

Lutheran Women's Missionary Society
 Chicago Area Circuit
 Spring Retreat, April 21, 2012
Our Backyard & Beyond



The Spring Retreat of the Chicago Area Circuit of LWMS was held at Christ the King Lutheran, Palatine, IL on Saturday April 21, 2012. Registration was from 8:45 to 9:15 a.m. During this time, a prayer corner was also available for quiet reflection and to write prayer requests. The registration sign-in showed 54 present - 52 members and 2 guests. The Reporters' meeting was held during registration - updated binders were distributed to all.

Church	Number Attending
Abiding Peace, Elgin	3
Christ the King, Palatine	17
Good Shepherd, Downers Grove	6
Jerusalem, Morton Grove	0
Lord and Savior, Crystal Lake	8
Palos, Palos Heights	1
Resurrection, Aurora	2
St. Matthew, Niles	5
St. Paul, Grant Park	2
Trinity, Crete	4
Zion, Crete	4
Non-member Congregations	2

Opening Devotion, led by Pastor Thomas Schultz, began at 9:15 a.m. We sang Hymn 486 & 526. Then Doreen Wagner from Christ the King welcomed everyone and gave thanks to all of their members who helped with the retreat. In keeping with the theme *Our Backyard & Beyond*, several of the attendees came dressed in Florida apparel.

Pastor Phil Huebner, our keynote speaker, gave his presentation titled *Ministry with Confidence in the Lord!* Christ the King in Palm Coast, FL began as a mission in 2007 with 8 adults & 3 children in the living room of the Huebner home. They soon rented a space in an elementary school and every week had to bring in chairs, tables, sound system, Bibles, etc... Christ the King received the last WELS grant to begin a preschool with 18 students, but two weeks prior to opening they were nowhere near ready! Pastor sent out 212 letters as they were looking for land with some acreage. This yielded a nice deal on an 8 acre parcel situated on Hwy. 1. In 2008, CtK hosted 76 for Easter worship and 90 in 2009. An architect from Cedarburg, WI drew up plans for a 2 million dollar building project. Prior to the opening in 2010, they were robbed of all they owned - chairs, tables, sound system, Bibles, etc...and were left with 2 candles for the opening of their new facility. The services were a BYOC (bring your own chair) operation for a few weeks. 30,000 homes have been canvassed and 500,000 postcards have been sent out in 4 years, and their fall Kids Carnival has resulted in huge numbers for their congregation. By next year, their school will include up to 8th grade / Hard Work + God's Blessings = GROWTH. In the next 3-4 years, there are plans for a 10 million dollar building complete with a school, Community Center, and a Fitness Center. A Florida Lutheran High School is also on the horizon!

After the break, Paula Danekas called the Business meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. There were no questions or concerns with the Fall Retreat Minutes or the Treasurers Reports. Ella Behrens explained the Mission Projects to be voted on this time. Lord & Savior won

the gift basket for most members in attendance, and Debbie Otteson won a prize for her Florida apparel. Several winners were also drawn to receive a music CD/devotion book. Our newly established LWMS National Convention stipend guidelines were read by Paula. The Chicago Area Circuit would like to set aside \$400.00 each year as a stipend to be awarded to a first time attendee (if possible), who would later give a report to the Circuit at the following retreat. Rita Piepenbrink made a motion, seconded by Joyce DeForge, and it carried unanimously. Carol Miller was awarded the stipend for 2012. Joyce DeForge, the 2011 recipient, then gave a summary of her experience at the last Convention. She reflected on her meaningful experience and then distributed a full report to each of us.

Ella gave updates on our Befriend A Mission assignments. Missionary Ben Schmeling in Saskatchewan, Canada reports that he returned his call to Jefferson, WI. Their Moms & Kids play group is expanding to 2 groups and they are still looking into starting a preschool. The parsonage mortgage has been paid off. Missionary Brad Krause in Leon, Mexico is happy to report that he and Heidi are expecting their first child, a daughter, in July. They had 51 in attendance for Easter Sunday and a good # in Bible Information classes. 2014 is the next Mexican LWMS Convention and we are all invited!

Paula thanked the Thrivent representative, Lee Straumann, for the generosity shown to our Circuit and added that Lee would be available during lunch for anyone with questions for him regarding Thrivent. Debbie Otteson then invited us all to the 2012 Fall Retreat to be held in October at Resurrection in Aurora, IL – date and speaker is yet to be determined.

Winston-Salem, NC is the location of the 49th Annual LWMS Convention, *Our God Reigns*, June 21st-24th. Be sure to register before May 1st to avoid late fees.

Mark Blauert, a representative of the Mission Board, shared an update on Amazing Love in New Lenox. Pastor Dustin Blumer and the members there have acquired 7 acres of land with a 10,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose building in Frankfort, IL.

The members of Christ the King treated us to a delicious lunch from Edelweiss restaurant.

Following lunch, we split into two groups and were able to take part in both workshops offered! The Spiritual Growth presentation, by Pastor Cordes, was *Creating Opportunities to Talk about Jesus*. We were given a four question test that we can use to reveal the true nature of each of us as lying, stealing, blaspheming adulterers at heart. Once that is established, we can share the beauty of the gospel and what our Savior has done for us.

Pastor Phil Huebner held the second workshop, *Evangelism and Outreach Ideas for the Congregation*. He encouraged us to put evangelism - the good news - into our own words, and gave us many practical ideas and conversation starters.

Ballots were counted resulting in the newly elected Chicago Area Circuit Board members:

Vice President:	Julie Epple (St. Matthew, Niles)
Secretary:	Caryn Grossman (Abiding Peace, Elgin)
Pastoral Advisor:	David Carlovsky (Lord & Savior, Crystal Lake)
Spiritual Growth Woman:	Ella Behrens (Lord & Savior, Crystal Lake)
World Mission Project:	#WM-2012-10 Russia Projects
Home Mission Project:	#HM-2012-17 WELS-Canada Evangelist and PSI Training

At 2:30 p.m., the afternoon ended with a beautiful closing devotion led by Pastor Nathan Cordes, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?*, followed by Prayer Center petitions and Hymn 286.

Thank you to Christ the King Lutheran Church for hosting this inspiring retreat!

Respectfully submitted,

Caryn Grossman, Chicago Area Circuit Secretary/geocarmat@sbcglobal.net/ (847)488-9571