

# Lutheran Braille Workers

*Helping People Touch the Promises of Jesus*

## ILLUMINATIONS

Spring 2012

PO Box 5000 Yucaipa, CA 92399 • 800-925-6092 • www.LBWinc.org

### Volunteers on a Mission



Helene Loewe Koehler

The first line in LBW’s history book, written by our founder Helene Loewe Koehler, reads: “The history of Lutheran Braille Workers is a report of volunteers on a mission . . . a mission to bring the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to all the world.”

As LBW prepares to celebrate 70 years of God’s grace in mission, we recognize that our dependency on volunteers

is greater now than ever. Volunteers are still on a mission, and sharing the Gospel of Jesus to the world is still our primary mission.

Because of the 5,000 volunteers who partner with Lutheran Braille Workers, more than 250,000 volumes of Braille and Large Print are sent to people with visual disability each year. That means people with few opportunities to read and study God’s Word, have at their fingertips the life-giving message of Jesus.

Because of volunteers, Bible Societies around the world rely on LBW to provide the Word of God in the “heart language” of the people they serve. LBW is the “Bible

Society for people with visual disability.” No other ministry in the world provides the services made possible by LBW volunteers!

From a first-time visitor’s point of view, it looks as though LBW volunteers (merely) emboss, collate, punch, bind, box and ship “stuff.” The fact is, LBW volunteers are delivering hope for people who want to know Jesus. LBW volunteers deliver the life-giving message of Jesus to people the world often forgets. LBW volunteers are missionaries of the Gospel for more than 161 million people with visual disabilities.

Lutheran Braille Workers’ volunteers are on a Mission, a mission to serve Jesus as His disciples, carrying the message of salvation to every nation, tribe, people and language, that all might know Jesus. The premise upon which Helene Koehler founded LBW almost 70 years ago is still our foundation today; volunteers with a mission “to bring the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to all the world.”

#### WHAT’S INSIDE

Volunteers Handle Shipping	2
Who Am I?	3
The Quiet Drive	4
LBW Sponsors Dining in the Dark	5
A Touch of Faith	6

# Volunteers Handle Shipping and Receiving Chores

Did you know that literally hundreds of cartons of Braille and Large Print material come into and go out of the Yucaipa Home Office every week? What is most amazing about this is that the shipping and receiving of these cartons is and has always been the responsibility of our dedicated volunteers.



Jim Berndt & Bob Schofield  
Packing and shipping Large Print material

There are past and present volunteers who have come in as many as five days a week. Some are so eager to get started that they arrive early in the pre-dawn morning and wait outside for the first staff member to arrive and let them in. Now that is dedication!

Just like the volunteers at our nearly 200 Work Centers in the U.S.A. and Canada, they come from all walks of life, such as:

pastors, police officers, school teachers, career military, housewives, former staff members and everything in between. But, they all have one thing in common and that is their love for the Lord.



Terry Dart & Dick Davis  
Packing and shipping Braille material

Our volunteer packers and shippers are passionate about spreading the Good News of Jesus to "People with Visual Impairment," all over the world. As one such volunteer recently stated, with a smile, "It may not be the most glamorous job in the world or the highest paying, but it is where I am meant to be."



Jim Snyder  
Packing Braille covers to go to the Work Centers



Dick Caveney  
Receiving and stocking incoming shipments

## Did You Know?

The first "LBW Work Center" was established in 1943 with a small group of volunteers inside a garage at a home in Long Beach, CA.

All LBW Board Members are themselves "volunteers" and are not paid for their services.

Helene Loewe Koehler, the founder of Lutheran Braille Workers, was initially a volunteer herself, who learned to read Braille in order to help transcribe the German Bible 70 years ago.

### NEWSLETTER STAFF



Rev. Dr. Phillip M. Pledger - President  
Jan Fisher - VP of Ministry Operations  
Rose Jaimes - Braille Administrator  
Roy Fisher - Large Print Administrator  
Kathy Buss - Donor Relations  
David Crespo - IT Specialist

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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## Did You Know?

Helene's brother, Norman Loeber (pictured above), volunteered his expertise, along with a tremendous amount of time, to develop and build LBW's Braille Presses using rollers from old wringer washing machines.

## PROMISE MAKERS

Honored people who have contributed time, talent and treasure to enhance and advance the ministry of Lutheran Braille Workers.

Norman & Sally Loeber  
LeRoy & Marjorie Delafosse  
Richard & Nancy Challis  
Rev. Sidney Frazen  
Mary Helen Kelly  
Ane Ertzner

Roberta Werth  
Mel Stueve  
Ida Mall  
Paul Eide  
Jean Peterson

## Who Am I?

Do you know this bright, respectful boy? Many of you do know him.

In 1959, volunteer transcriber, Mrs. Fry, visited this young man's classroom near Chicago. She shared about her ministry with Lutheran Braille Workers with his 4th grade class. This student was so moved by LBW's mission, he wrote a wonderful "Thank You" (reprinted below). In addition to his 4th grade class picture, check out his more recent picture on the next page.

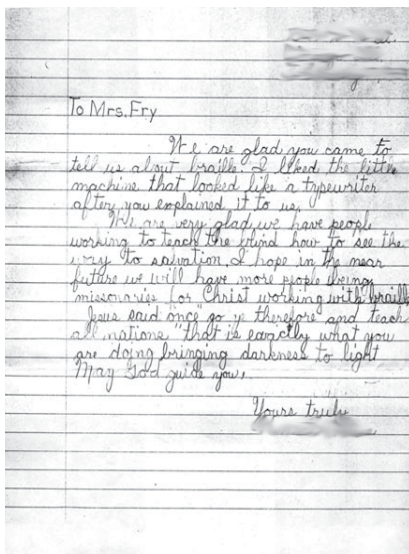
Lutheran Braille Workers has many volunteers like Mrs. Fry. For seventy years faithful people have been bringing the Word of Jesus to people with visual disability in Braille and Large Print. Volunteers influence thousands of people by providing the Bible and other Christian books to people who are blind or have low vision. In addition to bringing

the promises of Jesus to thousands each year, volunteers also encourage others by their Christian devotion and eagerness to serve the mission of Jesus.

This young man pictured here was greatly influenced by an LBW volunteer. One of this young man's dearest memories is of LBW and the mission work being done by faithful people throughout the nation. When this young man grew up, he remained faithful to Christ and fully embraced the Call of God to "go therefore and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19).

Your generous contributions to Lutheran Braille Workers places you into this same mission field, serving alongside the volunteers, making it possible for volunteers to send Christ-centered books to people throughout the world. (Turn the page to reveal this young man's identity.)

## The "Thank You" reads:



*"We are glad you came to tell us about Braille. I liked the little machine that looked like a typewriter after you explained it to us.*

*We are glad we have people working to teach the blind how to see the way to salvation. I hope in the near future we will have more people being missionaries for Christ working with Braille. Jesus said once "go ye therefore and teach all nations." That is exactly what you are doing bringing darkness to light. May God guide you,*

*Yours truly,"*  
[Guess Who?]





The answer is...  
**Ken Klaus**

Many of you recognize him now. Others of you can now put a face to the endearing voice you have listened to for years.

Rev. Dr. Kenneth Klaus  
Speaker Emeritus of the Lutheran Hour

## Please Pray For...

- Our Board Members who will meet in Houston, TX.
- The material we send our Readers will be well received.
- All of our Volunteers will be filled with joy during this Easter season.

## The Quiet Drive

### Unsung Heroes Behind the Scenes are Braille Transcribers ~ Rose Jaimes



1940's: Helene Brailleing at home with a Slate & Stylus



1950's: Transcriber operating a Flatbed Press



1945: Helene's birthday gift, a Perkins Braillewriter from husband Bob



1955: Transcribers begin using the Stereotype

It has always been stated "Volunteers are the backbone of Lutheran Braille Workers." Everyone knows that without our volunteers this ministry would not be in existence. One particular group of volunteers who are the "Quiet Drive" behind the production of Braille are our transcribers. The founder of Lutheran Braille Workers, Helene Loewe Koehler, became a Braille Transcriber in order to begin this ministry.

In the early days (1940's) of Lutheran Braille Workers the transcribers used a Slate & Stylus to produce each page of Braille. The Perkins Braillewriter was introduced to Helene in 1945 which was so much easier to use than a Slate & Stylus. In the early 1950's the transcribers began using a Japanese Flatbed Press. They would insert Braille lead slugs into slots to spell out words to emboss pages of Braille one sheet at a time. In 1955, transcribers began embossing zinc plates on a machine called the Stereotype, which was great for mass production since the ministry was growing. The Stereotype was used until the 1980's when LBW began using a Plate Embossing Device (PED).

Lutheran Braille Workers still uses the PED, which is

equivalent to a giant printer used to emboss zinc plates for the production of Braille. Transcribers must still translate the printed text into Braille dots through computers. They are extremely vital to this ministry in order for us to produce Braille.

When I began working with Lutheran Braille Workers in 1995 there were over forty rostered Transcribers. Today there are nine. I would like to say "Thank You" to: the current nine, the previous forty, and the numerous Transcribers before them who dedicated their time and talents to build this ministry.

If you would like to become part of the "Quiet Drive" and are willing to dedicate your time to learn Braille, contact the home office for more information on the Braille course.



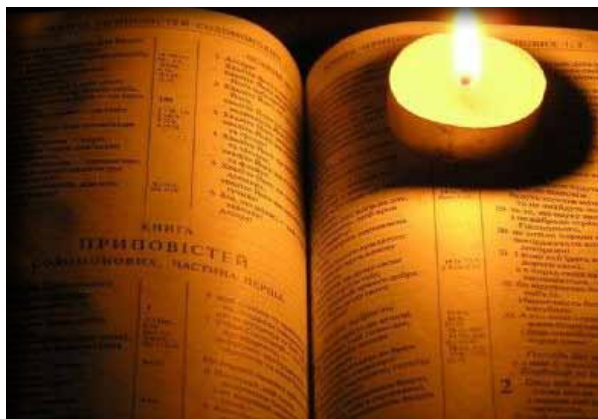
Newly purchased Plate Embossing Device (PED) to be delivered May 2012

# LBW Sponsors Dining in the Dark

Saturday, March 17th at the Sheraton, Houston, TX, Lutheran Braille Workers is sponsoring *Dining in the Dark*, an unforgettable dining experience. This will take you on a journey of emotional and spiritual awareness that will create greater appreciation for the needs of people with visual impairment and for the precious Light of the Gospel of Jesus.

The Bible uses images of Light/Dark, and Blind/Seeing to impress upon us the stark contrast there is between knowing and not knowing Jesus. When you attend Lutheran Braille Workers' *Dining in the Dark*, you will gain greater appreciation for the metaphors Jesus used, and will come away from the meal with a deeper understanding of the Light of Christ.

Lutheran Braille Workers' *Dining in the Dark* is an opportunity to gain understanding for the special needs of people with visual disability. You have no doubt heard the expression "walk a mile in my shoes." Lutheran Braille Workers' *Dining in the Dark* offers participants the opportunity to "walk a mile" in the shoes of a person severely visually impaired, to experience blindness in a safe and accepting environment in the time it takes to enjoy a good meal.



Your participation will give you great insight into the unique challenges of people with visual impairment, create deeper awareness of four of your five senses, and allow you to gain great insight into the Gospel message of Jesus. Your contributions will help Lutheran Braille Workers accomplish the mission of helping people touch the promises of Jesus.

People who are blind like to laugh, cry, eat, tell a joke, pray, and talk just like any sighted person. This dining experience is much like many you have had in the past, but this meal is enjoyed in no light. It is guaranteed that you will discover senses you didn't know you had as you share in this fellowship meal in total darkness.

For more information about *Dining in the Dark*, please contact LBW at 800-925-6092 (or by email at [LBW@LBWinc.org](mailto:LBW@LBWinc.org)). If you are interested in sponsoring a *Dining in the Dark* event at your Church or school, ask for our "Dining in the Dark Event Manual." This manual provides all the "how to's" as well as Bible Study support materials on a Christian theology of helping people touch the promise of Jesus.

*Please prayerfully consider Lutheran Braille Workers in your Estate Planning.*

## LUTHERAN BRAILLE WORKERS

## ELECTRONIC GIVING AUTHORIZATION FORM

502738851

Name _____		Date of first contribution: _____/_____/_____	Frequency of contribution (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 1 <sup>st</sup> <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly on the 15 <sup>th</sup> <input type="checkbox"/> One Time	Amount per donation: \$ _____
Address _____ _____				Work Center Number (optional) _____
<b>CHECKING / SAVINGS</b> Complete only if using checking or savings account.		<b>CREDIT / DEBIT CARD</b> Complete only if using your credit or debit card.		
Please debit my donation from my (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Checking Account ( <i>attach voided check</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> Savings account		Please charge my (check one): <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> Discover <input type="checkbox"/> American Express		
Routing #: _____      Account #: _____		Credit Card Number: _____		Expiration Date: _____
Name on Card: _____		Billing Address: _____		
I authorize Lutheran Braille Workers, Inc. and Vanco Services, LLC to process debit entries to my account. I understand that this authority will remain in effect until I provide reasonable notification to terminate the authorization.		I authorize Lutheran Braille Workers, Inc. and Vanco Services, LLC to charge my card for the above dollar amount.		
Signature on bank account: _____ Date: _____		Signature (as seen on the card): _____ Date: _____		

# A Touch of Faith

Then [Jesus] said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe” (John 20:27).

The most exciting time of the year is Easter. After the struggle and heart-ache of Holy Week, and the painful and awe-inspiring events of Good Friday, Easter morning is a glass of cold water to a parched and weary traveler.

Jesus was condemned, tortured, and killed. This apparent defeat demonstrates that God in His “weakness,” is stronger than death. Martin Luther writes (LSB 458, verse 1):

*Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands  
For our offenses given;  
But now at God's right hand  
He stands And brings us life from heaven.*

The Apostles, gathered together for mutual comfort and support after the Crucifixion, were overwhelmed to see Jesus on one of His first resurrection visits. They saw His face, heard His voice, and shared a meal. But poor Thomas wasn't in the room. Second hand information is not something Thomas wanted; his friends enjoyed the company of Jesus, Thomas wanted the same.

The next time Jesus met with His disciples, Thomas was there. Jesus offered Thomas the chance to touch the very marks of the Savior, the nail wounds on His hands and the spear wound on His side. Touching proved to Thomas that Jesus was real.

God lets us touch Jesus through the words of the Bible. For those who are sighted, touching is understood metaphorically, but for people who are blind, touching God's Word is literal.

Thomas and the other disciples were the first to meet the resurrected Jesus. Through His disciples Jesus broadcasted His message to billions of people and many have been brought to faith. Through sign language, people who are deaf “hear” the Gospel and grow in faith. Through Braille, people who are blind “see” Jesus.

The Easter message is for the world. As a disciple of Jesus, your prayers and generous financial support, make it possible for the blind to “see” Jesus. Through your

prayers and partnership, the Gospel message goes into the entire world.

Most people, like the Apostle Thomas, want to see, hear, or touch the Word for themselves; we want a connection with Jesus. For most of us, that connection includes the written Word of God. For more than 161 million people, special technology is needed, either Large Print or Braille.

Please prayerfully consider generously supporting our mission to bring the Easter Message to people who are blind that want to “see” Jesus and touch His Word.



José of Paraguay



Braille recipients in Cuba



Braille recipients in India

