

God's Love
Blooms

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gayle Caruso

God's love. When I think about the love God has for us, I am comforted knowing that He is always with me and I am never alone. God first loved us so that we, in turn, can love one another. As Lutheran Women in Mission, we show the love of God by collecting mites to support our mission grants. We meet together and study His word, we lift each other up when we go through storms, and we comfort each



other when we are mourning. These are all part of God's love. I live in an area where the seasons don't really change. We go from hot to cool back to hot. During our Spring I have a few plants that will bloom, but my favorite ones are my lilies. The flowers make me smile and remind me of my dad. He gave me several plants out of his yard and we careful brought them home and planted them in the flower bed in our front yard. When they start blooming, it warms my heart. They have spread all over the flower bed so now we have more blooms to enjoy. God's love for us helps us to spread His love to everyone.

I pray that, as we enter into this Lenten season, you reflect on the love that God has given us and that you are able to share this love with all those around you.



FINANCIAL SECRETARY**Christine Jennison**

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 thankfulness (Colossians 2: 6-7)

Because I work with plants a lot, this topic fits my life style. Watching plants grow, bloom, produce, and then fade away is so like life. We are planted when we receive Christ, we are rooted and grow, and we share that love with others as we overflow with thanksgiving.

The overflowing has been noticed by me this quarter as I open letters containing donations of love from LWML members. Yes, there is that nagging "will we meet our goal?" which enters my thoughts but it is in God's care and we will be overflowing with thanks. This is especially true when letters come from groups I've not heard from in a long while. God's love blooms with the offerings received so that His Word can reach others near or far away.

- ✦ Birthday offering from Ruth Bishop for Rosemary Heseman
- ✦ Mission Grants offering from Karen McCarthy for all of God's blessings

- ✦ LWML Sunday donation from Bethel Lutheran in Clearwater, FL Beautiful Savior Lutheran, Sarasota in memory of Marilyn DeKarske
- ✦ Scholarship Fund from St. Petersburg zone in memory of Dorothea Rinkenberger
- ✦ Steve & Sandy Wilson in memory of Sharlene Miers
- ✦ Gifts from Messiah Lutheran, Valdosta, GA and Our Redeemer, Augusta, GA

**"Housekeeping" note:**

1 Keep track of the monies you send by checking bank statements, etc. If you notice that your gift has not been deposited in a reasonable amount of time, let me know so I can watch for it.

2 Use the forms provided for depositing monies. They can be found in this publication, on line at our web site (flgalwml.com), or requested from me. Make multiple copies of them so you will always have them on hand.

VP COMMUNICATIONS**Susan Hanes**

I had been attending my church for a couple of years at the time and knew just a few names and faces when I landed myself in the hospital for a couple of weeks due to acute kidney failure. For someone who rarely got sick beyond the occasional cold, this was uncharted territory for me. I especially never expected a church full of people I barely knew to step in.

However, I found myself reaching out to my pastor who gave me a ride to the emergency room and visited me in the hospital several times during my extended stay. I was also visited by a couple from church who hand delivered a quilt to me made by the quilting ladies.

After being released from the hospital and the month following when I was still very physically weak, someone from church did my laundry and ran several errands for me. Another checked in on me several times, both in person and on the phone. Others offered words of encouragement, asked how I was doing, and if I needed anything. I received small meaningful gifts from a couple of people. Others prayed for me. One of these persistent prayer warriors later invited me to my first LWML rally.

I was very surprised and touched by the outpouring of love from my church. People I barely knew (and some I didn't know at all) showed themselves to be a living example of God's love when it mattered most.



VP MISSION SERVICE**Silvia Grasberger**

Then God said, “let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth”; and it was so. (Genesis 1:11).

Don't you just LOVE how *God's Love Blooms* here on earth! Spring is in the air and the flowers will soon be blooming in all sorts of beautiful vibrant colors and fragrances. However, there are so many more ways *God's Love Blooms*. Recently I was cleaning out a closet and found a Bible a very dear friend gave me back in 2016; on the inside she wrote “You are a blessing to so many people, you have made such a difference in my life”. At the time, I was very new to the Lutheran church and was eager to learn more. Since then, my love and wisdom of the Lord has blossomed over the years thanks to the word of God. I am so very grateful for this gift of love from my

friend Karen. Truth be said, Karen was the one who made a difference in *my* life. I pray you are planting the seed of God's word every day in your life and growing in his Love for you. Have a Blessed Easter Season.



Later this year we will be gathering for the FL-GA District convention in September; the Gifts from The Heart recipient will be Orlando Union Rescue Mission, a faith-based ministry. More info will be published on the district website.

VP SPIRITUAL GROWTH**Carol Jones**

This time of year many of us start longing for spring. A time when the sun shines a bit warmer, the grass turns a bit greener, and all around us we start to see life in bloom. I've been in south Florida for many years, and the only seasons we really get to witness are the rainy season and the dry season. It seems most of the flowers and greenery bloom all year long. I miss seeing those little buds struggling to pop out of the ground, or the day you realize it has finally happened and spring is in full bloom!

Praise be to God we do not have a season of cold or bleakness when it comes to God's love for us.

It is always in bloom! That amazing, unmeasurable love He has for us also blooms in our hearts and helps us to love one another as He has commanded.

We are reminded in 1 John 4: 7 (ESV) *Beloved,*

let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God.

His will for us is found in verses 11 and 12 – *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

That's right! God causes His love to bloom in our hearts. We are able to love because He first loved us.

I encourage you to take another look at 1 John chapters 3, 4, and 5. They are wonderful reminders of God's love in full bloom. I pray He

will help each of us bloom in love this season as well.



VP MISSION GRANTS**Karen McCarthy**

“It only takes a spark to get a fire going,” song lyrics from my childhood, came immediately to mind when I learned this *Evangel’s* theme was “God’s love grows.” Also, our Mite Box mission offerings and other love gifts grow His love within us and throughout the world. Here are recent reports received of God’s love growing through your mites:

A Rising Need, A Spiritual Opportunity (\$10,000): Lutheran Special Education Ministries help God’s children with learning differences.

Blessings in a Backpack (\$7,000) helped feed 115 children weekly with personal notes, invitations to church-sponsored events, and food to nourish minds, bodies, and souls for the Lord.

Christ Lutheran Mission (\$8,800): welcomed an outdoor shelter to better serve

those in need in their community.

Feed the Children—Peru (\$5,000) are feeding 275 children three weekly brunches while learning about the love of Jesus. (Moms help prepare and serve)

Filling Haitian Children Spiritually and Physically (\$10,000) helped Trinity Hope share the Gospel and fill empty tummies throughout the 265 Christian schools with whom they partner.

Food & Clothing Co-op, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne (\$5,000) helped provide fresh produce, milk, eggs, and butter, and other perishable and non-perishable items, to our future church workers and their families.

May God’s love continue to grow in us!

**MISSION TRIP COORDINATOR****Scarlet Holcombe**

There’s **still room for you on the 2024 Mission trip to Kenya!**

We have a few spots left for the August 2024 trip to Kenya. We handle all the details so you can concentrate on the mission!

In case you missed the information in the last *Evangel*:

Estimated costs:

Airfare \$1,000 to \$1,500

Ground fees (food, hotel, laundry, ground transportation, travel insurance) \$1,200 to \$1,500

Optional safari \$650-\$750 (additional 3 days and 2 nights)

Travel dates:

Sat., August 3 – Thur., August 15, 2024 with the safari

Sat., August 3 – Mon., August 12, 2024 without the safari

Get your passport ready and call or email Scarlet Holcombe for more details! [404-323-1323](tel:404-323-1323) Or scarlet2@mindspring.com



SCHOLARSHIP CHAIRMAN

Lois Ford

God’s LOVE is Blooming! And growing! And spreading!! With four Seniors!

Four of our students, prayerfully, will graduate in the spring.

Trevor Hudlin, DCE, from Concordia-Irvine, CA; Mt. Calvary, Warner Robins, GA

Maranda Macking, DCE, from Concordia-Irvine, CA; Our Savior, St. Petersburg, FL

Nathan LeBorious, EDU from Concordia-Chicago; Mt. Calvary, Warner Robins, GA

Faith Deterding, EDU from Concordia-St. Paul; Zion, Ft. Myers, FL

This has been a difficult semester for several of our students, with illnesses and challenging courses. They ALL need your continued prayers as they continue until summer.

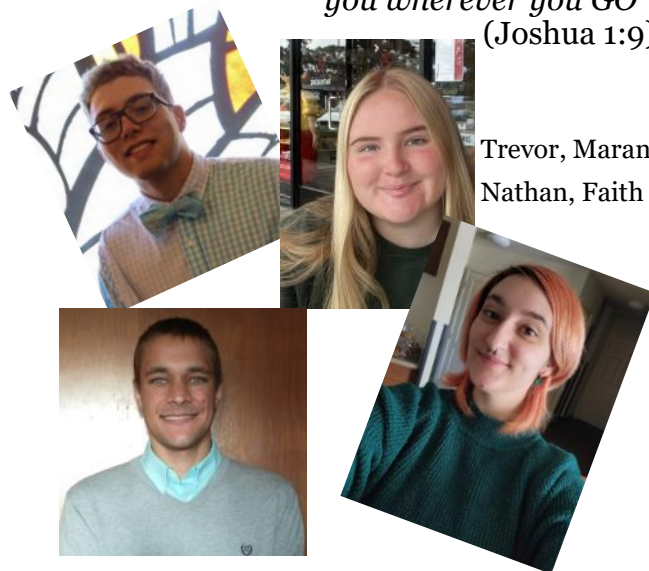
Call Day is at the end of April! This is an important day for those graduating or heading to a vicarage. That day they find out where their journey takes them next. I heard a rumor that someone might even be assigned to an overseas vicarage. “Just like the church workers of the past, (they) carry on that rich tradition of Lutheran Education and Lutheran Doctrine that is centered in Christ!” (Pastor Kappel)

All students, no matter what age or grade need PRAYERS! Be on the lookout for future church

workers in your church! God’s Love in the Gospel matters. It’s the most important news in the world. We need to share it with everyone! God’s LOVE is for SHARING!

How else can YOU help? Support our scholarship fund by your gifts to the MITE fund or gifts to the Love Gift account.

Be strong and courageous.... Your God is with you wherever you GO
(Joshua 1:9).



Trevor, Maranda
Nathan, Faith

NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Elaine Stier

Jesus said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field” (Matthew 9:37-38 NIV).

Please ask yourself this: Is Jesus calling me to work in His harvest field? Do I know someone who might be willing to serve on the District LWML Board? The 2024 District Convention will be here before we know it! (September 2024). I am happy to report that we have two candidates for Pastoral Counselor! The other positions to be filled this year are:

President– currently Gayle Caruso

VP Mission Grants– currently Karen McCarthy

Financial Secretary– currently Chris Jennison

VP Spiritual Growth– currently Carol Jones

Nominating Committee (three positions, including chairman)

It’s not too late! The deadline for nominations has been extended to March 15th! Please prayerfully consider running for an office or ask someone if they would consider running!

And, please continue to pray for workers in the harvest field!

Your zone president can help you apply or feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions!



COUNSELOR'S CORNER**JR. COUNSELOR— Rev. Dana Narring**

God's Love Blooms. Bloom Where You Are Planted

As we enter into this time of Spring when all things begin anew, we look forward to when things will again begin to bloom. Have you ever heard the phrase, "Bloom Where You Are Planted?" It's a very positive, encouraging, and uplifting statement.

This statement almost sounds biblical. However, you may be surprised to learn that it isn't contained in any bible verse. The earliest mention of this phrase is credited to The Bishop of Geneva, Saint Francis de Sales, who lived from 1567 to 1622. He is credited with the following: "Truly charity has no limit; for the love of God has been poured into our hearts by His Spirit dwelling in each one of us, calling us to a life of devotion and inviting us to bloom in the garden where He has planted, and directing us to radiate the beauty and spread the fragrance of His Providence." As redeemed Christians, by the blood of Christ, who have heard the saving word of Christ, we certainly can agree that *"the love of God has been poured into our hearts through His Holy Spirit dwelling in each one of us."*

So, what emerges from the word of Christ being planted/dwelling in us, (*yes, the "Word made Flesh" – God's love in Christ Jesus, living in us*)? Simply put, we grow in our love for God in Christ Jesus. And yet, dear Friends in Christ, this word of God's that has been poured-out/planted into our hearts through the Holy Spirit sometimes may appear to germinate and grow in our hearts and minds almost imperceptibly. However, God's word is always alive and is always growing in us through the work of God's Holy Spirit.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (Col 3:16) helps us see this process. God's word, living in us, empowers us to know and to follow Christ and God's Spirit continues to daily sanctify us.



And so it is, being firmly rooted in Christ, we continue to grow, teach, and sing to others about our faith in Christ – always giving thanks and praise to God for His love and for all that He has done for us.

God's word is also clear . . . that being rooted in Christ is more than just our receiving and embracing God's gracious gift of our Savior, Jesus. For we are Ambassadors in Christ – allowing the fragrance of God's love to cover us and then, (*from all we think, say, and do*), allowing that fragrance to be transported and permeate into the hearts and minds of others as God's Holy Spirit then creates and restores faith in others.

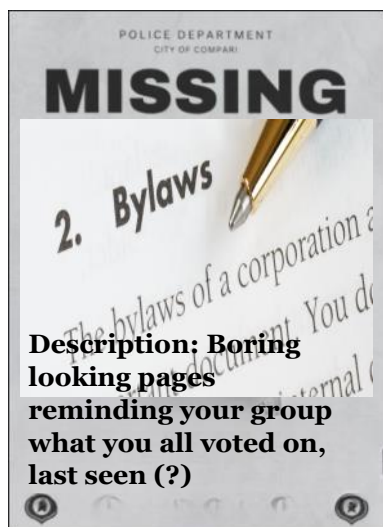
Dear Friends, God's love will only bloom as we live in His love, and then share His joy with others. May the love of Christ dwelling in us allow us to do just that – today and always!

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the LWML FL-GA District is to share the love of Christ with women of all ages and diversities and to foster a recognition that the mission field exists both at home and abroad.

STRUCTURE CHAIRMAN

Pat Powell



Have you seen your zone or group bylaws recently? Do we need to put a picture of your zone bylaws on a “Missing” poster? Occasionally I hear from a group or zone leader who can’t track theirs down. With that in mind, I’m collecting bylaws from groups

and zones so we have them all in one place. I have some copies, but definitely not all. Take a look around and see if you can find yours, and mail or email a copy to me.

While you’re looking, here are some things to think about.

Bylaw changes take a while to go through the process, so if you’re considering some updates, starting early is always good.

To make changes to zone bylaws, start with your zone Board. The zone board should agree on any changes. Next, the zone submits their

bylaws to the Structure Chair for approval. After approval, the bylaws are presented to the zone to be approved. This usually happens at a rally. You will want to give your individual groups time to review the changes, so send them to each group in your zone about 60 days before the rally where you intend to vote on them. Add up all that time, and you should get started 4-6 months before a rally.



When you send your bylaws to me for review, please send them by email as a Word attachment.

If you aren’t sure what should be in your bylaws, I have some samples from LWML.org that I can share with you. They’re a great place to start.

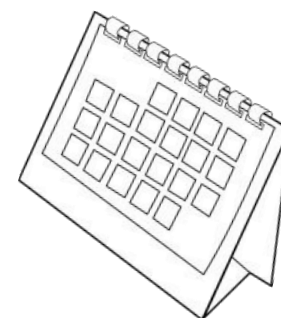
Bylaws don’t sound very interesting, but they are a valuable resource for your group or zone if something comes up that you don’t know how to handle. Often your bylaws will address the issue. They’re a valuable resource so everyone knows what the rules are and how things work, so be sure to share them!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

August 3– 12 or 15, 2024: LWML FLGA District trip to Kenya– (see Scarlet’s article)

September 13–15: LWML FLGA District Convention– Marriott Lakeside, Orlando, Florida. Theme is from 2 Cor 4:6-7. Gifts from The Heart recipient will be Orlando Union Rescue Mission, a faith-based ministry. Hosting Zones: Greater Orlando, Winter Haven, and Space Coast. Speak with your Zone Host Committees to see how YOU can help! Also, think about a Young Woman Representative (YWR) aged 22-35 from your congregation/zone who would benefit from a great LWML event. Most zones have a Pastoral/YWR account to offset the cost for her. Even more info very soon!



June, 2025: LWML National Convention– Omaha, Nebraska. More info as it becomes available.

Around the Zones...

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA ZONE

Cinara Navarro - President

Blessings to all in the name of the Triune God! I pray you are all staying physically warm from the cold and on fire for Christ. Serving and sharing Jesus is our greatest tool for giving to others. Our zone has remained stable for the months past. Locally, Faith Lutheran installed Pastor Pat Galligar in October and he is loving his new home church. We pray for Faith as they adjust to their new pastor. Continue to pray for all our societies to be active participants in our LWML zone. Trinity in Summerfield will be hosting a Women's Retreat on Feb. 24, 2024. Their speaker will be Wendy Sue Fluegge. First Lutheran in Inverness hosted the 2024 prayer service and the sanctuary rang with Grace, Mercy and Peace. We are looking forward to our spring rally on April 27, 2024 at St John in Ocala. May this Lenten season lead you to a joyful Easter. Remember that Jesus loves you and so do I.

Grace! Mercy! Peace!

SUMMER EVANGEL DEADLINE

May 5, 2024

Send articles & photos to:
evangel.flga@gmail.com

Write in **Word** with pics as attachments.

Exec Board: 250 words

Zone Articles: one paragraph plus pics
PLEASE list everyone in all photos

2024 ZONE RALLY DATES

EAST CENTRAL GEORGIA

Our Redeemer, Augusta, GA
 Sat., April 20, 2024

GREATER ORLANDO

St. Luke, Oviedo, FL
 Sat., March 23, 2024

NORTHEAST GEORGIA

Oak Rd, Lilburn, GA
 Sat., April 13, 2024

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

St. John, Ocala, FL
 Sat., April 27, 2024

SARASOTA

Faith Lutheran, Parrish, FL
 Sat., March 16, 2024

ST. PETERSBURG

Faith, Dunedin, FL
 Sat., April 6, 2024

SPACE COAST

Trinity, Holly Hill, FL
 Sat., April 20, 2024

SUNCOAST

Hope, Hudson, FL
 Sat., April 27, 2024

TREASURE COAST

Son Life, Boynton Beach, FL
 Sat., April 6, 2024

WINTER HAVEN

Christ, Lakeland, FL
 Sat., April 13, 2024

Around the Zones...

GREATER ORLANDO ZONE – FL

Carol Lynn Scheer - President

St. Luke's, Oviedo, afternoon LWML group held an Advent by Candlelight program on December 5. The Advent Wreath was the program and meanings/descriptions were given for each of the four candles in Advent which represented the Gift of Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace and the white Christ candle symbolizing Christ's birth. Christmas carols were interspersed with the parts of the program. The program portion closed with each guest having an individual candle and we joined in singing Silent Night. Individual hostesses and co-hostesses decorated their tables with Christmas decorations and candles. The hostesses served dessert to the ladies at their table and fellowship followed. Everyone really enjoyed the event.



TREASURE COAST ZONE – FL

Betsy Ablott - President

The ladies of the societies in the Treasure Coast Zone have been busy serving their Lord in a variety of ways. The Church of the Redeemer, Vero Beach, created hand made greeting cards as a fundraiser that sends messages of love and care. They also plan to design floral arrangements for their social hall so there are bright spots to bring smiles to church members.



Grace, Port St. Lucie, decorated the church and entry to give glory to the Lord at the celebration of His birthday.

Redeemer, Stuart, volunteered to run stations at their school's "Grandparents Day" recently. Lots of memories, smiles, and stories were shared in the church, gym, and playground. The Women of Faith, North Palm Beach, helped sponsor a very successful rummage sale, helping to fund safety lighting for their parking lot at church.

Many of our societies shared the Bombas socks with their homeless or other ministries. We will share our spring rally with the South Palm Beach Zone, to meet new women in God's service, as well as to renew relationships from prior rallies and projects.

We want news about YOUR zone!

Send a **paragraph** and pictures
evangel.flga@gmail.com to be
 included in an upcoming issue!
Please identify everyone

To subscribe to *Evangel*:
www.flgalwml.com Go to "Join Mailing
 List" at bottom left, and type your name
 and email address.

Around the Zones...

ATLANTA ZONE

Sarah Elston, Maria Parrish - Co-Presidents

Praise and thanksgiving to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! In early January the Atlanta Zone was blessed with seven cases of Bombas socks! A quick trip to Savannah to pick them up at Trinity LC and then distributing them to seven churches in the Atlanta Zone. I was able to bring one case back to Kitty Anderson president of the North East Georgia Zone. Thanks so much to Lonna McEwen-President of the East Central Georgia Zone for spearheading this great outreach!




Sarah Elston and Lonna McEwen with cases of Bombas socks!

EAST CENTRAL GEORGIA ZONE

Lonna McEwen - President

Trinity Lutheran Church, Savannah, GA, is a distribution center for Bombas socks, and we reach many charities throughout GA, SC, and FL. I have received 25 cases equaling 6,250 pairs of socks to distribute to LWML groups! Sarah Elston (pictured below) has picked up for her area and Trinity's "Top Dog" Cindy and Lizzie Comfort Dog delivered to Betsy Ablott - Treasure Coast President, for outreach throughout her zone. I will bring socks with me to the Board Of Directors meeting in March. To God be the glory for blessing us as we reach out to others!





LWML Florida-Georgia District
MEMORIAL Remittance Slip
Make all checks payable to LWML FL-GA District

* Rectangular Slip

Date: _____ Check #: _____

In memory of _____ In honor of _____ In celebration of _____ Name: _____

Donated by: _____

Donated for: Mites \$ _____ Scholarship Fund \$ _____ Endowment Fund: \$ _____


LWML Convention Fund \$ _____ Other (specify fund) \$ _____

Name and address of family member where acknowledgement letter can be sent

Donor Name & Address

MAIL TO
 Christine Jennison, Financial Secretary
 LWML FL-GA District
 114 Fairlane Cir., Sanford, FL 32773

Revised 11/22/2022



LWML Florida-Georgia District
2022-2024 Biennium - Remittance Slip
Make all checks payable to LWML FL-GA District

Date: _____ Check #: _____

Mites: \$ _____ LWML Sunday: \$ _____ Prayer Service: \$ _____

Scholarship Fund: \$ _____ District Mission Trip: \$ _____ Endowment Fund: \$ _____

LWML Convention Fund: \$ _____

Church City, State _____ Church Name _____

Your Name _____ Telephone _____ Your Email _____

Your Address

MAIL TO
 Christine Jennison, Financial Secretary
 LWML FL-GA District
 114 Fairlane Cir., Sanford, FL 32773

Revised 11/22/2022

LWML FL-GA DISTRICT**DISTRICT PRESIDENT**

Gayle Caruso

VP COMMUNICATIONS

Susan Hanes

VP MISSION GRANTS

Karen McCarthy

VP MISSION SERVICE

Silvia Grasberger

VP SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Carol Jones

RECORDING SECRETARY

Kathy McCartin

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Christine Jennison

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Bunnie Koelsch

PASTORAL COUNSELOR

Rev. Timothy Brown

PASTORAL COUNSELOR

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Colleen Umphrey

STRUCTURE

Pat Powell

WEBMASTER

Stephanie Edgar

YOUNG WOMAN DEVELOPER

Could be You!

MISSION GRANTS DISBURSED AS OF 11/1/2023

GRANT RECIPIENT	GRANT	DISBURSED	BALANCE
Scholarships for Pastoral & Church Worker Students	\$29,500.00	\$29,500.00	\$0.00
Food & Clothing Co-op, Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
A Rising Need, A Spiritual Opportunity	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00
Blessings in a Backpack	7,000.00	7,000.00	0.00
Healthy Children	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00
Feed the Children— Peru	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry	7,500.00	4,500.00	3,000.00
Filling Haitian Children Spiritually and Physically	10,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Rebecca's Garden of Hope Next Level	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00
Dominican Republic Disability Ministry	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
Christ Lutheran Mission	8,800.00	7,984.75	815.25
What Does This Mean – Bible Books for Haitian Families	8,500.00	8,500.00	0.00
Lutheran Hands & Hearts Helping with Haitian Earthquake Response	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00
Bringing Spanish Braille Bibles to Central & S. America	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
Migrant Resettlement and Assistance	7,432.23	7,432.23	0.00
TOTALS	146,732.23	117,916.98	25,815.25

HAPPY EASTER!
REMEMBER, IT'S NOT ABOUT
THE BUNNY, IT'S ABOUT THE
LAMB!