

**Kansas District Lutheran Laymen's League Convention**  
**79<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, November 3, 2018**  
**Messiah Lutheran Church, Hays, Kansas**

Registration for the convention opened at 10:30 AM. David Kruse, Secretary/Treasurer of Zone 15, served as the registration coordinator.

At 12:30 PM, President Tim Voelker, LLL Kansas District President called the Convention to order. Tim Voelker welcomed all of those in attendance. At Tim Voelker's request, each person attending the convention introduced himself or herself.

President Tim Voelker led the opening devotion on the topic of giving thanks to God. Tim Voelker proclaimed that all of us can be genuinely thankful for the blessings that we receive daily from God and for the salvation from our sinful nature that God has granted to us by means of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Tim Voelker concluding that Christians every day should be considered to be "Thanksgiving Day".

Continuing with the devotion, Tim Voelker showed the Lutheran Hour Ministries video Bible study titled "Nurturing Your Faith – Part 2: Prayers of Gratitude". (This video may be freely viewed on the LHM web site (<https://www.lhm.org/studies/studyvideofull.asp?id=31909>) or downloaded from the LHM web site.)

In the video Rev. Don Everts said that thanking God should be an ordinary part of the Christian's life of prayer. Rev. Everts quoted Colossian 4:2, "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving." Rev. Everts told of the insight about thanksgiving that he gained from several visits to an orphanage in the city of Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Rev. Everts concluded that robust gratitude to God was at the core of the faith of Itzak and Olga, who ran the orphanage. Rev. Everts found that prayers of gratitude were a regular part of Itzak's and Olga's life of faith despite the difficult circumstances of their ministry. Rev. Everts also reported that he had discovered peaceful reassurance during stressful times when he concentrated on prayers of gratitude to God for the blessings that he had received in his life. Rev. Everts concluded his message by quoting 2 Thessalonians 1:3a: "We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly."

Tim Voelker referred to Psalm 54 in which David prays to God to save him from his enemies and to vindicate him. Tim read that David concluded this psalm with the verses, "I will praise your name, O Lord, for it is good. For he has delivered me from all of my troubles,...". Tim said that like David, contemporary Christians have good reason to express their gratitude to God, even in the face of adversity. Tim concluded that Christians should remind themselves that the troubles and stresses of daily life on earth are less important than eternal life with God.

Following the devotion, Ron Bott read Theme Resolution 18-01 for the convention. In brief, the resolution resolved that the International Lutheran Laymen's League would strive to proclaim the Good News of Christ Jesus in Kansas and throughout the world and that the members will strive to promote and advance the LLL/LHM ministries under the theme "Sent", which summarizes the words of Jesus in John 20:21, "...as my Father has sent me, I am sending you". This resolution was approved with the singing of the Common Doxology, "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow".

Tim Voelker asked the convention attendees to read the minutes of the 78th convention of the Kansas District of the Lutheran Laymen's League, which occurred at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church,

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Marysville, Kansas on November 4, 2017. Subsequently, Gary Neuschafer moved to accept the minutes as printed in the convention booklet. Joe Chretien seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

Carroll Hackbart, LLL Kansas District treasurer, explained the treasurer's report, which was printed in the convention booklet. The report showed that revenue for the 2017-2018 fiscal year was \$10,345.73. The report showed that the total operating expense for the 2017-2018 fiscal year was \$8,479.52. The report also showed that \$10,000 in revenue was budgeted for the 2018-2019 fiscal year and that \$8,250 was budgeted for operating expenses in the 2018-2019 fiscal year. John Johnson moved to accept the treasurer's report. Ralph Hanson seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

Carroll Hackbart reviewed the receipts of the 2017-2018 LLL Kansas District project. Carroll Hackbart reported that contributions of \$40,797.06 were received from individuals, congregations, and clubs throughout the state of Kansas. Carroll Hackbart reported that \$2,471.03 were received from students who did not use all of the grants-in-aid that they received for the 2017-2018 academic year. Consequently, \$3,268.09 was available in excess of the \$40,000 goal of the 2017-2018 LLL Kansas District project. These extra funds were added to the financial aid that was granted to students who enrolled at LCMS colleges and seminaries during the 2018-2019 academic year to prepare for careers in full-time church work.

Carroll Hackbart read Ministry Action Resolution 18-02 for the 2018-2019 LLL Kansas District project. The following fund-raising goals were presented: \$31,500 for financial aid for Kansas students attending a synodical school or seminary preparing for full time church work; \$1,000 for the annual dinner for fourth year students at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; \$8,000 for overseas Bible correspondence courses and Argentina Ministry; \$1,000 for State Fair Booth and Worship Service; \$500 for Tournament of Roses Parade float. The total fund-raising goal was \$42,000. Carroll explained that contributions that are received in excess of \$42,000 will be allocated to financial grants-in-aid to students.

After the presentation of the proposed 2018-2019 LLL/LHM Kansas District project, Tim Voelker encouraged individual Kansas congregations to contribute to the LLL Kansas District project even when local LHM-affiliated groups did not exist at the congregations. Tim Voelker read a note of thanks that he received from the Kurt Buchholz, President and CEO of Lutheran Hour Ministries, for the \$8,000 that the LLL Kansas District contributed to the Argentine ministry and to the program for overseas Bible correspondence courses. Tim Voelker informed the meeting that a contribution of \$3,100 that he received from the LLL Kansas Zone 3 2018 Spring Rally motivated a contribution of \$2,060 from St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Manhattan, Kansas. Fred Gruhn, president of LLL Kansas Zone 3, reported that an offering at a weekly men's Bible study group at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, Olathe, Kansas, resulted in a \$3,100 contribution to the 2017-2018 LLL Kansas District Project.

Arlen Schultz, LLL Kansas District vice president, moved that the proposed goals for the 2018-2019 LLL Kansas District Project be adopted. Mike Tonn, chairman of the State Fair Booth Committee, seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

A video presentation by Kurt Buchholz, president and CEO of Lutheran Hour Ministries, was shown to the convention attendees. In the video, Kurt Buchholz thanked the LLL Kansas District for its partnership with the International Lutheran Laymen's League. Mr. Buchholz informed the attendees that research studies have revealed the younger generations is skeptical of Christianity and organized churches. Mr. Buchholz said that in order to reach out to the younger generations, the Lutheran Hour Ministries has developed a new

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social media ministry, which has been named THRED. Mr. Buchholz said that the purpose of the THRED social media ministry web site is to engage person in the 25 to 40's age range in conversations about Christian themes. THRED attempts to induce persons in the online community to watch videos and engage in conversations by posing topics and questions that are relevant to their lives. Kurt Buchholz also encouraged the LCMS and LHM members to attend LHM events and conferences, like the "Sent" conference that occurred in Detroit, Michigan, in August of 2018.

Following the showing of the video, Polly Gregali, LHM Ministry Resource Manager for Kansas and nine other states, made a presentation to the convention. Polly Gregali described her responsibilities. She informed the attendees that she can provide resources and presentation materials to recruit ambassadors. She encouraged the congregational ambassadors or officers to send her an email note if they needed resource materials or other assistance.

Polly Gregali informed the convention that a new congregational resource tool kit will be sent to each ambassador. She said that that she hoped that this kit would be help the congregational ambassadors with their preparations for and presentations during LHM Sunday, which is scheduled for February 3, 2019.

She expressed the desire to recruit congregational ambassadors for the 66 of the 166 LCMS churches in Kansas that do not currently have an ambassador. She expressed her willingness to accept ideas for training LHM congregational ambassadors in Kansas. She informed the convention attendees that works with affiliated groups in local congregations. She added that 15 groups in the 10-state region had affiliated with LHM in 2018 as of the date of the convention.

Polly Gregali reported that the Lutheran Hour Ministries wanted to encourage greater congregational involvement with Lutheran Hour Ministries. She encouraged congregations to invite her to make presentations. Polly said that she wanted to identify a church in each area that would serve as a catalyst for generating greater involvement among neighboring congregations with Lutheran Hour Ministries. Polly Gregali said that she was scheduled to make a presentation at Messiah Lutheran Church, Hays, Kansas on March 9, 2019.

Following the conclusion of Polly Gregali's presentation, Rev. Jason Broge, Associate Director for U.S. Ministry Design and Development at Lutheran Hour Ministries, introduced himself. He complimented the grants-in-aid that are made annually by the LLL Kansas District and the LWML Kansas District to students who are enrolled in LCMS colleges and seminaries in preparation for careers in full-time church work.

Rev. Jason Broge briefly reviewed the history of the Lutheran Laymen's League. In 1917 the Lutheran Laymen's League was founded to pay the debt of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The second LLL project was to provide grants-in-aid to students preparing for full-time church work. In 1930 Walter A. Maier asked the LLL to fund radio broadcasts. In 1940 the first international ministry center was established in Manila, Philippines. In 1952, the "This is the Life" television program was first produced and broadcast. In 1971 the first animated special television program was produced and broadcast. In 1992 the name Lutheran Hour Ministries was adopted.

Rev. Broge said that Christianity is currently at a crossroad. Rev. Broge said that two-thirds of the world population do not believe in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Rev. Broge said that 36% of protestants do

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not share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with persons outside of their churches. He said that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world.

Rev. Broge shared information about the “Sent” initiative. He said that “Sent” is a five-year program with the following goals: (1) Energize, equip, and engage the laity for outreach; (2) Grow God's Kingdom through expanded media outreach; (3) Bring the Gospel to the unreached around the world; (4) Engage communities in the digital mission field.

Rev. Broge said that in order to energize, equip, and engage the laity for outreach, LHM will provide relevant tools and training to individuals and congregations. He said that LHM partnered with the Barna Group in order to understand the current world so the it can offer relevant programs, tools, media, and resources. The first year of research in 2018 was labeled “Spiritual Conversations”; the second year of research is labeled “Households of Faith”; the third year of research is labeled “Communities of Action”.

Rev. Broge reported that research about Christians' attitudes regarding their responsibility and capability for outreach. In 1993, 89% of Christians believed that they were individually responsible for sharing their faith. In 2017, 64% of Christians believed that they were individually responsible for sharing their faith. In 1993, 78% of Christians believed that they were sufficiently trained to share their faith with the unchurched. In 2017, 58% of Christians believed that they were sufficiently trained to share their faith with the unchurched.

Rev. Broge reported that in order for Lutherans to become “eager conversationalist”, they must (1) embrace the Gospel, (2) apply spiritual discipline, (3) grasp that they have been called to share their faith with the unchurched, (4) expect spiritual conversations, and (5) respond confidently when the persons with whom they engage in spiritual conversations ask questions.

Rev. Broge reported that LHM has developed 12 on-line courses at URL <https://www.lhm.org/learn/> to assist the Christian in strengthening their faith so that they may be better equipped to reach out with the love and Good News of Jesus Christ in their daily lives.

Rev. Broge reported that the Online Mission Trips has been renamed to Gospel Adventures. The Gospel Adventures provided an interactive web page and curriculum that enables children to safely experience a mission trip that will teach them about other cultures around the world while teaching them the importance of God's work and spreading the Gospel. LHM has partnered with Group Publishing continues to bring mission trips to the comfort of your home, classroom, and Sunday school. The next free group of five 45-minute to one hour long lessons is named “Passport to Peru”.

Rev. Broge reported that the Lutheran Hour is now available on Sirius/XM, Spotify, iHeart Radio, Amazon Alexa, and YouTube. Rev. Broge reminded the audience that Rev. Dr. Michael Ziegler began preaching as the Lutheran Hour Speaker on October 28, 2018.

Rev. Broge reminded the convention attendees about the LHM smart phone apps that are available for download from URL <https://www.lhm.org/apps/default.asp>. He reported that smart phone apps are available for The Lutheran Hour, Daily Devotions, video bible studies, and Project Connect booklets. Rev. Broge reported that podcasts from The Lutheran Hour, Daily Devotions, Ayer, Hoy I Siempre, Sentido

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Latino, and Action in Ministry may be streamed or downloaded without charge for the Lutheran Hour Ministries web site.

Rev. Broge began to speak about the LHM Global Ministries. He reported that two-thirds of the LHM staff and volunteers resided and worked in countries other than the United States. He said that LHM does not simply translate sermons that are created for the United States' audience from English to other languages. Rather, he emphasized that the LHM policy is to create sermons that are attune to the local cultural context.

Rev. Broge reported about the broadcasts and outreach ministries in Lebanon. Rev. Broge reported that Lebanon is the only country in the Middle East in which freedom of speech and freedom of religion exist. Rev. Broge said that broadcasts that originate in Lebanon are in the Arabic language. These broadcasts often contain comic skits followed by an interview with a pastor, who proclaims the Good News during the course of the interview. Rev. Broge reported that outreach ministries among refugees from the Syrian civil war are active in Lebanon. Rev. Broge said that some refugees, especially women, are receptive the Gospel and the aid provided by Lutheran workers despite the harsh prohibition against anything related to Christianity that the Muslim religious authorities and Muslim faithful enforce. Rev. Broge that the LWML also provides funds to support the LHM broadcasts from Lebanon.

Rev. Broge reported that the Lutheran Hour Ministries endeavors to engage communities in the digital mission field with the THRED social media web site that was launched in 2017. Rev. Broge described THRED as an online social network that enables young adults to communicate with each other individually and through discussion groups. Rev. Broge said that THRED attempts to engage young adults, proclaim the Gospel to these young adults, then guide them to faith in Jesus Christ. Rev. Broge said that THRED attempts to engage young adults with thought-provoking questions. He said that THRED provides a safe place for discussion without incivility; He said attempts to provided a discussion environment in which those who are participating my disagree without harsh reprisals.

Rev. Broge concluded his presentation with an overview of the "Sent" initiative. He reiterated that "Sent" is a key word to remind Lutherans of Jesus command in John 10:21, "As my Father sent me, so I send you." Rev. Broge reported that the goal of the "Sent" initiative was to reach 108,000,000 people per week by 2020. Rev. Broge happily reported that this goal has already been achieved. Rev. Broge reported that LHM hoped to raise \$242,000,000 over five years to fund the programs of the "Sent" initiative. Rev. Broge reported that approximately \$162,000,000 had been raised as of the date of the convention.

Following Rev. Jason Broge's presentation, Bervin Mirtsching, LHM Ministry Advancement Officer, made a presentation regarding means by which contributions could be made to Lutheran Hour Ministries. Bervin Mirtsching provided information to the convention attendees about giving from an IRA, giving through charitable gift annuities, giving through endowments, giving through wills, giving through charitable trusts, and giving through real estate. Bervin Mirtsching also asked the convention attendees to consider making a charitable contribution in response to the Lutheran Hour Ministries matching grant appeal.

Following Bervin Mirtsching's presentation, Brenda Piester, Kansas District Lutheran Women's Missionary League President, greeted the convention. She said that it was a joy for the Kansas District of the LWML to work in partnership with the Kansas District of the LLL. Brenda Piester congratulated the LLL Kansas District project for increasing the fund-raising goal for grants-in-aid to students enrolled at LCMS

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colleges and seminaries at its 2017 convention and for successfully meeting that goal. Brenda remarked that the LWML Kansas District had increased its fund-raising goal for the grants-in-aid to students enrolled at LCMS colleges and seminaries in response. Brenda reported that the LWML Kansas District was thankful for the fine LHM children's books and that 500 of these books had been distributed to children during the recent Halloween holiday. Brenda reported that LWML circles at a number of congregations throughout the state of Kansas had collected materials and contributed to the LLL Kansas State Fair booth for the free distribution to persons who visited the booth. Brenda concluded by informing the convention attendees that the LWML had a fund-raising goal of \$100,000 to be contributed to Lutheran Hour Ministries' media outreach in the Middle East from 2017 until 2019.

Vice-President Arlen Schultz presented the ballot for LLL Kansas District officers for a two-year term. The ballot consisted of Arlen Schultz for the office of President; Keith Jopp for the office of Executive Board Representative for Region 2, John White for the office of Executive Board Representative for Region 4. No nomination for the office of Vice President was presented to the convention, and no nomination for the office of Vice President was made by the convention attendees. Mark Westerman, Executive Board Representative for Region 5, moved that the candidates on the ballot be elected by acclamation. Dorothy Kellner seconded the motion. The motion to elect the three candidates on the ballot to their respective offices by acclamation was passed.

Arlen Schultz presented the appointment of Rev. Dennis Kootz, Associate Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church, Salina, Kansas, to the office of Pastoral Advisor to the LLL Kansas District for a two year term.

Rev. Jason Broge then installed Arlen Schultz to the office of President of the LLL Kansas District. Keith Jopp, John White, and Rev. Dennis Kootz had been unable to attend the convention.

Following his installation as president, Arlen Schultz made a few remarks. He asked the attendees to review list of past presidents in the convention booklet. Arlen told the convention attendees to consider that the initials J.O.Y. represent "Jesus", "Others", and "You".

Mike Tonn then read the Convention Thanks Resolution 18-03. This Resolution thanked the members of Region 4 of the LLL Kansas District for the unselfish contribution of their time and talents for the presentation of an inspiring and Christ-centered 79th Kansas District LLL/LHM Convention. This resolution was accepted with the exclamation "Thank You! Amen" from the convention attendees.

Following the expression of appreciation to the persons who had done the work of providing the venue, the refreshments, and the dinner, old and new business items were discussed.

Tim Voelker reviewed the report of the 2018 LLL Kansas District Golf Tournament, which was held on Saturday, May 5, 2018 at the Village Greens Golf Course and few miles west of Ozawkie, Kansas. 27 golfers participated in the tournament. Proceeds of \$624 were contributed to the 2017-2018 Kansas District Project. The 2019 LLL Kansas District Golf Tournament is planned to be held on Saturday, May 4, 2019, at the same golf course. Tim Voelker expressed his appreciation to Mark Nieman for chairing the Golf Tournament committee and to those who worked with him to produce a successful tournament.

Tim Voelker reviewed the report of the 2018 State Fair Worship Service that was printed in the convention booklet. Tim expressed gratitude and appreciation to Ron Bott for coordinating the State Fair

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Worship Service beginning in 2002 and ending in 2018. Tim Voelker announced that Tom Stanton, a member of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Hutchinson, Kansas, will coordinate the State Fair Worship Service in 2019.

Tim Voelker reviewed the report of the 2018 State Fair Booth that was printed in the convention booklet. Mike Tonn, chairman of the State Fair Booth committee expressed his gratitude for the material that had been provided to the LLL/LHM Kansas State Fair Booth. Mike Tonn thanked Polly Gregali for the support that was received from Lutheran Hour Ministries. He thanked the Lutheran laypersons from the churches across the state of Kansas who volunteered to staff the booth during the 2018 Kansas State Fair.

Tim Voelker encouraged the convention attendees to send articles about LLL/LHM events and news that occurred in their area by email to John Johnson at email address [johnejohnson4779@gmail.com](mailto:johnejohnson4779@gmail.com). He said that these articles will be posted in the Kansas LLL/LHM web site at URL <http://www.lhm-ks.org>.

Mark Westerman presented an invitation to the 2019 LLL/LHM Kansas District Convention, which is scheduled for Saturday, November 2, 2019. Mark Westerman said that the venue for the convention would be the meeting room behind the Perkins Restaurant, 2920 10th Street, Great Bend, Kansas. Mark reported that rooms will be blocked off for convention attendees in the Best Western Angus Inn, which is adjacent to the restaurant.

Subsequently, an auction of some donated items was held. Approximately \$217 was raised for the 2018-2019 LLL Kansas District Project.

There being no more business, John Johnson moved that the convention be adjourned. Gary Neuschafer seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

Secretary

Richard Schrum