

LUTHERAN LIFE

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Florida-Georgia District Hosts

LWML Adopts Record \$1.625-Million Mission Goal

Delegates to the June 16-19 Lutheran Women's Missionary League's 31st biennial convention in Tampa adopted a record mission goal of \$1.625 million for the 2005-07 biennium.

More than 3,100 people attended the convention under the theme "Live Joyfully as Salt and Light" (from Matthew 5:13-16).

The new goal is \$50,000 more than the last biennium's \$1.575 million goal, which was exceeded by \$99,345. That overage — believed to be the largest for the LCMS women's auxiliary — will be applied toward the new goal.

LWML President Linda Reiser described the over-goal funds as "a miracle." Reiser had sent word to LWML districts weeks before the fiscal year ended, informing them that contributions were lagging. By the March 31 deadline the goal had been exceeded by about \$1,000, so the bulk of \$98,000-plus was received after the deadline.

"We took everything postmarked March 31 and God just kept growing it and growing it," she said. "I think He wanted to surprise us and say, 'Look, \$1,000's not enough. I've got big plans for you.'"

All of the organization's mission goals are "faith based," Reiser said, and the new goal of \$1.625 million is the largest ever adopted.

"It's our human goal, but [the real goal] is whatever God puts in the hearts of these women," she said. "And these mission hearts that He's given to the LWML are huge. The women in the church know they're making a difference in the lives of people everywhere."

The new goal, she added, "will probably be small in God's eyes."

Contributions toward the goal are given by the LWML's 200,000-plus members nationwide through individual mite-box offerings.



Delegates selected Pittsburgh as the site of the LWML's 2013 convention.

Besides exceeding their last mission goal by almost \$100,000 and adopting the auxiliary's most ambitious mission goal ever, convention-goers gave daily offerings of more than \$136,000 for specific projects.

Delegates elected new officers and committee members to four-year terms.

Please see page 7 for more LWML convention and update reports. □

The Florida-Georgia banner in the Friday morning convention procession was carried by District LWML President Lois Ford.

Zion-Tampa Celebrates "Extraordinary" Year

"Exciting and meaningful happenings have made the first half of 2005 extraordinary in the lives of the people of Zion Lutheran in Tampa," reported Darlene McRoberts Prox, who served on the congregation's church council.

The first of those events was the ordination and installation of Rev. Charles T. Trower as Zion's pastor on January 23. "It was an impressive and inspiring service," recalled McRoberts-Prox, with Florida-Georgia District President Gerhard Michael Jr. officiating and many area pastors participating.

Several programs have debuted at Zion, including the Community Outreach Literacy Program. Approximately 20 neighborhood young people came to Zion two Saturdays each month to be tutored and enjoy food and fellowship. The program will resume in the fall.

Soon after his installation, Trower launched a Leadership Academy for Boys to complement a similar program for girls that his wife, Sandra, and daughters Shauna and Charlese had

been developing for the congregation.

In the spring, five children and two adults were baptized and 18 children and three adults were confirmed at Zion.

"When legendary basketball player Meadowlark Lemon of the Harlem Globetrotters participated in the Easter



Rev. Charles T. Trower with his wife, Sandra (center); their daughters; members of Zion-Tampa; and pastors of the Florida-Georgia District who participated in his installation service early this year.

Sunday service, once again there was great excitement and inspiring messages," McRoberts-Prox.

In June, Zion members "rejoiced when Music Director Robert Clark returned to his bench after having suffered a serious stroke earlier in the year," she continued.

Added Trower, "If anyone doesn't believe in miracles, they need to come and hear Brother Clark play again."

Also in the news in June was Zion member Willie Mae Williams, 92, who made the front page of the *Tampa Tribune* in an article focusing on her experiences as a black woman serving in the United States' armed forces during World War II.

"Being considered an historic site has brought another challenge to the

congregation," McRoberts-Prox concluded, noting that Zion is the oldest Lutheran congregation in the Tampa area. A State of Florida Historic Preservation Grant is available if matching funds are raised.

Zion is located in Tampa at 2901 N. Highland Avenue. □

President's Convocation Set for September

Registration continues for the 2005 Florida-Georgia District's President's Convocation, which will be held September 28-30 at the Wyndham Orlando Resort.

The triennial event will bring together all the church workers of the District — professional and laypersons — for worship, study, relaxation, celebration, mutual support and encouragement under the theme "Rooted in Christ." Based on Colossians 2:6-7, the theme "grows out of St. Paul's words of encouragement to the Christians in Colossae . . . 'So then,

just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught and overflowing with thanksgiving,'" said Florida-Georgia District President Gerhard Michael Jr.

He encouraged District pastors, principals, teachers, directors of

Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, deaconesses, lay ministers, parish nurses, musicians, youth ministers, secretaries and laypeople serving in leadership positions to attend the Convocation.

Keynotespeakers will include Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer, associate executive director of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Commission on Theology and Church Relations; Rev. Dr. William Willimon, bishop of the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church and

former professor and dean of the chapel at Duke University; and Dr. Marva Dawn, theologian, author, musician and educator with Christians Equipped for Ministry.

Convocation materials have been sent to all District congregations and church workers and are available online at www.flga-lcms.org. □



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