

Minnesota South District Christian Growth News

Plan to Attend the Women's Retreat "Bloom Anew In Christ" July 29 & 30, 2005



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!
2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV

Who wouldn't want a fresh start sometimes, and just think — God gives us one each day! What a great God!

No matter who we are or how much we feel used up, we are still an integral part of God's plan in the spreading of His Word. You do not have to be a missionary to Africa to be useful to

God. Some of the greatest work for God is done among just one or two people.

Through the four Bible studies at the Women's Retreat, we will find out what it means to be in Christ, what Jesus does to make us better, and what it means to leave our comfort zone and step into a deeper presence with God.

More information can be found in the WOM by contacting Irene Mensing (address on back of this newsletter) or use the registration form on the top part of page 7.

Volume 1, Issue 1
MN South LWML
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Welcome to the 2005 Edition of the Christian Life Newsletter

In this newsletter we'd like to give you ideas, encouragement and guidance as you lead your Zone in Christian Growth.

In order to be a good leader, you need to be in the Word yourself, remember to set aside time for your own spiritual growth. In this newsletter you will find a Bible study, guidelines for a good leader, tips on planning a Christian Growth event and more.

The 2004-2006 Christian Growth (Christian Life) committee members are Irene Mensing, Chairman, Gayle Baumgard, Sharon Patrick and Rev. Scott Gustafson, Counselor. Feel free to contact them if you'd like more information. The back of the WOM has information on how to contact us.



Don't miss this opportunity to develop the gifts God has given you. You will have two chances, April 30th or May 7th. See page 6 for more info.

Tips on Planning a Christian Growth Event

- 1- Set time, date and location—then advertise. Do not presume that everyone “knows” what you mean. Start on time and stick to the schedule as much as possible.
- 2- If you are trying to reach out to those who are on a fixed or tight schedule — not only staying on time, but keep the Bible study moving. Keep to the goal or purpose of the meeting.
- 3- Are you inviting new people? Make sure they know where you are meeting. Simply stating the church may send them to the wrong area. State the specific location, such as the fellowship hall or the conference room.
- 4- If you are trying to reach those with more free time, it’s also important to stay on time, but maybe have more time for personal sharing. End on time, but allow for those who need more time to share by lingering over a cup of coffee.
- 5- The best way to invite a new person is a personal invitation including an offer to pick her up and spending the time with her and making personal introductions to others in the group.
- 6- Make your event enjoyable, but also predictable. If it’s a Bible study, stick to the plan. If it’s just an entertaining program, make sure that is how it’s advertised. The fastest way to discourage new people is to start late, have a mismatched program and then interrupted it with discussion about the last church supper (or LWML meeting) and complain about no one coming.
- 7- Likewise, if you ask someone new to help with a mission project. Make sure they are comfortable with the work, guide them, but then let them do the work. If this is a person who works outside the home, or has children, they need to leave with a feeling that they were needed and that they accomplished something.

Look for the NEW revised Christian Growth Handbook this summer. Pick one up at the convention in Tampa or order through the LWML office. Each Christian Growth officer should have one.



Christian Growth Resources

As a Christian Growth leader encourage the use of the *Quarterly* Bible studies, the Prayer Service and prayers of dedication and/or devotion with mite box offerings.

Are you aware of all that is available to you in the LWML catalog—such as Bible studies, retreat programs, program resources, individual spiritual resources and new this summer, Mustard Seed devotional packets.

Check out the middle section of the LWML catalog. This section contains Bible studies, devo-

tions and sketches submitted by LWML members and pastors. All have doctrinally approved and are listed three ways, alphabetically, by topic and by type. If you have written something, consider submitting it to the LWML Christian Resource Editors for inclusion in the next catalog. For those of you with internet access, some of these can be found on the web site at www.lwml.org. The *Quarterly* and the Prayer Service are on the LWML web site.

Your pastor can be

an excellent source for Bible studies, ask to borrow one of his books or check your own church library.

There are many other places, but be careful to chose material that are Lutheran Church Missouri Synod based. Last but not least, don’t forget to check the files that you received with the office. There should be guidelines and possibly other materials that will help you as you “Serve the Lord with Gladness.”

Look for the NEW 2005-2007 **Program Planner** available this summer. In recent years, the title was changed to “Bright Ideas” but is being changed back. The **Program Planner** is full of ideas that reference LWML materials in the catalog along with 26 new devotions based on the convention theme “Salt and Light”. The **Program Planner** is in a monthly calendar format with enough ideas to last two years and designed to make program planning easy. Inform the societies of this easy to use tool

Christian Growth Ideas from the MN South Board Of Directors' Own Societies

Our Bible study group meets for a brown bag lunches. We have an exact start and stop time so that the gals can do it during a lunch hour.

Our LWML group started a monthly newsletter/Bible study about two years ago. The newsletter/Bible study is put the congregational mail box of each woman. It begins with news about LWML listing dates of meetings/events and recognizes the women's birthdays for the month. It then has a short Bible study and prayer. This is all on a regular size sheet of paper that can be carried in your purse and easily read when convenient. This idea keeps LWML in from of the women and especially has helped when we have projects scheduled that need volunteers. The Bible studies are from books provided by the Pastor so we know they are doctrinally correct.

We have a Bible study and lunch before our delegate board meetings. We also invite those who attend the Bible study to stay and listen in on the meeting if they wish.

Our ladies had an Advent devotional service with various musical renditions, scripture readings, message etc. and then adjourned to the Fellowship Hall for a dessert sampler. Those who attended were asked to bring their favorite tea cup and saucer: some of our table conversation centered around the questions, "Why is this special?"

In November we put together quilt kits and distributed to anyone in the congregation who wanted to take one to hand tie a "fringed fleece blanket".. We used matching funds from Thrivent which allowed us to have 32 kits. We donated them to Partners in Mission and City Life Center. Our Pastor had an opening devotion/Bible study with us in December and then our society hand stamped Christmas cards for our shut-ins. It was such a success we are doing it again and will be hand stamping Easter cards.

In December we always have "Advent by Candlelight." This past year they had 125 to 150 who attended. Each individual table is decorated by one or two women. They start the

evening with punch and fellowship, then we move to the sanctuary for singing and a message and end back in the fellowship hall for dessert. Sets the theme for Advent.

My society combines a morning Bible study with quilting in the afternoon. We have a brown bag lunch with shared snacks and ladies may join us for all or part as they wish.

We have a Circle that meets once a month in the afternoon for Bible study and collecting mites and is made up of those who do not care to drive to the evening meetings.

Our zone puts together a booklet of ideas from each church to share with all. We have also been paying the way for our members to attend LWML workshops and taking one of the churches vans so we can have fellowship together on the drives.

We wrote down prayer requests on 3 x 5 cards and randomly picked one. That lady became our prayer partner. We prayed together a few minutes each meeting and for each other throughout the month. This formed some new friendships.

Our society adopts the confirmation students. Each lady has one of the youth and throughout their confirmation years sends note of encouragement, little birthday gifts, etc. We have had several moms join our LWML after they child has been through confirmation.

We had a man of the congregation dress as the leper that Jesus healed. He spoke of how his life had been before being healed, of the experience of the healing, and of his changed life and the great thankfulness he felt toward Jesus.

We have an annual "stone soup" noon meeting. Hostesses provide the broth and some bread and the members each bring a cup of uncooked vegetables to add to the soup. We have our Bible study/speaker and then eat the soup! It is a good object lesson of how each of us individually can contribute something. The combi-

nation of all of our contributions (be it vegetables, or mites or whatever) provides something greater and more nourishing than any one of us could do individually.

Our society meets and we always open with devotion. On Monday afternoon's the ladies do quilting at the church and collect clothing for charities around the area. The children use their mite box offerings once a year for LWML.

We sent invitations to each of the women in our congregation to join us for a 6:30 PM potluck and concluding no later than 8:30PM. We had Ann Joos as a speaker and an entertaining program (to let them know we do have fun). Just before we started our business meeting, we politely

Here are some things that the MN South District Board of Directors do in their societies or zones, maybe there will be an idea that will work for you.

told the young moms that we understood if they wanted to go home to tuck their young ones in. We thanked them for coming and said they could join us anytime if fit into their schedule.

Our society enjoys "neighborhood" Bible studies. We meet in and complete on of the new Bible studies each year.

If you are in an exercise or walking group, start or finish with a devotion or short Bible study such as a Mustard Seed.

When you attend district or LWML functions, sit with someone new and talk to them about what works in their zone or what they are doing, there are thousands of ideas.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO FURTHER THE MISSION OF THE LWML?

As an individual . . .

- Be in the word
- Boldly, courageously and prayerfully fill your Mite Box
- Use your gifts and abilities
- Volunteer your time for LWML
- Be a mentor...giving or receiving
- Read the *Quarterly* and share a subscription with a friend
- Pray for your pastor
- Plan to attend LWML functions
- Invite others to attend with you

Mission Inspiration

As a local group . . .

- Include Bible study / devotions / prayer in all events
- Invite an MMV Consultant to come to your group
- Feature your district and national Mission Grants in your church publications
- Use the resources of the LWML catalog
- Contact any of the District Officers for help (See WOM for information)
- Remember Missions and Mites! Motivate your local group!
- Be mission advocates
- Be open ... flexible ... as you encourage additional groups with different structures

Mission Outreach

As a zone . . .

- Use the LWML planning process to plan effective, interesting zone events
- Provide opportunities for spiritual development and leader training
- Mentor a friend, daughter or another leader
- Be innovative and creative
- Offer Christian fellowship and mutual encouragement
- Provide opportunity for sharing ideas among the societies
- Encourage individual membership as well as group membership
- Offer programs through which women may participate in servant events and Gospel outreach activities
- Support your voting delegate to the convention giving encouragement and prayers

Mission Grants

(Taken from 2002 National LWML Report to the Districts)



Tips For The Leader

1. Begin on time.
2. Start with a brief devotion and prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to be the teacher.
3. Keep the group on target. Bring the discussion back to the point when necessary.
4. Don't monopolize the conversation. Seek to involve all members in the discussion.
5. Encourage members of the group to be responsible for special parts of the next session: devotions, special report, etc.
6. Allow sufficient time for group prayers. Bible study and prayer go together. We listen to God speak to us in His Word; we respond to Him by speaking to Him in prayer.
7. Adjourn at the agreed time.

God's Plans

A Bible study prepared by Rev. Greg Fairow, South Wisconsin District LWML Counselor 2003

God is a God of plans

- What plan did God give in Genesis 6:15?
- What plan did God give in Exodus 26:30?
- What plan did God give in 1 Chronicles 28:11-12a, 19?
- What plan did God give in Ephesians 1:11 and Hebrews 11:39-40?

God's plans cannot be thwarted

- What does Psalm 33:11 say about God's plans?
- What does Isaiah 14:24 say about God's plans?
- What does Isaiah 46:11b say about God's plans?

God's people should be people of plans

- According to Isaiah 32:8, who makes plans?

We need to receive God's guidance in the planning process

- According to Proverbs 16:3, what should we do with our plans?
- What does Proverbs 19:21 say about man's plans and the purpose?
- According to Amos 3:7, the Lord does nothing without what?

We should seek input from others when making plans

- According to Proverbs 15:22, what causes plans to fail? To succeed?

We need to be ready to adapt and adjust in obedience to God's plans for us

- According to James 4:13-15, how should we plan?
- According to James 4:7a, to whom should we submit?

Our plans are self-centered, flawed and presumptuous. God's plans are perfect, blessed and inspired. Following God's plan is a matter of humility and obedience.

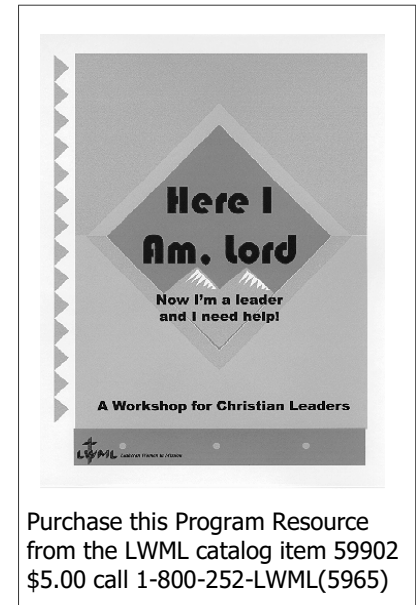
Having said all of this, what is God's plan for you? (This is a good question for you to ponder daily.)

PRAISE THE LORD!

Commit to the Lord whatever you do, your plans will succeed. Proverbs 16:3 NIV

God made plans. We also need to plan our events.

Pray for God's guidance and help as you plan your event.



A story from the Internet— How do you handle Adversity?

A young woman went to her mother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed as one problem was solved, a new one arose. Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to boil. In the first she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans. She let them sit and boil, without saying a word.

In about twenty minutes she turned off the burners. She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed it in a bowl.

Turning to her daughter, she asked, "Tell me, what do you see?"

"Carrots, eggs, and coffee," she replied. Her mother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. The mother then asked the daughter to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard boiled egg. Finally, the mother asked the daughter to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma. The daughter then asked, "What does it mean, mother?"

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity ... boiling water. Each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard, and

unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior, but after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

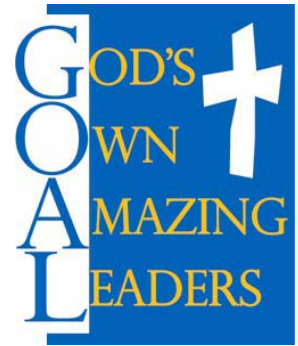
"Which are you?" she asked her daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?"

Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength?

Am I the egg that starts with a malleable heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit, but after a death, a breakup, a financial hardship or some other trial, have I become hardened and stiff? Does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I tough with a stiff spirit and hardened heart?

Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the fragrance and flavor.

If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you. When the hour is the darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate yourself to another level? How do you handle adversity? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?



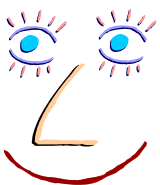
God's Own Amazing Ladies.

On April 30th or May 7th plan on attending a day of celebrating and developing the gifts God has given us. We are God's Own Amazing Ladies. Together, we will be empowered, energized and equipped to serve our Lord with gladness. Ladies of your society along with officers and zone officers are asked to attend. There will also be Bible study, skits, food, fellowship and fun. Minnesota South District sent two representatives to the national LWML training last November and now they will be presenting this information to you, our local officers.

Bring a young woman between the ages of 22 and 35 and receive a gift.

You can choose either April 30th at Trinity Lutheran, 530 4th St NW, Faribault or May 7th at Martin Lutheran High School, Cty Hwy 38, Northrop. If you want more information about this Leadership event contact Patti Pierson at 507-669-2371 or email her at piersonw@rconnect.com.

A registration form is in the Spring WOM or use the one on the next page. Don't forget to bring your Bible and be ready for a spirit-filled day.



Make people happy where you go —
Not when you go!

In some small way —
improve thyself every
day.

MINNESOTA SOUTH LWML **Women's Retreat**
July 29 & 30, 2005 Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN
Thursday Check In 7 - 9 pm Friday Check In 8 am / Opening 9 am
Saturday closing with Noon lunch

Friday evening "A Garden Of Talent"
 Contact Irene Mensing at
 507-526-3430 to find out how to
 participate—all talents welcomed!!

Registration Fees:

\$117.00 —For Thursday evening through
 Saturday noon lunch—A/C room
 (\$97.00 for non air-conditioned room)

\$90.00 —For Friday (No Friday breakfast)
 through Saturday noon lunch
 —A/C room
 (\$80.00 for non air-conditioned room)

\$68.00 —For Friday and Saturday
 (No housing & no Friday breakfast)

Mail completed form, a check made payable to
 Minnesota South LWML for appropriate fee,
 and **a stamped, self-addressed, business-size
 envelope** (for confirmation reply and more
 details) to:

Gayle Baumgard
 413 - 5th Ave
 Round Lake, MN 56167
 Phone: 507-945-8313
 email: courtyhall@yahoo.com

Registration Deadline: July 14, 2005

Please print and check all that apply—Thank you.

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Full Address _____

City, St, Zip _____

Home Church _____ City _____

Registration fee enclosed \$ _____ For health reasons, I prefer a first floor room Yes _____

I would like to room with _____ and we are enclosing our registrations together.

I am a Young Woman Rep: Yes ____ No ____, but, I'd like to participate in any YW activities. Yes _____

I need a map of the Gustavus Adolphus Campus: Yes _____

I can be an Emergency Medical Technician at Retreat: Yes _____

Emergency Information Your Name _____

In case of an emergency please contact: Name _____

Relationship _____ Emergency Phone Number _____

Health Insurance Company _____ Policy Number _____

(This information will be keep confidential and only used in the case of an emergency.)

Registration form for God's Own Amazing Leaders	
Name _____	Address _____
Congregation _____	
Zone _____	Registration: \$10.00
Conference _____	
Phone _____	Email _____
Checks written to: MN South District LWML	
Attending (check location and date) Time 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM	
_____ April 30th—Trinity Lutheran	Mail form and check to:
_____ May 7th—Martin Luther High School	Patti Pierson
	1526 201st St
	Hardwick, MN 56134
	Piersonw@rconnect.com



Minnesota South
District LWML
Christian Growth News

Lutheran Women in Mission

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**Minnesota South is
on the web
www.mnslwml.org**



A new LWML bear
will be available in



Tampa.
This will
be the last
convention
with a bear.

LWML Convention is in Tampa, FL June 16-19, 2005

Jesus provides a powerful illustration about the impact and impression we are to be making on the society in which we live. He's not talking about your neighbor being salt and light, but you? He has created you for a purpose. He takes great delight in you and your unique witness to **season and shine** in this joy-impaired world.

The Holy Spirit works through you to bring hope into the lives of those in darkness. Season your words, attitudes and actions so they will draw others into a relationship with Him, not push them further away.

Joyfully spread the Good News that Jesus Christ is the One and only Source of permanent joy. The real joy is not in the absence of problems but in the presence of the Savior. The more we focus on His grace and presence in our day the easier it is to **season and shine**.

To "**Live JOYfully as Salt and Light**" begins in His grace-filled, joy-laced Word. Thirst for it? Follow His Spirit. Get

out of the secret service business about what empowers you to have hope and rejoice in all things! (taken from Joy-votion by Annetta E. Dellinger)

Have you considered attending the LWML convention this year? Attending a LWML convention is an experience that will last a long time. Annetta puts it this way, "Go now and season as His glow-in-the-dark, eternally loved child!"

If you cannot attend, do what you can to encourage others in your Zone or Society to attend and when your Zone delegate returns, encourage her to speak on her experiences or contact one of the two new Young Women Representatives that will be going from Minnesota South. Excitement is contagious. All information about registration and housing is in the Winter *Quarterly* or on the web at www.lwml.org