

### **Melissa Salomon, Chairman**

Melissa Salomon, an adult convert, came to faith through an LCMS Spanish speaking ministry. She has worked in Hispanic ministry since 1986 starting out in the San Fernando Valley, west of Los Angeles, before moving to the border region of California/Mexico. She currently lives in Chula Vista, California. She has two grown children both of whom got married within the last year and a half.

Melissa has had the privilege of serving her Lord in border ministry since 1986. In 1998 she was part of a team that opened the first Lutheran Hour Ministries office in Mexico located in Tijuana, Mexico. In 2012 that office was moved to Mexico City, but Melissa has since continued to work in border ministries.

She has been involved in the LWML since the '80s. In 2001, Melissa was asked to serve on a national committee, with former missionary's wife, Marilyn McClure. Together they developed a plan to be intentional about identifying ethnic women leaders within the LCMS. Through their involvement with the LWML, these ethnic women have been able to lend their ministry and leadership skills to LWML local, district, and national committees.

Melissa has an AB degree from Occidental College in Pasadena, California as well as a Juris Doctor degree from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. She currently serves as the Community Life Coordinator for Concordia Lutheran Church and School in Chula Vista, California and continues to enjoy life and ministry on the border.

### **Anita Beyersdorf**

Anita Beyersdorf, past President of the LWML Michigan District, thanks God for being her Savior and Lord for over 70 years now. By His grace, God has allowed Anita to teach in various Lutheran schools in the Saginaw, MI area. She has also been an author of religious materials for the LCMS Board of Parish Services, Youth Director and Weekday Religion Instructor at her congregation, St. Mark Lutheran, Saginaw. Anita is blessed to be mother of Adrienne who is married to Ben Riegle. Anita and her husband Dave enjoy time spent with their two grandsons, Noah and Hudson.

Anita has been part of short term mission teams in Panama, Slovakia, Alaska, Cambodia, Poland, Detroit and most recently Guatemala. In each case, it has been a joy to see how God calls, into His family, people from all nations and backgrounds. Now serving on the LWML Heart to Heart Committee she works with beautiful women of various ethnicities to enhance the LWML by being inclusive of all women. To God be all the glory!

## **Oluwatoyin Akinde Fakuajo**

Oluwatoyin (Toyin) Akinde Fakuajo was born in the western part of Nigeria in Yoruba Land. Her parents are from Ondo State. Toyin was born into a Christian family who attended a non-denominational church. Her father became familiar with a Lutheran missionary in Nigeria. Then her father lived for a while in the United States. After returning to Nigeria, he and all Toyin's family joined a Lutheran missionary church in Akure. Toyin was baptized around the age of 7 years old. Today, she is a member of Grace Lutheran Church in Brooklyn Park, MN where she serves on the fellowship team.

Toyin's professional training included administrative leadership, before making her way into Education. Education was a natural path for her as her parents were both educators. Toyin is a professor at Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn. in the Department of Graduate Teacher Education. Toyin relates, "I was blessed with parents and families that held me to high standards and pushed me to be the best I can."

Toyin is married to Johnson and together they have a son and daughter – both preschoolers.

## **Mai Nhia Thao**

Mai Nhia Thao is 34 years old, from Milwaukee, Wis. She is in the audiology field and owns a consulting business. She is married and has 5 children ages 18,16,12,8,3. Her mother-in-law Joan Kruse has been instrumental in her faith journey. Joan also introduced Mai to the LWML. Mai Nhia attended the LWML Young Women Retreat in her district in 2009. She knew she wanted to be a part of this mission organization. Mai Nhia is a member of Covenant Lutheran Church and was baptized there in 2011 where she delights in growing in her relationship with Jesus Christ.

After her retreat experience she knew she wanted to get involved with the organization and volunteered with assisting the retreat in the marketing area. She then became Co-chair for the retreat. She went on to hold other various positions such as the Heart to Heart Leader and VP for her zone. She organized an annual multicultural women's event in her district with 180 attendees from diverse groups including Hispanic, Hmong, Karenni, International Student Ministries, and African French Ministries.