

## Reflection on Serving as RECORDING SECRETARY for the 2021-2025 Term of Service

To be made available on the website and changed every biennium one year before elections of those candidates at convention.

This is an opportunity for the outgoing officer/nominating committee to share a reflection on the highlights of serving and the time required to carry out the duties of this office.

**Brenda Piester**

Name

### 1 What was the most rewarding part of your service/work with LWML in this position?

Serving as a member of the Board of Directors (BOD) and being part of a team to affect the direction of Lutheran Women in Mission in the near term and into the future is an honor and privilege. It is a blessing to meet and work with so many enthusiastic, skilled, faithful, capable, and dedicated women and pastors. I have developed new, lifetime friendships. We have fun while we work and serve!

Honestly, I enjoy taking the minutes of the LWML meetings. I like the challenge of recording what is necessary for future reference and doing so in a professional, succinct way. The recording secretary also receives, proofreads, compiles, distributes, and uploads the reports for all Board of Directors and Presidents Assembly meetings.

### 2. What regular and special committee assignments did you have in your department?

- The Recording Secretary is typically the chairman of the Governance Committee, and it is responsible for the *LWML Standing Policies* and the *BOD Operating Policies*. Both have separate approval processes, but it is critical to the efficiency of the BOD and the Presidents Assembly (PA) that these policies are clear, concise, and streamlined.
- Beginning with the 2023–2025 biennium, the recording secretary is an advisory member of the Structure Committee which oversees bylaws from the 40 districts.
- I serve as a liaison to the Convention Programming Committee for the mission grant voting process prior to the convention. I collaborate with others to compile and proofread reports for the convention manual.
- I also serve as a member of the Gifts of Love Committee.

### 3. Approximately how many hours a week did you devote to your LWML work?

I spend 15–50 hours per week, most of it on the computer. There are times when it is like a full-time job. Other times it's less busy, and still other times, it's more involved. This varies on the time of the year, articles I may be writing, and what presentations I may be preparing, such as PowerPoints to the district conventions I will attend. The time leading up to the LWML convention is definitely busier!

I like the flexibility of being able to work at times of the day (or night!) that fit my schedule. There are, of course, Zoom meetings, usually no more than a couple of times a month. BOD meetings are held three-four times a year, and they last for several days; most are in St. Louis or the next convention city.

### 4. Approximately how many days away were necessary for your position?

117 days — plus days I would attend retreats, meetings, and conventions in my home Kansas District.

I was away from home for approximately 56 days for BOD or PA meetings during my 4-year term (this included travel days). During this time, I helped lead:

Assembly of Leaders: 2022

Interdepartmental Meetings: 2021, 2022 (virtual), 2023, 2024 (virtual)

In addition, I had the opportunity to make presentations or represent LWML at various events for another 61 days (including travel days) away from home during the 4-year term:

BOD Representative to District Conventions in 2022 and 2024: 26 days

Best Practices for Ministry, 2022, 2023, and 2024 in Phoenix – 4 days each time: 12 days

LWML Conventions, 2023 Milwaukee and 2025 Omaha: 8 days

Additional events were blessings to attend as “once-in-a-lifetime” experiences:

Making Disciples for Life Conference and Presentation, St. Louis, 2022 – 3 days

Installation of CPH CEO Jonathan Schultz, St. Louis, 2022 – 2 days

*Unshakable* filming, Texas, 2022 – 2 days

March for Life, Washington, D.C., 2023 – 4 days

LWML Strategic Planning, St. Louis, 2024 – 3 days

## **5. What else would you like the next woman serving in this position to know?**

This position requires a good foundation of computer skills, especially for writing minutes, collecting, editing, and compiling reports, emailing documents, answering questions from the district presidents about convention delegates, proofreading, accuracy, detailed writing and listening, and independent skills to work alone. It is important this person is a self-starter. The position requires developing PowerPoint presentations, drafting articles, and working closely with the LWML President in assigning BOD representatives to conventions, mentors, and mentees.

## **6. Were special assignments burdensome beyond your expectations?**

I don't know if I would use the word “burdensome,” but proofreading the convention manual was quite a task and required teamwork and an absolute eye for details. LWML, LCMS, and general writing style guides are essential to perform proofreading tasks accurately.

In addition, the recording secretary manages the delegate lists for the convention so must be very knowledgeable in working with a spreadsheet. This responsibility works closely with district presidents, the convention management team, and the LWML office staff. Accuracy is crucial for emails concerning the online voting processes for mission grants. Again, it was not necessarily “burdensome,” but deadlines had to be met—no matter how many hours it took to complete the tasks.

## **7. Would you be willing to discuss your role with a nominee or potential nominee?**

YES! I was blessed to have support and input from the Recording Secretary before me, and I would want to give as much support, encouragement, and assistance to any woman considering the position and then to the woman who will be elected.

May God richly bless your nomination consideration, work, service, and travels as you “*Serve the Lord with Gladness!*”

In His Grace,

Brenda Piester, LWML Recording Secretary (2021–2025)

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