The Lutheran Women’s Missionary League will celebrate its 75th Anniversary in 2017, honoring our past and imagining our future as Lutheran Women in Mission. Our basic purpose … missions … remains the same today, as it was with the very first grant in 1943. That grant was a “seed” planted years ago and still thrives today. Mites make a difference!

Then

At the first LWML convention in 1943, delegates approved using $15,000 in mite offerings to help fund construction of a building for Christ Church for the Deaf in Cleveland, Ohio. Having a structure of their own made it possible for the congregation to begin outreach in the area. An LWML group was soon organized that adapted LWML materials to Deaf culture. The congregation was one of the first racially integrated churches in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Now

Christ Deaf Lutheran Church, as it is now named, has outgrown the modest building from the 1940s. Having moved several times, the congregation is now part of St. John Lutheran in Garfield Heights, a suburb of Cleveland. The LWML is active, with several small groups meeting regularly for Bible study, fellowship, and outreach to the Deaf community. The cornerstone and a stained glass window from the original building have traveled with the congregation throughout all of its moves.

Noteworthy: The women of LWML have subsequently supported additional grants for Deaf ministry, including Gallaudet College for the Deaf, production of captioned films and videos for children, television outreach, Deaf lay and clergy training as well as Bible studies and devotions for the Deaf. Mite offerings also supported Deaf outreach in Brazil and India.

From Rev. Gary Lawson, current pastor at Christ Deaf Lutheran Church, Cleveland: “We are very grateful and thankful to the Lord for the support and love of LWML over the years. Today, we are still alive and well and carrying on the work of the Gospel of Christ Jesus.”

Go to lwml.org and search for “Mission Grant Resume” to read descriptions of all LWML grants from 1943 through 2015!

Historical information has been taken from the book Wherever God Sends Us by Marlys Taege. Copyright © 2013 Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. All rights reserved.