



# THE PILGRIM WAY

“But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior,  
the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3.20).

## JULY 2025

On July 4<sup>th</sup> we will celebrate Independence Day, which was the day the Continental Congress approved the final wording of the Declaration of Independence, which declared the original 13 colonies to be **free** from British rule. In 1870 Congress first declared July 4<sup>th</sup> to be a national holiday.

Our culture today expands on that word free – free to choose, free to say or do whatever you want. That’s what the secular world says. As Christians we look at the freedom that we have through Jesus.

Jesus came to set us free. He came to rescue and redeem us from slavery to sin. The redemption price for our freedom was not gold or silver, but His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death. Jesus frees us from the shackles of sin to walk in freedom.

Jesus hasn’t set us free so that we can serve only ourselves. Freedom never seeks to harm or steal from our neighbor. Freedom never seeks to betray our neighbor. Freedom never seeks to hate God or to reject the gifts that God gives. These things flow from slavery, not freedom.

The freedom, for which Jesus has come and to which He has called us, is to allow us to be free to serve where God has called us and with the gifts that God has given. You have been freed by Jesus to serve, and you are free to serve. We aren’t required to all serve in the same way because we haven’t all been given the same gifts. We are free to serve – some with their hands, some with their mouths. Some serve by getting up in front of people and some serve behind the scenes without any notice or fanfare. There is no mandate, no requirement. Jesus has fulfilled the Law in our place, freed us from the Law’s obligation, and freed us to serve where He leads and directs.

Through His Word, God continues sets us free. Jesus only died once for all, but the proclamation of the freedom happens again and again. From St. Paul’s letter to the Galatians we read, *“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”* (Galatians 5:1, 13)

*Pastor Tod Shouse*

## **BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

### **July Birthdays**

7.05 Marion Legge  
7.08 Marilyn Jenny  
7.09 Lynn Shouse  
7.09 Willette Early  
7.09 Tim Olp  
7.11 Marianne Koehler

7.15 Eric Gruenewald  
7.16 Alexander Boerger  
7.23 Liz Jentz  
7.24 Victoria Sweeney  
7.26 Marillyn Evaska  
7.28 Ruth Mueller

### **July Anniversaries**

7.09 Tim & Megan Boerger  
7.19 John & Suzanne Denecke

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Men's Bible Breakfast**

The weekly Men's Bible Breakfast is held on **Thursdays at 8:00am** at Mykonos Restaurant, located at 8501 W Capitol Dr in Milwaukee. We order breakfast, enjoy some fellowship and a meal, read until about 9:00 or so, and then pray together. Feel free to join us if and when you are available. We are currently reading in 2 Samuel.

### **Sewing for Veterans**

The next meeting dates for the Sewing for Veterans group will be on July 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 in the Fellowship Hall.

### **Women's Bible Study**

During the month of July, the Thursday Women's Bible study will meet as usual in the Fellowship Hall unless the work on the elevator becomes a hinderance. Take a look at each week's bulletin for the latest update. We will continue to study the book of Judges throughout the month. In August we will take some time to get updated on the happenings of the LWML convention.

### **PCDC Update**

Hello Pilgrim Family ~ Happy summer. Wow, we sure have been feeling the heat lately. The children have been able to be outside having some fun playing in the water table, feeling the "rain" from the sprinkler, washing toys with sponges and clean paintbrushes, and catching bubbles. What a joyful scene it is to watch their eyes light up, see their smiles, and hear their giggles. I am reminded of Matthew 19 where Jesus says, "let the little children come to Me." I imagine His warm smile, and loving eyes as He saw their eyes and smiles – as well as when he heard their giggles and was engulfed in their hugs. What a blessing it is to try to follow His example and continue His work over here at PCDC. Thank you for partnering with me on this journey. May we all continue to follow Jesus every day! ❤ ~ Suzanne

### **PCDC Ingathering (Gifts from the Heart)**

Now that summer is here and since we have not mentioned items to collect as "Gifts from the Heart" (ingathering), there are some items that would be helpful for the PCDC to have for the children and their outside play times. They include chalk, bubbles, fly swatters, water toys, plain paper plates for crafting, and play dishes for the outside "mud sink." These items can be put in the ingathering box at the bottom of the 68th St. stairs.

## Parish updates

In hopes to keep everyone up-to-speed on various projects that have been approved and are in progress here at Pilgrim, I would like to provide the following information:

**Altar Items Update** – At the South Wisconsin District Convention, we were able to meet up with Rev. Jacob Eichers who is leading the planting of Hill Country Lutheran Church in Viroqua, Wisconsin (between Prairie du Chein and La Crosse). We handed off our gently used candelabras, candles, candlelighters, missal stand, and some previously retired paraments. It is a joy to be able to add part of our history to the new Hill Country Lutheran Church and we continue to pray for their success.

**Bylaws** – I was also able to meet with the chair of the bylaws committee at the District Convention to help gain clarity on a couple items that were still outstanding in our bylaws. The bylaw committee met in June to solidify some of those comments and changes. We have submitted those changes to the committee and hope to have a final version ready for congregational review and approval at the September Voter's Meeting.

**School Sale** – The review and study phases continue. From the Phase II testing that was performed in June, there were some items needing further analysis and review. Pilgrim and LUMIN will be sharing in that testing, in partnership toward an ultimate sale. This further testing will result in Pilgrim paying approximately \$20,000 to help determine the extent and even further "next steps". As authorized by the Voter's Assembly, the School Sale Committee (Pastor Shouse, Gary Mueller, & Tim Olp), and confirmed by the Church Council, has approved moving ahead with that expense. As Pilgrim continues to gain "equity" with each monthly mortgage payment made, this expense is easily absorbed through that process.

**Kitchen Counter Tops** – The kitchen countertop replacement project is completed and fully in use. A great big "thank you" to Mike and Gail Zawacki for a lot of the homework and legwork on this project as well as to the Kitchen Committee for their hard work in emptying the cabinets in preparation for the work and then reorganizing it all.

**Elevator (Lift)** – Nothing new to report. Short of any changes in their schedule, we are anticipating a start date in mid-to-late July, subject to availability and schedule. In the meantime, we will continue to use our current elevator as long as we can.

**Sermons Online:** Partly in anticipation of the elevator process, I wanted to remind everyone that Pastor Shouse's weekly sermons are available as text and audio on our website ([www.pilgrimtosa.org](http://www.pilgrimtosa.org)) and recently we have started posting a link to the recorded sermons on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/PilgrimTosa/>). While this in no way can replace the in-person worship experience, we are glad to be able to provide Pastor's message for those that are not able to attend for whatever reason.

If you should have any questions on the above projects, or any others, please do not hesitate to give me a call in the church office.

-Tim Olp

## **Pilgrim LWML – Ruth Mueller**

The days continue to pass, and we may all be caught up in our daily routines. Happenings occur outside of our personal lives and some of these affect us in various ways. As I write this article last minute adjustments are being made in Omaha and by the time this is printed, the 41<sup>st</sup> Biennial Convention of the LWML will be history. So, I cannot write about the business that occurs there until next month.

I have decided to look into the LWML website and touch on some of the history of LWML that has been the main focus of this group over the past 80+ years. First, let's take a look at the Basics of LWML.

### **What is the Lutheran Women's Missionary League?**

- The LWML is an official auxiliary of the LCMS.
- It has at its "mission heart" thousands of volunteers who are daily dedicating their lives to making a difference in this world.
- It is also "Lutheran Women in Mission," a phrase that reflects the object of the LWML adopted by the Board of Directors in January 1998.
- It is women who are finding avenues to use their God-given talents as they meet the challenge to share the Gospel message.
- It is composed of individual women and women's groups within congregations of the LCMS, on campuses in residence homes or in other settings.
- It provides individual membership to women in LCMS congregations with or without a group affiliated with the LWML. Women may have an interest in the mission and ministry of the LWML – and wish to be part of the organization – but cannot, for a variety of reasons, be part of a local group. Individual membership is designed for these women.
- It seeks to develop and maintain a greater mission consciousness among the women of the Synod through education, inspiration and service.
- It places a major emphasis on the support of mission and ministry throughout the world by means of Mite Box offerings. These Mite Box offerings have funded over 100 million dollars in mission grants since the organization's inception in 1942.

In the following pages of this newsletter, read about the history of the mite box. On the LWML website ([www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org)) there are documents that talk about the various grants that have been funded since 1942. They are too long to reprint here, but offer new insight into the work of LWML.

I found it interesting that some of those early grants after WWII were used to aid orphans and orphanages in Europe. Check out [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) and search Mission Grants History to see God's work! The History is a listing of all of the LWML grants from the 1943–1945 biennium through the 2021–2023 biennium.

Or, check out [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) and search Mission Grants Resume (1943–2023)! The Resume gives the Grant descriptions by country. Completed projects are history. The importance of this history is not to say, "See what the LWML has done," but to point toward a future of service.

Watch for the beginning of that future in next month's article!

## Mite Boxes — How They Began

Perhaps inspired by the various "cent" or "mite" societies of the early 1800s, the Woman's Mission to Woman (Baptist) urged members in its first circular letter in 1871 to use their new Mite Box to raise funds. The entire family was encouraged to contribute. The garnet-colored paper box had an opening on the top and the words, "Woman's Mission to Woman," in gold letters on the side.

## LWML Mite Boxes



Over the years, many Lutheran Ladies Aid societies used a box to gather funds in support of local and synod ministries. Under the original 1928 Lutheran Women's Missionary Endeavor organizational plan, each woman in every congregation would receive a Mite Box if she participated in the Ladies Aid. Receipts from the 92 Ladies Aid societies totaled \$6651.31 in 1930.

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League, formally recognized by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in 1942, required by the newly adopted constitution and bylaws, that 25% of all missionary contributions be given to the national organization, shared from the districts.

At the 1953 convention, delegates reaffirmed the policy of raising funds only through voluntary offerings. Instead of "mite boxes" some societies called their ingathering devices "blessing boxes" or "mission boxes" or "thankoffering boxes." The first Mite Box design had space for districts to imprint local messages. In publications and speeches, Leaguers were reminded not to just tuck their Mite Box away out of sight and then on the day of the meeting take out a dollar bill, put it in an envelope and hand it to the secretary. Among the suggestions offered were:

- Put your pennies in the box at the end of each day
- Say "thank you" with an appropriate amount whenever calamity or misfortune has been averted
- Empty all your loose change from your kitchen coin bowl into the box on meeting day

Throughout the decades, Lutheran women have stepped out in faith, setting goals and trusting God to move the hearts of His people to give generously to LWML to proclaim the Gospel.

Based on the Biblical account of the widow's mite (Luke 21:1–4), the Mite Box is intended for regular contributions of "mites" — offerings above and beyond the support given to congregations and the LCMS. Mite Box contributions amount to millions of dollars that fund district and national mission grants and implement the LWML program.



## Times and Mite Boxes Change

Mite Boxes have changed in color and design over the years, but what has never changed is the dedication of freely given offerings for the purpose of reaching out to others with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Districts still retain 75% of mite offerings for the work of the LWML at that level. National mites fund over \$1 million in mission grants each biennium.



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*The Pilgrim Way*  
July 2025

**SUNDAY DIVINE SERVICE: 9:30am**  
**FELLOWSHIP: 10:45am**

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**Pilgrim is here by God's grace to serve our neighbor with Christ's love.**