

LWML
Iowa West District

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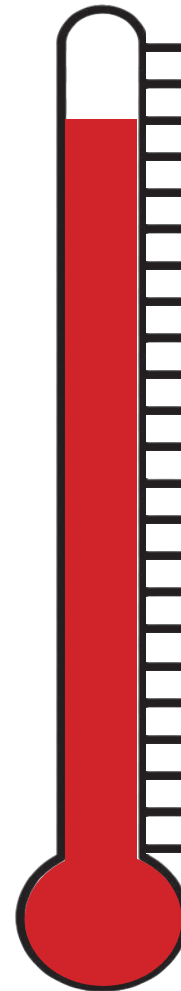
February/March 2026

LWML Iowa West District Mission Goal

2024-2026 Biennium

Progress as of January 26, 2026

We still need \$22,985.94 to meet our total goal.
We need \$10,413.16 to cover the remaining grants.



ATTN ZONE PRESIDENTS

2026 IWD LWML Convention Memorial Display

Please contact each of your Group Presidents within your Zone and ask them to submit names of those LWML sisters in Christ who have passed away during the period of May 15, 2024 to May 15, 2026. Those names, along with their respective Zone and Town, should be submitted to Deanne North at dlnorth@aol.com or Jackie Hembry, at hembrys@msn.com.

Deadline to submit: May 15, 2026.

Yellow Visors = Convention Hosts



District Convention is just around the corner. Are you ready? When you're at convention and find yourself lost or needing direction, look for someone in one of these yellow visors and they will be able to help you.

The February/March eNews articles will be due to Editor Lisa Wilson by March 20.
Send articles to lisawilsonlwml@gmail.com

From our Iowa West District President

Where do you belong? Do you belong to your group? Your church? Our IWD LWML 2026 Convention theme verse states: But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9 In this verse, God says so much to us. He begins by telling us that, we are a people for His own possession. What a great place for us to be. We are the possession of the One who created the universe. We belong to Him who took every sin to the cross for His own possession, only to suffer and die for us. He was then raised to life on the third day.

As His possession, as LWMLers, we share His light with the world in various ways. We do that through our mites, as well as when we are serving one another in gladness. There are times when we forget whose we. In those times, we need each other. That is why we need to belong to our LWML groups and our church homes. This is where we come together to receive Word and Sacrament, to praise the Creator of the universe, and to thank the Redeemer for His amazing love and the forgiveness of sins. I pray that

everyday we would remember to be the light of Christ, loving and caring for each other, serving Him in gladness.

We are going to be quite busy over the next few months, as we are preparing for our IWD District convention on June 11-13, 2026, at Camp Okoboji. Speakers have confirmed their willingness to join us: our keynote speaker will be Linda Reiser, past National LWML president; our Bible Study leader will be Deaconess Betty Knapp, past board member of the National LWML; our proclaimer for the worship service on Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Spirit Lake is Rev Paul Egger, Iowa West District president. We will be blessed and equipped as His possessions to proclaim His excellencies and share His marvelous light.



Penny Schuessler
LWML - Iowa West District
President

LWML IWD District Convention June 11-13, 2026

Convention Speakers



KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Linda Reiser
Past National LWML President



BIBLE STUDY LEADER

Deaconess Betty Knapp
*Past National LWML
Board Member*



WORSHIP SERVICE

PROCLAIMER
Rev. Paul Egger

Epiphany

Epiphany. A manifestation of deity, a term applied to the birth, Baptism, appearance of the star, and similar events in Christ's life. It is also applied to January 6th, celebrated in commemoration of the visit of the Magi (Lutheran Cyclopedia, p 342).

When you read this, Epiphany will be in full swing, and Lent with Ash Wednesday, which is on February 18th this year, will be close to begin. Epiphany is the third season of the church year.

The account of the coming of the Wise Men stands out as one of the highlights of the Christmas and Epiphany seasons. And it should be especially important to us, the believers of the Gentile nations. We look to the Wise Men as the first of the Gentiles to know and worship Jesus as their Savior and Lord. When they arrived in Jerusalem following a long and arduous journey, they immediately began asking about the newborn King. It seems they expected the entire nation to be caught up in the excitement of this momentous event, the coming of the long-promised Messiah. Yes, the question they posed was regarding the birth of the King of the Jews, but they made it evident that they had come to worship Him. This was something more than the usual honor paid when a new crown prince was born. They were searching for their king, a spiritual king.

Isaiah 60:3-4: The Gentiles shall come to your light,

and kings to the brightness of your rising. "Lift up your eyes all around, and see: They all gather together, they come to you; Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be nursed at your side." This is part of the Old Testament for The Epiphany of our Lord.

Epiphany is the season of the church year that hangs a huge welcome sign at the door to the kingdom of God. The pain of being unwelcome and denied a place at the group is something we all have experienced at one time or another. Without Christ Jesus, we would be excluded from the kingdom of God, from his grace and forgiveness. The sign at the doorway of heaven would read "No sinners allowed."

But that is not what the season of Epiphany teaches. Just as light seeps through every barrier crack, as it spreads outside confining places, and it doesn't stop shining until it's gone through the entire universe, so also God's forgiveness and grace spread throughout the whole world, drawing people to God from all nations, and that, dear friends, includes you and me.



Rev. Edward E. Durand III
LWML IWD
Senior Counselor

Young Women IN MISSION

LEADER DEVELOPMENT

YWRs Wanted! Zone leaders, as our District Convention approaches, it is time to start recruiting Young Women Representatives (YWRs) We are looking for Lutheran women between 18 and 40ish, who are young at heart and willing to serve! There will be forms for Zones to fill out with basic YWR contact information at our next District Board meeting. Each zone can select up to two YWRs!

If you are a young woman who is interested in becoming a YWR, or know of a young woman YWR, contact your group or zone presidents or leader development chairwoman! We look forward to meeting our next group of YWRs soon!!



Martha Sunderman
Leader Development
Chair

HELP : Love : GROW and Endure

Carrying the Mission Forward Through the Ages



Leave it to the experts!

Rick boasted to Allen, "I just watched a YouTube video and was able to fix my twenty-year-old clothes dryer. I am feeling so confident now, that I bet I could use one of those online tools and write my own will too. I can probably get this all done for less than \$100."

Allen, who had just worked with his attorney said, "That's impressive that you fixed your dryer. But let me ask a few questions. Do you own property in more than one state? How are you going to choose who serves as your personal representative? Which choices for end-of-life medical concerns are you going to choose? Would inheritance to family be best in a lump sum or stretched over time? What is the most tax savvy way to minimize taxes when making a charitable gift? I don't think you are going to get all these answers through YouTube."

The reality is, there are many self-serve opportunities in life, from ATM's, to self-checkout at the grocery store, to ordering a ride at the airport using Waymo, the autonomous

cabs. But you don't get to self-diagnose illness or write your own prescriptions. You need a doctor to do that. You can't fill your own air conditioning unit with refrigerant. A licensed technician must do that. So also, in the complex world of estates, you need the assistance of those who specialize in doing this work, to make sure that mistakes don't happen. Your attorney or financial advisor bring much to the table. But sometimes they specialize in wealth creation or wealth protection. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor specializes in charitable gifts and the smartest way to use the right asset, in the right way for the right gift. It takes a team.

To get your team all pulling for you, helping you in your faithful stewardship of God's gifts, your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can assist. Contact Ann Carrick at 515-360-0709 or my email acarrick324@hotmail.com.

Blessings as you consider making the next step with your estate plans!

From the Nominating Committee

By the time you receive this Enews, the ballot will be approved along with many other decisions for our upcoming convention in June.

Our committee has spent many hours "Sharing the Light of Christ" by calling, texting and emailing all of you. WE have laughed, cried and prayed with many of you over issues that were happening in all our lives. It's been a joy to get to know and visit with many of you.

I would like to personally thank all the Presidents of the zones, and all the wonderful ladies who have helped us along the way to fill this ballot for the upcoming convention in June. Our nominating committee is truly blessed and grateful for each and every one of you.

Committee Chair,
Julie Carstens

Committee members; Jill Fieilmeier/ Nancy Schoen/ Carmen Thiedeman/ Breanna Wetzler



Julie Carstens
Nominating Committee
Chairman

Do you know someone who is not receiving the LWML IWD eNews?

Have them send their email address to: Lisa Wilson at lisawilsonlwml@gmail.com and ask to be put on the distribution list. **Do you know someone who does not have email but would like to receive it?** Print it for them or print it and post it on your church's bulletin board. We want everyone to have access to the latest LWML IWD news.

Organizational Resources

As my pastor and I are preparing for upcoming Lenten services, one of the hymns we will be using is “O Love, How Deep.” As I was doing research on this hymn, I noticed that the tune name is Deo Gracias which means, “Thanks be to God.” My first thought was “This tune name appears too joyful to be a Lenten hymn.” As I reflected on this hymn tune along with the hymn text, I realized that yes, we should give thanks to God—even throughout Lent. “O Love, How Deep” reminds us of all that Jesus did for us while he lived among us on earth...

for us...He was baptized, was tempted, overthrew the tempter, prayed, taught and showed us how to live, was betrayed, bore the cross and death, gave His dying breath, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and sent his Holy Spirit to be with us.

This is a list that is humbling and reminds us of why God sent His Son to earth to be our Savior so that we may be with Him in heaven for all eternity. In humility our response can only be “Thanks be to God for your mercy and understanding of our human condition.”



Jeanette Hinkeldey
VP Organizational
Resources and
Christian Life

Christian Life

One of the last Christmas decorations I pack away is my collection of lighthouses that cast a warm evening glow on our mantelpiece. I’ve gathered them up over the years and they remind me in a very practical way of Jesus, who is as David proclaimed in the Psalms, the light of our salvation. Lighthouses have a long history of both protecting and welcoming mariners. They warned of dangerous waters and they beckoned ships home. Perhaps you can imagine the relief ship crews felt when the night’s blackness was pierced by a lighthouse beacon. Perhaps those magi coming to visit the newborn king of the Jews felt the same relief when they left Jerusalem and picked up the star’s guiding again that had led them from their far away homes in Persia. That the Gentiles would have a ‘home’ too around the incarnate Christ has been a huge relief and joy maker ever since.

Someday, I’ll get around to putting away my little lighthouses and their glow will be dark until next year. But the light of Christ won’t go out, in fact it goes on shining in us. And it gets brighter with our study of God’s Word. One such opportunity is found on the LWML.org website. It is called “The Light No Darkness Can Overcome.” It points us to Jesus as the light that blasts through the shadows of this world. You can find other such resources there, as well.

Our Convention theme for this summer urges us to Share the Light of Christ, which we do in our serving, giving and sending. And like a lighthouse, something needs to spark that welcoming light. It is the very light of Christ and salvation for us sinners in Him that brightens our light to others. I look forward to our gathering together this summer and catching up on each other’s lives and the faithful ways that God has blessed us and we Lutheran Women in Mission since we last were together. It is such a special time at convention for you all are lighthouses to me of Christ and His faithfulness, and I pray that He keeps me a lighthouse to you sisters, my family, my church, and our world.

Be a lighthouse! Shine on!



Sherrill Phillips
Christian Life
Co-Chairman

Historian’s Queries

By Gretchen Sump, IWD LWML Historian

We learn from history. Even more I think we learn from people. Who has been a mentor for you in LWML? Perhaps you have had more than one person you consider a mentor. The second thought is who are you mentoring? We learn most from Jesus and his Word by direction of the Holy Spirit. I would like to hear about your mentoring experiences. May you Praise God for these learning experiences in your LWML history story.

Gospel Outreach

2026 – 2028 LWML Iowa West Grant Application Thank You!

The deadline for this biennium grant application cycle is behind us. The Mission Grants committee has submitted their scores, and their final recommendation is ready for Board of Director approval in February.

Thank you to those of you that encouraged organizations to apply, served as sponsors on applications, coordinated the signatures needed, and prayed for the many worthy missions in need of our mites. We had \$324,300 in funding requests; the mission grants committee consisting of the following people did an excellent job reviewing and scoring the applications:

Rev. Paul Egger, President of the Iowa District West

Rev. B. Keith Haney

Penny Schuessler, President, LWML Iowa West District

Brenda Dryer, Vice President, Gospel Outreach, LWML Iowa West District

Marilyn Bernard, Northwest Zone

Angela Wilkinson, Storm Lake Zone

The LWML Iowa West Board of Directors will hear their ballot recommendation at the February 21st meeting. Watch our LWML District Facebook page for the video that will drop sometime in March / April detailing the grants that will be on the ballot for delegate voting at June's District Convention.

It's been a blessing to lead the District's grant making process for the last two biennium's. There is much being done to spread the Gospel; so many awesome opportunities from our local communities to the other side of the World to proclaim the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!

To God be the Glory!



Brenda Dryer
VP of Gospel Outreach
& Special Focus
Ministries

WISHES Scholarships in Action



In 2024 we extended a 2020-2022 grant in support of LWML District WISHES scholarships due to the pandemic. Three ladies from Calvary in Sioux City took advantage of the WISHES funding support and were a part of this year's IOWAY Trip to Pasadena.

If a short term mission trip is in your future please reach out to me at bsdryer50@gmail.com to discuss application for a \$500 scholarship.

Mission Servants

Now that we have a good start to 2026 we can look at what the New Year will bring but also at this time we would like to look back to 2025 and share what IWD Groups and Zones have done to serve our Lord in the last part of the year. This is our new way of reporting donations and sharing ideas.

The Southwest Zone reports that many churches in their area, both LCMS and other denominations, came together to collect items for OGT in Lincoln, Nebraska. A local trucking company has donated a truck and driver for this project for many years. For the first time they were able to fill the entire floor of the truck with items. At their Fall Rally in Villisca, they listened to a speaker that talked to them about dementia and the Project Worship Anew for the elderly. They collected so much food they were able to put together care giver baskets and also donate to the local food pantry. They also collected fidget blankets for dementia patients. Everyone was very enthused about this project. The Southwest Zone also reported that their quilting group made cot sheets out of donated material and gave to Noah's Ark Preschool and Daycare. This brought older women together to enjoy and see the joy of the little children when they saw the cute fabrics on their cots.

Adair Zone and Immanuel Guthrie Center reports that every year they do a fuzzy sock collection for Phil's Friends. Their goal is a 100 pair of socks and they have exceeded their goal almost every year. This year they ended up with 1 extra sock, unsure how that happened, and their package also got lost in the mail but by God's grace everything worked out well. Zion Atlantic collected boxes of Kleenex for the elementary schools and St Thomas hosted an omelet breakfast that is open to the public. They use the donations from this to send to LWML missions.

Des Moines West Zone reports that Faith Adel packages each month 10 hygiene bags that include a bible and give to the Crisis Intervention and Advocacy Center. They are packaged in special purple bags. This is a great project to have the church and the LWML work together. Mary and Martha Lutheran Women in Van Meter had a pie auction on LWML Sunday to encourage Mites. It was a great hit, and the auction provided \$884 for mites. The congregation was so supportive and there was great fellowship, so they plan on making it an annual event. Beautiful Savior in Polk City hosted a month long fund raiser for a member who began seminary this summer. The LWML and the congregation were excited to help one of their own members at seminary.

Des Moines East Zone reports that St Paul Ankeny, after touring the new Hope Ministries Center for Women and Children, was so inspired that they asked the other East Zone groups if they were interested in partnering to be a sponsor for one of the rooms under Hope's i58 Program. Several of the groups joined with them and they were able to provide the \$1500 to support a room in 2025. This was such a success and with much interest spreading to their congregations they were able to support a room again this year at the Women's Shelter and also a bed at Hope's Bethel Mission for Men. This has been a wonderful joint project to support the vulnerable members of the community. Christ the King Altoona had a salad supper to learn more about Hopes Center for Women and Children and collect needed items for the center.

Council Bluffs reports that they collected School supplies for local schools and diapers for Swaddling Clothes. They also did a congregational party with a Mexican Fiesta theme to support a member preparing for seminary. It has been very special for them to support this young man, to watch over him and love and support him. They have collected items for OGT and the best part has been having nonmembers come every Wednesday to work on these projects and for fellowship.

Fort Dodge reports Good Shephard gave a monetary donation to seminary students and made quilts for OGT. Boone Zone reports that they have had great fellowship and great times together making quilts for OGT and LWR and they had a missionary from India speak to them at their salad supper and was able to support him with a monetary gift along with monetary gifts to the Fort Wayne Seminary.

Continue to share with us the wonderful things that are happening in our District. Also please look in the next issue of the E-news to hear what our projects for convention will be.



Nancy Medick
Mission Servants
Chair

INTRODUCING BLDM (Bethesda Lutheran Disability Ministries) — HAVE YOU MET US?

You may have known us as **Bethesda Lutheran Communities Auxiliary**—now meet **Bethesda Lutheran Disability Ministries (BLDM)**. We continue this important work, reaching forward in **faith, word, and deed** by sharing the love of Jesus with people living with **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)**.

In past years, **LWML district mission grants** have supported this ministry by helping reprint Christian education resources used by churches, Bible classes, and families of people with IDD.

Did you know **2–3 people out of every 100 in your congregation live with IDD**, and only **10% of the entire IDD population have a church home**? God's Word reminds us: *"How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?"* (Romans 10:14).

BLDM provides **resources, training, and support** to help include **ALL**, regardless of ability or disability.

Sisters in Christ, learn more at BethesdaLDM.org



Financial Reports

Gifts received December 2025 and January 2026

Mission Account

| Memorial/Honor District 75%/National 25% | |
|--|---------|
| Carol Lock | \$25.00 |
| Florence Sandgren | \$25.00 |
| Roger Johnson | \$20.00 |
| Stanley Bukacek | \$10.00 |
| Wayne Kuhlmann | \$10.00 |
| Joanne Meeves | \$20.00 |
| Bert Kirchhoff | \$20.00 |
| Arloa Rapple | \$20.00 |

Memorial Mites District 100%

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| Jane Bass | \$100.00 |
| Gail Beermann | \$ 50.00 |

Gifts District 100%

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Mt Olive Des Moines | \$274.69 |
| Shepherd of the Valley | \$100.00 |
| West Des Moines | |

Other Mites

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Zion Humboldt | \$150.81 |
| LWML Brunch & Luncheon | |

Light That Endures Fund

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Qualified Charitable Distribution | \$1,000.00 |
|-----------------------------------|------------|

General Account

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Thrivent choice | \$25.00 |
| Recycling – Denison zone | \$40.07 |

Quarterly Report October 2025 to December 2025

Mission Account

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Zone mites | \$34,163.99 |
| Memorial mites 75%/25% | \$140.00 |
| Memorial mites 100% | \$90.00 |
| Other mites | \$2,196.00 |
| Rally/Prayer service mites | \$1,482.44 |
| 100% District gifts | \$1,801.06 |
| Stamps | \$0.00 |
| TOTAL | \$39,873.49 |

The Light That Endures Fund

| | |
|---|------------|
| Endowment – memorial | \$25.00 |
| Legacy -Qualified Charitable Distribution | \$3,000.00 |

ELECTED OFFICERS

| | | |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| President | Penny Schuessler | IWDprespenny@gmail.com |
| VP Organizational Resources & Christian Life | Jeanette Hinkeldey | hinkeldeyharmonies@gmail.com |
| VP of Gospel Outreach & Special Focus Ministries | Brenda Dryer | bsdryer50@gmail.com |
| Secretary | Deb Schmidt | iwdsecdeb@gmail.com |
| Financial Secretary | Chris Mahnken | iwdlwmlfinancials@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Sharon Hamann | iwdlwmltreasurer@gmail.com |
| Senior Pastoral Counselor | Rev. Edward E. Durand III | durande@ymail.com |
| Junior Pastoral Counselor | Rev. Nicholas Thackery | pastor@goodshepfortdodge.org |
| Nominating Committee Chairman | Julie Carstens | carstensjulie50@gmail.com |

APPOINTED PERSONNEL

| | | |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Christian Life Chairman | Sherrill Phillips | sherrillphillips2@gmail.com |
| Christian Life Co-Chairman | Deb Rouse | gdrouse1281@ncn.net |
| Mission Servants Chairman | Nancy Medick | nmedick@yahoo.com |
| Mission Servants Co-Chair | Ann Schauer | schauerann@gmail.com |
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