

13

Number of
Heart 2 Heart Sisters

\$612

Donations for Decorations,
CD's, Banners



Keynote Speaker Sharon Elliott

"Our Never-changing Christ in
our Ever-changing Culture"

Our keynote speaker, teacher
and author Sharon Norris Elliott,
shared with humor and energy
how to live as a Christian in an
ever-changing culture. Our world
is in a state of flux, so we need to
find a constant in Jesus Christ who

"is the same yesterday, today, and forever" Hebrews 13:8. Using the story of Jacob wrestling with God in Genesis 32 as a guide, Sharon stated that we should 1) "latch" onto God and His Word; 2) "listen" for and live up to our new name of Christian; 3) "limp" because God has touched us and now we can honestly share with others; and 4) "last" or don't give up on living as Christians. Sharon ended with saying we should "Stand on the Word made flesh. Our culture wants to see if we change or abide in His Word."

By Gayle Tarr

"CAN Hunger" Convention Ingathering

In Matthew 25:40, Jesus said, *"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."* Convention attendees took these words to heart, donating about 400 pounds of canned food for Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County. Some financial donations were made directly to the food bank — there was also \$1,100 cash given. In addition, on convention Friday, more than 15 volunteers formed a Thrivent Financial Action Team that packed 200 pounds each of beans and rice for distribution with St. John's Second Harvest Mobile Food Pantry on convention Saturday. Thank you LWML and Thrivent Financial for supporting "CAN Hunger." You have made a difference in the lives of people who might otherwise miss a meal. You have touched people with God's love. *By JoAnne Sloan, VP of Human Care*



Covenant Confidence In A Conflicted World

Junior Counselor Pastor Brad Viken

Pastor Viken, dressed as a Biblical prophet, took us through the book of Hebrews "from across the river" to get us to think outside the box about the new covenant God made with us by sending His Son to redeem us. Jesus Christ became our High Priest to pay for the sins of all humanity with His death on the cross and His resurrection. The people of the

time were struggling to believe this. At times, we also may struggle. But God invites us to approach Him with our fears, lack of trust, and selfishness. As the world around us continues to change, we know we can hold fast to Christ our Savior who does not change. He is the same YESTERDAY, TODAY and FOREVER! *By Marilyn Stuckwisch*

Angels Visit Again!

We were honored by three visits from our Angels at the celebration of the Pacific Southwest District LWML 70th anniversary. They bring our events such joy and laughter. Our Angels reflected on the "yesterday" commenting on how prim and proper the ladies were wearing dresses, hats, and gloves in the past. In reflecting on "today" looking out at the ladies in the audience they could see many were wearing slacks, pants, even shorts, very few in dresses, and no hats or gloves. Their comments about the change in dress brought laughter and many smiles. The "forever" is going to see more changes in how we dress, but the mission of the LWML will never change. We will continue to focus on spreading the good news of His saving grace by supporting our Mission Grants with our Mites. *By Barbara Paetzel*



FRIDAY NIGHT WORSHIP SERVICE

"It was 1946. World War II had ended. Couples were coming to California and looking for a church in hopes of a new life," began Rev. Dr. Larry Stoterau, preacher for the Friday Night Worship Service. He went on to say, "Seventy years later people are still looking for a new life. They, however, don't look like

us or speak like us, but they also want a new life." Dr. Stoterau reminded us that Jesus remains the same over the years and gives that "new life" that all desire. That is the power of our mission — letting people know who Jesus is. Jesus says, "When you have believed me, you will know who I am." You and I know Him and are to be witnesses of Jesus and His love.

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League is all about the mission — we show it with our mites, quilts, Undie Sunday, concern for unwed mothers, and so much more. Why? Because Jesus did it. We want others to know we love them just as Jesus does. Jesus cares. He died on the cross for all. We care by our mission.

The service continued with communion "by which God offers, gives, and seals unto us the forgiveness of sins which Christ has earned for us." It was a service to remember and, with His help, renew our efforts to fulfill the mission. **By Betty Dennis**



News from National LWML President Patti Ross

President Ross greeted convention attendees as missionaries. Three thousand LWMLers will meet in conventions this weekend. Forty conventions will be held this spring and summer. Karen Duprey and Amy Gill were recognized for their service to National LWML.

News from LWMLS included the establishment of the LWML Doctoral Study Area at Fort Wayne Seminary by an anonymous donor. LWML will be recognized at the LCMS convention in July for its work with Lutheran Friends of the Deaf to fund Bible Story Books for use by the deaf.

Items from the LWML Store provide resources and products for our use; visibility about LWML; and an esprit de corps expressing what LWML stands for, who we work for, and why. LWML Sunday 2016 information is available as well as the Summer Quarterly. Please refer to the LWML website for more information.

President Ross described five of the current 19 National grants with a mite goal of \$2 million. Over the last two years combined District and National mite giving has totaled \$7.25 million.

The National Convention in Albuquerque June 22–25, 2017 will celebrate 75 years of the LWML with the theme 'Jesus Christ above all'. Her parting words were to *Engage, Encourage, Equip, and Enjoy*. Wear your purple with pride! **By Sandra Wardwell**

MUSIC

The 36th Biennial Convention of the Pacific Southwest District LWML is now a memory. We enjoyed a weekend of good fellowship with our Christian sisters and what better way to do that than with music!

Our inspirational musical experience began on Friday evening with the opening worship communion service in the sanctuary of St. John's Lutheran Church. The first lady of our District, Mrs. Linda Stoterau, led us in familiar hymns of praise on the beautifully restored organ, and we sang a new hymn penned especially for the convention by Rev. Brad Viken. The convention choir, directed by Chris Rogers, Minister of Music at Abiding Savior Lutheran Church in Lake Forest and accompanied by Mirta Leiss, Immanuel Lutheran Church in Orange, inspired us with four pieces, including a round, *Go and Serve the Lord With Gladness*, by Patrick Liebergen. Speaking for the choir (I sang alto!), we all were inspired by Chris' direction and her lovely musical selections.

Our song leaders on Saturday were Pastor Bill Hood and his wife Kim. Pastor Bill is a second career pastor and Kim has been a teacher for 27 years. At the beginning of each session and during breaks in convention business, Pastor Bill accompanied us on the guitar and Kim on the keyboard. They got us on our feet, singing old familiar hymns like *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*, *Joyful Joyful*, and *Amazing Grace*, and well-known contemporary songs like *On Christ Alone*, *Mighty to Save*, and *Here I am to Worship*. They also taught us a new contemporary version of *On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand*, and led us in singing the convention hymn, *Yesterday, Now and Forever*.

During our Saturday evening picnic "banquet," we were entertained by the beautiful harmony of Sweet Tidings Gospel Band, who really got our feet tapping with their renditions of old and new Gospel song favorites. Our musical inspiration concluded with worship on Sunday morning, when we joined the members of St. John's in glorifying our Lord and thanking Him for another biennium of His faithfulness.

By Berny Rothlisberg

Many thanks to 24 Carrots and Stone Fire Grill of Irvine, California for the scrumptious meals and friendly service to our attendees.

In addition to a delicious Saturday evening barbecue outdoor picnic meal and fellowship time, we enjoyed "Sweet Tidings Gospel Jam" of Loma Linda, California. This talented group feels their music is a ministry and they shared copies of one of their CD's with us which we shared with attendees for donations to mites. Thank you to Gene "Buddy" Conley (mandolin, guitar, banjo, vocal), Don "a man can never have too many banjos" Hergert (lots of banjos), Diana Hergert (rhythm guitar, vocal) and Marc "that's Marc with a 'c'" Nelissen (bass) for entertaining us with such sweet Gospel harmony. May God continue to bless your ministry.



Karen Duprey, (District President 2012–2016) passes along the presidential pin to President Elect, Bonnie Karch at the conclusion of the 2016 Pacific Southwest District Convention.

Our hands to work for Him, our feet to go on His errands:

- Left-over food catered by Stone Fire Grill was donated to Orange County Rescue Mission
- 20 Baby Quilt Banners to be donated to several Orange County faith based groups that minister to homeless pregnant women
- 300+ bags of beans and rice assembled for food distribution by St. John's Food Pantry
- 4 barrels of food and \$750+ cash donations for Orange County Second Harvest Food Bank
- Many cards of encouragement for missionaries and church workers were assembled
- Lots of opportunities to learn from and network with Lutheran partners/mission organizations
- \$150,000 goal for 16 district mission grants for next biennium
- New officers elected to carry out the work of our district — please say yes when asked to help!

2016–2018 Pacific Southwest District Mission Grants \$150,000

Lutheran Braille Workers, NLS Cartridge Conversion, Yucaipa, CA	\$10,000
Cornerstone Mission Project, Kingman, AZ.....	\$ 5,000
Zion's Healing Hands Food Ministry, Blythe, CA	\$10,000
Weekend Back Pack Hunger Program, El Centro, CA	\$10,000
Reaching Families with Hope and Care" New Life Pregnancy Ctr, Yuma, AZ	\$10,000
La Mesa "The Table" Ministry, Christ's Greenfield, Gilbert, AZ	\$9,600
Yuma Community Food Bank, Back Pack Program, Yuma, AZ	\$10,000
East County Transitional Living Center, El Cajon, CA	\$10,000
"Make a Joyful Noise" Music Ministry, Yuma Lutheran School, Yuma, AZ	\$10,000
Hands of Christ Feeding the Needy, Our Savior's First Lutheran, Granada Hills, CA	\$10,000
Raising the Roof: Expanding Early Childhood, Christ Lutheran, Vail, AZ	\$10,000
Redeemer Lutheran Church Food Ministry, Ontario, CA	\$10,000
Playground Equipment at Immanuel Lutheran, Sierra Vista, AZ	\$10,000
Future Leader Scholarships, Pacific Lutheran, Gardena, CA	\$10,000
Arizona Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Assoc. Prescott, AZ	\$10,000
Celebrating Recovered Lives, Christ Church, Phoenix, AZ	\$ 5,400

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Please email submissions as early as possible,
be extra careful with punctuation.

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