



“Serve the Lord with gladness.” Psalm 100:2

# Oregon Leaguer

## Winter 2024

Oregon District President Carol Reis



### 20 C + M + B 24

#### Do any of you recognize the title to this article?

Christmas seems a long time ago and our minds may well have turned to New Year’s resolutions or, if you are anything like me, wondering when spring is going to appear.

As we go about our daily lives, we should not forget what Epiphany means.

In the nativity story, Jesus is born into relative poverty and obscurity in Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph have been visited by angels who foretold his birth and at the time of Jesus' birth, the angels also imparted the good news to the shepherds who came and worshipped.

Yet the addition of the Magi to the story adds a whole new dimension. The significance is that they were not Jewish and yet recognized something special and unique in Jesus. They knelt down before Him and offered gifts showing the importance they placed on him.

This is the first indication we have in Jesus’ life that His ministry will not be just for Israel but for **people of all nations**. Although it took His followers many years to see it, this was the moment where it was first revealed that the Messiah would come not only for the Jewish people but for people of **all backgrounds, ethnicities, and nationalities**.

Orthodox Christians and many Roman Catholics also use Epiphany to focus on the Baptism of Jesus. He was baptized by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. We read in the Gospels that a voice from heaven says: *“You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased”* (Mark 1:11). This is another way in which Jesus' identity and purpose was being revealed to those around him.

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## President's message continued

The Epiphany theme is clear – God was and is making known to specific people at a specific time in history who Jesus was. They include the Magi, the crowds at Jesus' Baptism and even for us today, God makes clear that

✠ something new,  
✠ different and exciting

was to happen through Jesus. That is the Good News that has been passed down to us and which we celebrate at Epiphany.

This is the Good News that Jesus instructed His disciples to proclaim at His Ascension.

### **So, what do the numbers and letters mean?**

The first and last numbers simply refer to the current year. The letters C M B come from the traditional names for the three kings: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Some also suggest “Christus Mansionem Benedicat” which means, “May Christ bless this dwelling!”

Epiphany blessings to all of you!

## ***Leaguer Schedule***

### **Spring 2024**

**Submissions Due: March 1, 2024**

**Publication Date: April 1, 2024**

Send items and photos to:

Deb Weaver, Editor

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Luther's great catechetical hymn, "To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord" begins with the historical events celebrated on the first Sunday after the Epiphany. If you would like to follow along it is hymn 406 in *Lutheran Service Book* or 223 In *Lutheran Worship*. Luther begins, "To Jordan came the Christ, our Lord. To do His Father's pleasure" (1). Jesus came as our redeemer, our champion to win for us salvation.

The first verse continues declaring that Jesus is "the Father's Word" (1). A veritable web of biblical strands finds their fulfillment here – in the person of Jesus. He is "the Word" by which and through which God created the heavens and the earth. He is "the Word" incarnate. He is "the Word" that gives His blood and endures the agony of the cross that becomes our release from death. He is "the Word" we hear on Sunday morning by which the Spirit enters our ears, descends to our hearts, and thereby strengthens us in the one true and saving faith.

Faith becomes Luther's focus in stanza two where he observes that faith "receives this token" (2). "Token" catches us off-guard, yet it is a reminder that "token," "symbol," "sacrament" all point to the mystery of God's grace received. The benefits of that reception Luther summarizes in stanza four. A reception proclaimed by the Father Himself and attested by the Spirit as a dove. "The Triune God assuring us with promises compelling" (4).

Stanza five takes a turn we might not have anticipated, away from the historical events at the Jordan and the theological implications of our own baptism. Here Luther echoes the great commission, "Go out to every nation, and bring to them the living Word and this my invitation" (5). And then in stanza six he adds this warning "But woe to those who cast aside this grace so freely given" (6).

The final stanza summarizes the mystery that we experience in Holy Baptism. Yes, simple water, yet through the eyes of faith a "crimson flood" (7) that brings eternal healing. Luther often speaks of the font as being filled with Jesus' precious blood. John writes in his first epistle, *the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin* (1 John 1:7). This happens at the font, in the washing of renewal (Titus 3:5). We do well to recapture that connection trusting in our baptism as we begin our Epiphany journey awaiting Jesus' final Epiphany, His revelation in glory.

Soli Deo Gloria



## Happy New Year!

‘Should auld acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind? Should auld acquaintance be forgot and the days of auld lang syne?’

We often hear this familiar tune when ringing in the New Year. The song is a story of old friends reminiscing over old times. What are your traditions at the year’s end? Do you reflect on things past? Congregate with friends or family or just have a ‘quiet evening’ to ring in the New Year? Do you make promises? New Year’s Resolutions?

Ah, those New Year’s Resolutions. Think about those. How many have been successful? How many get broken? As Christians, we are blessed by God to have one promise that has never been or will be broken. God’s promise is lifesaving. It is the life and work of our Savior Jesus Christ.

At creation’s very beginnings, God gave the promise of a Savior, to redeem us from our sins. Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and we have all suffered the consequences of their sin. But God —in His infinite love — promised a way out of sin and eternal death — Christ. He would be the propitiation for all sin.

God continues throughout history reiterating His promise of a Savior to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to David, and a whole host of believers. The book of Matthew even begins with the genealogy of Christ to show how God’s love for His people is manifested in Christ. God’s promise is fulfilled with the birth of Jesus in the little town of Bethlehem, just as the prophets foretold. Christ, who lived, died, and was raised from the dead gives us new life. We have forgiveness of our sins through Him. Our faith in Christ points us to the hope of heaven.

Now we can seek God’s will daily and joyfully meet whatever comes our way. As we ring in the New Year, we want to stay true to God and His promise. The writer to the Hebrews describes this “... *let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God*” (Hebrews 12:1b–2).

How encouraging are these words! Our faith, a gift of God, is encouraged and grows through hearing God’s Word, Bible readings, and prayer. Sharing the Gospel one on one, supporting missionaries, and giving our mite offerings for missions are ways we show our joy for the Lord’s faithful promise of a Savior. With our efforts to take care of family and friends or to help the needy we are showing God’s love to others just as Christ taught us. With Christ at our side, we can run with endurance each day.

What is the song?

“If you cannot cross the ocean, and the distant lands explore, you can find the lost around you, you can help them at your door;



If you cannot give your thousands, You can give the widow’s mite; what you truly give for Jesus, will be precious in His sight.



Let none hear you idly saying, “There is nothing I can do.” While the lost of earth are dying, and the Master calls for you;

Take the task He gives you gladly;

Let His work your pleasure be; Answer quickly when He calls you, “Here am I, send me, send me.”

(“Hark the Voice of Jesus Calling” Daniel March, 1868)

**May your year be blessed with endurance to stay faithful to the Lord in all that you do.**

Happy New Year!

Lynne Beck, Vice President of Christian Life

# 2024 LWML Oregon District 34<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention



**Mark 16:15**

*And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation (Mark 16:15)."*

The LWML Oregon District will be holding its 34<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention June 21–22, 2024, at Living Savior Lutheran Church in Tualatin, Oregon.

As always, we will worship, study God's Word, learn about mission grants, present and future, serve others, and enjoy plenty of fellowship. The keynote speaker will be our own Char Kroemer!

Registration information will be available in March. Watch for a special Convention *Leaguer* to be published!

Make plans now to attend June 21–22, 2024. See you in Tualatin!

Liz Bier, Interstate Zone and Connie Adams, Mt. Hood Zone, Convention Co-chairmen

### **LWML Oregon District Mission Statement**

Lutheran Women in Mission will by God's grace, ignite, involve, equip and encourage women of this Oregon District to express their faith as servants of the Triune God through joyful Christian Ministry.

### **LWML Mission Statement**

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

Do you see a theme in these two mission statements? Lutheran Women in Mission are in the “service” business. Serving our Lord and each other. The three of us on the Nominating Committee are serving by encouraging fellow sisters and brothers in Christ to consider being on the ballot for officers at the 2024 convention.

Does this mean you? Are you currently serving in your local group? Or maybe you are on your zone board? Have you thought about expressing your faith and honoring God with service on a district position?

The following positions will be elected at convention in June 2024:

- President
- Vice President of Servant Resources
- Vice President of Special Focus Ministries
- Financial Secretary
- Junior Pastoral Counselor
- Nominating Committee (three)

We ask that you pray about serving. We pray that by God's grace you will be encouraged to serve, to say yes to having your name on the ballot.

**Visit our Website's Resources Page for more specific details and candidate forms:**

***<http://www.lwmlor.org/resources>***

Please contact one of us on the Nominating Committee for more information.

We are happy to answer questions and look forward to serving with you.

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## February, 2024 Executive Committee and Board of Director Meetings:

The Executive Committee and Board of Directors Meeting will be held in February, 2024. Dates and location will be announced soon!

## 2024 Leaguer Dates

| <b>Leaguer Issue:</b> | <b>Submissions Due:</b> | <b>Publication Date:</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Spring 2024           | March 1, 2024           | April 1, 2024            |
| Summer 2024           | June 1, 2024            | July 1, 2024             |
| Fall 2024             | September 1, 2024       | October 1, 2024          |
| Winter 2025           | December 1, 2024        | January 1, 2025          |

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June 21–22, 2024, at Living Savior Lutheran Church in Tualatin, Oregon

# 2023 Oregon District Fall Retreat Photos

(For more photos, see the district website at [lwmlor.org](http://lwmlor.org))





Fall Retreat Photos (cont.)





Fall Retreat Photos (cont.)





## Fall Zone Gathering Photos



## Pacific Zone Gathering



## Interstate Zone Gathering at Advent



# Fall Zone Gathering Photos (cont.)

## Myrtlewood Zone



## Juniper Zone





# Fall Zone Gathering Photos (cont.)

## Interstate Zone





# The Joy of Christmas: House of Bread



## In the Word

*So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David ... (Luke 2:4a).*

## Of the Word

Jesus called Himself the Bread of Life. Just as bread nourishes the body, Jesus nourishes the soul. He declares, "*He who comes to me will never go hungry*" (John 6:35b). Many were puzzled at such an outrageous statement. Yet those who put their trust in Him soon learned the truth of His words. They discovered that Jesus was Who He claimed to be: the Bread of Life. Even today He feeds and strengthens faith, gives spiritual fulfillment, and provides life-giving hope and assurance.

Our Bethlehem, our House of Bread, lies not in Judean hills but in God's Word, the Bible, and in the life-giving bread and wine of Holy Communion. Let the feast begin!

## Walking with my Lord

Thank You, Jesus, for feeding me with the Bread of Life. My spirit is well satisfied in You.  
Amen.

Mustard Seed: The Joy of Christmas. 8/32 Author: Patricia Mitchell. ©2011 Lutheran Women's Missionary League, 801 Seminary Place Ste. L010, St. Louis, MO 63105. [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org)

## Prayer Chain Email!

Let us pray with you.

[lwml.or.prayerchain@gmail.com](mailto:lwml.or.prayerchain@gmail.com)

*Blessings on your day, Lynne Beck, Prayer Chain Coordinator*



Did you know? The LWML Oregon District has a Facebook page. If you're on Social Media, particularly Facebook, we welcome you to "like" our page so that you can see what is going on in our district! Here is the link for our Facebook page:

[facebook.com/LWMLOregonDistrict/](https://facebook.com/LWMLOregonDistrict/)

Thank you, Nicole Knutson, VP Communication



**LWML Oregon District website:**

***lwmlor.org***

**LWML National website:**

***lwml.org/home***

**View the Leader Development's Monthly**

**HUG-IN-A-MUG**

[lwmlor.org/servant-resources](http://lwmlor.org/servant-resources)



## OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION

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## Mission Statement

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## Oregon District Mission Statement

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## ZONE PRESIDENTS

**Emerald Zone**—Delores Feddersen

**Interstate Zone**—Joyce Twiss

**Juniper Zone Contact**—Pat Reck

**Mt. Hood Zone**—Connie Adams

**Myrtlewood Zone**—Joan Mahaffy

**Pacific Zone**—Nicole Knutson

**Southern Zone**—Janis Arnsdorf

**West Hills Zone**—Judy Chase

**Willamette Zone**—Karen Clark

## LWML Goal

Each woman of the LCMS is the Heart of LWML. Christ is in the heart of each woman as she engages in mission education, mission inspiration, mission service, and mission support. Each woman of the LCMS is invited to embrace her role as a Lutheran Woman in Mission.



Please remember to submit photos of your LWML gatherings and events for publication in the *Leaguer* to Deb Weaver, Editor, at [debeweaver@gmail.com](mailto:debeweaver@gmail.com).

*“As a Lutheran Woman in Mission, I will share the joy and wonder of what is done through the LWML by the grace of God — the resources created, the missions supported, and the ministries provided.”*



**Thanks be to God! We are HIS!**

We are:

- H** Held by God's Word
- I** Inspired to share HIS Gospel
- S** Surrounded by HIS Grace