Celebrate the Lord of the Nations
PRE-CONVENTION DEVOTION

Are you getting ready? Before you know it the national LWML Convention in Milwaukee will be upon us! People from across the nation, and really from all over the world, will gather to “Celebrate the Lord of the Nations.” It is so exciting to gather with like-minded, missionary women, who love Jesus and are primed for action to share Jesus with the world and to help others share the good news, too! The convention theme verse, from Psalm 33:12–13 is Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom He has chosen as His heritage! The LORD looks down from heaven; He sees all the children of man.

As we make all the necessary preparations to be together at the convention, we are indeed a blessed people. To have the ability to gather and participate in such an amazing event is indeed a sign of God's blessings. The convention might be a gathering that will be about as close as we can get, this side of heaven, where all, including those in authority, proclaim Christ and His forgiveness loudly and clearly. No, we are not and will not be sinless, but we each know what Jesus has done, done for each one gathered. As He indeed looks down from heaven, He will see all who are gathered and, in addition, sees all the children of man. That little word, “all” is important. In the Hebrew it is transliterated as “kōl” and in the Greek it is “pantos”; it means all, everything, the totality. All means all! Who, then, is excluded from all the children of man? No one. Some certainly self-exclude, but our loving Lord, the Lord of the Nations, excludes no one. What's even more, is that He died for all, us and all the others, even those who don't believe, and removed all guilt from all sin for all.

In fact, the Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 2:2–4, God our Savior ... desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. God's desire is our marching order. It forms the basis for our mission. We are “sent ones,” sent by Jesus into the world to share the glorious news of a Savior who invites all people to be saved! Jesus is the promised One to gather the nations. In fact, it is only at the foot of His cross that we can find true unity, whether it is as a church denomination, as Christians, or even as a nation!

Throughout the Bible we hear a repeating refrain from our gracious God. His desire is to gather the nations. From the prophet Ezekiel, in Ezekiel 36:24–27, we hear, "I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of
flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.” This was fulfilled at Pentecost, where the nations had gathered in Jerusalem, and God poured out His Spirit in a decisive way. But there is still work to be done! We must not be satisfied with our smaller circles of believers. We are sent to the nations to share the Good News of salvation through Jesus, filled with God’s own Spirit — the same Spirit Jesus breathed on His disciples the night of the Resurrection.

And we have such wonderful news to share with the world. We know the Lord of the nations. He has invited us to call Him by name — Jesus! He has called us His friends. He lived for us, died for us, and rose to new life, all for us! Now He invites us to not only celebrate Him, but to share His love, grace, and forgiveness with the world! God still loves the world. This is why He sent Jesus to save it. Now His Spirit works through people like you and me, and through groups like the LWML, who shine His light in the world through the amazing projects you together accomplish with your mighty mites. But there’s still work to be done.

As you prepare to gather in Milwaukee, or even support those who do, pray the Lord of the Nations, the Lord of the Harvest, continues to raise up workers, and let it begin with you! Many of us will not be able to go overseas, but God has brought the nations to us. In almost every city in the United States there are people not yet reached for Jesus. Preaching is fine, but sometimes it is the tangible love of Jesus which makes the difference. How might God use you to share His love with those who need to hear it? Your service in His name is an amazing way to celebrate the Lord of the Nations.

I once had a friend who would say, “Don’t anticipate, participate!” I would share this with each of you preparing to meet in Milwaukee. The Lord of the nations has great purpose for all of us as we reach all nations in the name of Jesus! May His Spirit grant us safety as we gather, and may He guide us as we celebrate the Lord of the Nations!

Closing Prayer: Lord Jesus, You have called us out of the nations to be Your own, and reach into the nations with Your love, grace, and forgiveness. May we shine Your light to all people for the sake of Jesus. Amen.

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