



Illuminations

"Helping People Touch the Promises of Jesus"

Lutheran Braille Workers

Winter 2009 PO Box 5000 Yucaipa, CA 92399 · 800-925-6092 · www.lbwinc.org

LBW and LWML... A Long Standing Relationship

This past June, over 3200 people traveled to Portland, Oregon to attend the biennial National LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) convention. Under the theme of "Look to the hills...God Reigns," conference attendees were uplifted, had friendships renewed and focused on the mission opportunities facing the Church.

For over forty years LBW and LWML have enjoyed a symbiotic relationship. Through these years thousands of members of LWML have supported and participated in the ministry of LBW. At this summer's LWML convention, three - two hour servant events were made available to conference attendees to produce Braille Bibles. With two embossing presses from our work centers in Gresham, OR and Vancouver, WA, attendees produced many volumes of Braille. Participants included women and men ranging in age from teens to seniors coming from East to West and North to South. As a result of this experience, a good number of these service minded people wanted to get involved at the nearest work center to them or wanted to start a work center in their own area.



LWML members braille Bibles for LBW (Permission for use of copyrighted photos has been granted by Lutheran Women's Missionary League)

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At each convention, the voting delegates determine mission projects that LWML will fund from the mites received. (Mites are individual collection of gifts that LWML women have put aside for mission.) This summer the National LWML Convention presented LBW with wonderful news. The delegates voted to provide a two year grant for LBW to produce English Braille Bibles for recipients in Africa! It is with great joy and gratitude to a gracious God that the staff and volunteers of LBW receive this grant from LWML. LBW also expresses sincere gratitude to the thousands of faithful LWML women who set aside their mites to help fund this grant.

LBW and LWML...a long relationship. A relationship that God has greatly blessed and for which Braille recipients are able to *touch the promises of Jesus*.



Rev. Dr. Phillip Pledger
Executive Director

Making Everyday Christmas Letters, Emails, and Telephone Calls From Anxious People

“Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes...”
(Matthew 20:34)

With God, every day is Christmas. Among the gifts God offers is life, now and forever. In Christ the blind see, the deaf hear, and the developmentally disabled are made whole. All these gifts, and more, are made possible through Jesus, born in Bethlehem to be our Savior. In Christ, every day is Christmas.

For many years Christians have celebrated the birth of Jesus by giving gifts. We do this as a response to God’s love, for as the disciples said, “For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). Making the message of Christmas available to blind and otherwise visually impaired people throughout the world is a result of

our great love and gratitude for Jesus, who has blessed us with hope and life, in Him. Christians enjoy making every day Christmas, that all will know Jesus.

Please keep Lutheran Braille Workers in your prayers. Every day we receive letters, emails and telephone calls from people anxious to touch for themselves the precious promises of Jesus. Please prayerfully consider a generous contribution to the LBW mission, knowing that through your prayers and continued support, we make every day Christmas for untold thousands of people. And these precious people will be grateful forever, in Christ! May your Christmas be filled with joy, and may God continue to bless you in your service of making every day Christmas by *helping people touch the promises of Jesus!*



Lorraine Finke

“Mrs. Johnny Appleseed” Called Home

This past summer the Lord called home Lorraine Finke. Many people within LBW are very aware of Lorraine’s contributions to our ministry. As a pastor’s wife, wherever her husband was called to serve a congregation, Lorraine started an LBW Work Center. The nickname given to Lorraine was “Mrs. Johnny Appleseed” as she had planted so many work centers.

Just a couple of weeks before she entered heaven, LBW’s Mike Fischer visited with Lorraine. This LBW champion was very weak and bedridden due to poor health. However, as the topic of conversation moved to LBW, Lorraine’s face lit up and her broad smile engaged everyone in the room.

The ministry of LBW has been greatly blessed by this woman of God. Her legacy is found in the work centers that she has birthed as they continue the process Lorraine started of *helping people touch the promises of Jesus.*

Braille Bible Proves “Invaluable” A Thank You Letter From a Braille Reader

Dear Lutheran Braille Workers:

My name is Shirley Disheroon Tracy. I am a wife and the mother of three grown children and three grandchildren.

In the early 1990’s, I was looking for a Braille Bible other than the difficult King James Version. Totally blind from age 22, and partially sighted before that, I was a Braille reader from 5th grade and wanted a Bible in Braille so I could follow along in 3 Bible study groups, one of which my husband and I led. I was particularly interested in locating a copy of the New International Version.

One of the groups I attended was a women’s Bible study at St. Paul Lutheran church in Berea, Ohio. Someone there suggested I contact Lutheran Braille Workers, and although I wasn’t Lutheran, they responded right away and sent me the entire Old and New Testaments in Braille.

In 1993, I began leading a group of “Moms In Touch”, praying for our children and their schools. Having the Bible at my fingertips was invaluable. A few years later, several of the volumes of my Bible were worn and tattered. No problem. LBW responded to my request and replaced the ones I needed.

In June of 1995, my husband and I traveled with our church choir to Russia, where we spent 12 days touring, singing, and helping out a sister church outside Moscow. We took with us 52 boxes of humanitarian aids, including eye glasses and items for the blind and visually impaired. In preparation for our trip, I contacted LBW, and they generously donated large print coloring books, maps, and a couple of Braille volumes of the Bible in Russian. They also put me in touch with an English instructor at the school for the blind near Moscow. We toured the school and received a warm reception.

I continue to be involved in Bible studies and Moms In Touch. Although Braille books take up a lot of room, and modern technology provides computer accessibility for much Christian material formerly not available, I still appreciate being able to have my own quiet time, where I can pull a book off the shelf, sit down alone, and touch God’s Word.

I cannot begin to express my gratitude for all that LBW has done for me, and for others like me who might not otherwise have access to God’s Word—something we often take for granted.

I confess our monetary donations to LBW have been small, but I know that every little bit makes a difference. And I’m happy to help in any other way I can, including proofreading Braille. Although I am not certified as a Braille proofreader through the Library of Congress, my Braille skills are good and I would be happy to help. My prayer is that this ministry continues to bless others as it has blessed me. Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Shirley Tracy



Shirley Tracy reads one of her many volumes of the Braille Bible

Ministry Advancement

P...V...C...

Earlier in the year the acronym "PVC" was described and emphasized. As we anticipate the end of the 2009 year, it is good to again review what this acronym stands for and what it means.

P represents the regular prayers that our dedicated prayer warriors offer up on behalf of LBW

V represents the wonderful volunteers that reduce our production costs by assembling our materials for our visually impaired recipients

C represents the much appreciated financial contributions of our faithful supporters

LBW expresses a deep and sincere gratitude to all those who engage in any of these three areas. Thank You!



*Mr. Michael N. Fischer
Director of Ministry
Advancement*

Giving Plus to Thrivent Choice

Thrivent has informed LBW that the **Giving Plus** matching gift program will cease at the end of 2009. A new program called **Thrivent Choice** will be implemented in the spring of 2010 and not involve matching gifts. While the actual details of **Thrivent Choice** are still being worked out, Thrivent members are encouraged to leverage their remaining 2009 gifts to LBW by using **Giving Plus** forms. These forms and any questions about the **Thrivent Giving Plus** program can be directed to Lori Alonzo at our home office. Details on the new program will be forthcoming in our 2010 spring newsletter.

Memorials

A wonderful and longstanding opportunity exists for those who wish to remember a loved one who has gone to be with their Lord. Using a memorial card and sending in a gift in memory of your loved one is a marvelous way to honor them and enable LBW to **help people touch the promises of Jesus**. Please contact the home office for more information or to receive a memorial packet.

Remember LBW

As the 2009 year comes to an end, please remember the ministry of LBW as you consider year end gifting. One method of remembering LBW is making a current gift to our general fund. A second method is that of including LBW in your Will or as a beneficiary to a contractual asset (e.g. life insurance, annuity, 401K, IRA). LBW is able to provide free counsel in these areas. For further information, please contact our home office.



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