**Lutheran Women’s Missionary League**

**Celebrating 75 Years**

**of**

**Commending Christ**

**From One Generation to Another**

*One generation shall commend your works to another,
    and shall declare your mighty acts (Psalm 145).*

We are gathered here today as women and men of the church who are ***in our generation*** to be witnesses of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many of us lament “the generation gap” that seems to be growing with the acceleration of changes in our culture. There are times when we long for the “good old days.” Our worship for today is to remind us that God continues to work in our days. That He is the God of all generations!

Rev. Dr. Steve Turner, Iowa West District President, Author

Invocation

L: All your works shall give thanks to you, | O LORD,\*

 **C: and all your saints shall | bless you!**

L: One generation shall commend your works to an- **|** other,**\***

 **C: and shall declare your | mighty acts.**

L: On the glorious splendor of your **|** majesty,**\***

 **C: and on your wondrous works, I will\* meditate.**

L: They shall speak of the might of your **|** awesome deeds,**\***

 **C: and I will declare your | greatness.**

L: They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant **|** goodness**\***

 **C: and shall sing aloud of your | righteousness**.

L: The LORD is **|** good to all,**\***

 **C: and his mercy is over all that | he has made.**

**ALL: Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\***

**and to the Holy | Spirit;**

**as it was in the be- | ginning,\***

**is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

“**We are Called to Stand Together”** LSB 828

L: Lord Jesus, light of the world, You shine with the brightness of the sun in the darkness of our crooked and twisted generation. Give us strength to shine as lights in the world as we live out our baptismal life by serving our neighbors with thanksgiving and joy as sacrificial offerings of mercy and love; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

 **C:** **Amen.**

**We are connected to the Generations that have come before us.**

L: *These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God* (Genesis 6:9). *The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart* (Genesis 6:5-6). *Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation”* (Genesis 7:1).

R1: Noah’s character and conduct were quite different from the rest in his generation. We Christians today may find ourselves increasingly at odds with our culture.

R2: The flood water was for us a gracious water of deliverance from sin and judgment. We are the decedents of Noah. Which means the water protected and saved us.

L: The Lord … *keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation* (Exodus 34:7).

R1: God reveals that He works through Law and Gospel. The first use of the Law is to keep order in the world. The second use of the Law is to show us our sin. The third use of the Law is to teach us how to live in a way that pleases God.

R2: The Gospel offers forgiveness of sin in Christ. Jesus is the one who has fulfilled the Law for us. The Gospel is the Good News that we have been set free of the guilt of our sin by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

L: From the very beginning of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, women started local auxiliaries to meet the needs of people; mending clothes for seminarians, equipping hospitals, establishing schools, developing convalescent and retirement homes, assisting orphanages and residences for people with disabilities, gathering clothing, furniture, and food for indigents, and funding mission endeavors at home and abroad.

The Lutheran Women’s Missionary League was founded on July 7, 1942, in Chicago. The purpose then of the LWML was to develop a greater mission consciousness among women (“missionary education, missionary inspiration, and missionary service”) and to gather funds for mission projects for which no adequate provision was made in the LCMS budget. “Missionary” meant the individual member, who was to “win and hold souls for Christ the Master, visit the sick and the shut-ins, relieve the needy, and cultivate the spirit of sisterly good cheer and fellowship” (History of the LWML by Marlys Taege Moberg).

L: Let us pray.

O Lord, You kill and You raise to life; You brought the flood upon a wicked and perverse generation, and yet You saved faithful Noah and his family in the ark. Keep us in safety in the ark of Christ's body, the Church, that Your mercy may come to its fullness and Your salvation be preached to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

 **C:** **Amen.**

**Confession and Absolution**

L: Merciful God, heavenly Father, Whose grace endures from generation to generation, You are patient and long-suffering and forgive the sins and transgressions of all who are sorry and repent. Look with compassion upon Your people and hear their prayers.

 **C: We have sinned against You. We are unworthy of Your goodness and grace. Remember not our transgressions; have mercy upon us. Grant us remission of all our sins and save us. Give us the grace of Your Holy Spirit that we may amend our ways and with You obtain everlasting life; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

L: Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, we walk in the light of Jesus Christ. Through His blood shed on the cross, God has forgiven us all our sins. The rainbow is a symbol of God's promise of grace for He said to Noah, *“When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creatures of all flesh that is on the earth”* (Genesis 9:16).

**“Let Children Hear the Mighty Deeds”** LSB 867

**We are connected to this generation**

L: The Lutheran Women’s Missionary League strives to be a multigenerational organization. We see this in our encouragement of all societies to have young women representatives. We must confess this is often difficult to do. Part of this difficulty stems from the generational diversity in our culture. Most of our LCMS congregations are made up of four, possibly five, distinct generations. The following definitions are based on generalities, and while they may be true for the majority of that generation, there will most certainly be exceptions.

R1: **Builders** are those of us age 70 years and older.

We are group oriented. We join and invest much energy into big organizations and clubs. We exhibit great loyalty to our church. We are the women who built and are still building the LWML.

R2: **Boomers** are those of us age 50-70.

We are less committed to the “institutional” church. We see our commitment to Christ as more personal. We are active in the LWML because it offers us a sense of fulfillment. We actively support causes we believe in and those who believe in the mission of LWML are its leaders today.

R1: **Generation X** are those of us age 27-50.

This group is important to the church because it represents the new leaders. This is the group that LWML often targets for our young women representatives. They are thoughtful, reflective, and they are often refreshingly honest. You will not find this group in church every Sunday. Regular church attendance is not seen as a measure of their love for Jesus. You will find this generation at any function where their children are involved.

R2: **Millennials** are those of us under age 27.

Millennials are likely the most studied and talked about generation to date. They are the first generation in history that have grown up totally immersed in a world of digital technology, which has shaped their identities and created lasting political, social, and cultural attitudes.

L*: “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you”* (Genesis 17:7).

**Mary's Song of Praise: The Magnificat**

L: And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

 **C: and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,**

L: for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

 **C: For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;**

L: for he who is mighty has done great things for me,

 **C: and holy is his name.**

L: And his mercy is for those who fear him

 from generation to generation.

 **C: He has shown strength with his arm;**

 **he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;**

L: he has brought down the mighty from their thrones

 and exalted those of humble estate;

 **C: he has filled the hungry with good things,**

 **and the rich he has sent away empty.**

L: He has helped his servant Israel,

 in remembrance of his mercy,

 **C: as he spoke to our fathers,**

 **to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”**

L: *“For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues”* (Acts 15:21). *When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit* (Ephesians 3:4-5).

R1: Christ comes to us through the “Means of Grace;” the written and spoken Word of the Gospel, Holy Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper are the ways the Holy Spirit calls us to faith.

R2: Through the ordinary language of the preacher. Speaking the word of forgiveness on account of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ sinners are converted from death to life.

L: *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his* (Romans 6:3-5).

R1: In Holy Baptism we are born again as God’s children and received into His Church. Through ordinary water connected to the Word and command of God we are received into the fellowship of believers (the Church).

R2: It is personal in that it connects us to Christ. It is communal in that it connects us to the Church which is the fellowship of the baptized. It is multi-generational in that it connects us with the communion of saints, those who have come before us, those now with us, and even those who will follow us in the future.

L: *“Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD”* (Exodus 30:10).

R1: Once a year the priest shed the blood of the lamb. This symbolized the payment of Christ’s atonement made for us on the Cross. We speak of the “Sacrament of the Altar” because in the Old Testament an altar was a place of sacrifice.

R2: Jesus offered Himself on the Cross as an atoning sacrifice for all our sins. Now at the table of Holy Communion we receive His body and blood as the once and for all generations the sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins.

L: O Lord, You kill and You raise to life; You brought the flood upon a wicked and perverse generation, and yet You saved faithful Noah and his family in the ark. Keep us in safety in the ark of Christ's body, the Church, that Your mercy may come to its fullness and Your salvation be preached to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

 **C:** **Amen.**

**Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,**

 **maker of heaven and earth.**

 **And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,**

 **who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

 **born of the virgin Mary,**

 **suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

 **was crucified, died and was buried.**

 **He descended into hell.**

 **The third day He rose again from the dead.**

 **He ascended into heaven**

 **and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.**

 **From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

 **I believe in the Holy Spirit,**

 **the holy Christian Church,**

 **the communion of saints,**

 **the forgiveness of sins,**

 **the resurrection of the body,**

 **and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**“Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good”** LSB 819

Mite Offering

**We Are Connected to All Generations**

L: *“Remember the days of old;*

*consider the years of many generations;*

*ask your father, and he will show you,*

*your elders, and they will tell you”* (Deuteronomy 32:7).

R1: God gathers His people that we my hear His Word. That we may learn to fear, love, and trust in Him all the days that we live on the earth and that we may teach this to our children.

R2: In past generations elderly were especially respected because of their wisdom. The Lord God charged parents with the sacred duty of passing on the covenant history and God’s acts of deliverance to their children and to their children after them.

L: *… that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world* (Philippians 2:15).

R1: We live in a crooked and twisted generation. This is not new. It has been this way since Adam and Eve chose to rebel against the good and gracious will of God.

R2: We live in the light of God’s grace. Jesus is the new Adam who has restored us! By His Word and Sacrament we are a new creation. According to our new nature, we while living in a crooked and twisted generation, live in perfect harmony with Him.

**“Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me”** LSB 722

**The Prayers**

L: Lord, keep this nation under Your care. Bless the leaders of our land that we may be a people at peace among ourselves and a blessing to other nations of the earth. Grant that we may choose trustworthy leaders, contribute to wise decisions for the general welfare, and serve You faithfully in our generation. Lord in Your Mercy,

 **C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Almighty God, gracious Father, You are without beginning and without end, the Lord of all generations. Guide our youth that they may number their days and apply their hearts to eternal wisdom. By Your Word and Spirit increase their faith. Lead them to make godly choices and ever to strive for holiness of living, that they may faithfully serve You and finally come to the joys of heaven; Lord in Your Mercy,

 **C: Hear our prayer.**

L: O God, Your days are without end, and Your mercies cannot be numbered. Make us ever mindful of the shortness and uncertainty of life. By the working of Your Holy Spirit preserve us in faithfulness and righteousness that, when we have served You in our generation, we may finally join the saints in heaven; Lord in Your Mercy,

 **C: Hear our prayer.**

L: Merciful Father, the generations rise and pass away before You. You are the strength of those who labor and the repose of the blessed dead. We give You thanks for all who have lived and died in the faith. Give us faith to await with confidence the resurrection of all Your saints, living and departed; Lord in Your Mercy,

 **C: Hear our prayer.**

L: O Lord, the refuge of every generation, we fade like withered grass as You sweep us away in the sleep of death. Make us glad for as many days as You have afflicted us, be gracious to us for Jesus' sake, and awaken us in the joy of the resurrection to eternal life with Him who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

 **C:** **Amen.**

L: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**All: Our Father who art in heaven,**

 **hallowed be Thy name,**

 **Thy kingdom come,**

 **Thy will be done on earth**

 **as it is in heaven;**

 **give us this day our daily bread;**

 **and forgive us our trespasses**

 **as we forgive those**

**who trespass against us;**

 **and lead us not into temptation,**

 **but deliver us from evil.**

**For Thine is the kingdom**

 **and the power and the glory**

 **forever and ever. Amen.**

League Pledge

L: We are Christ’s servants in this generation.

 **C: In fervent gratitude for the Savior’s dying love and His blood-bought gift of redemption we dedicate ourselves to Him with all that we are and have;**

L: God has entrusted to His people the task of teaching all nations. We thank Him for the 75 years He has blessed the work of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League.

 **C: and in obedience to His call for workers in the harvest fields, we pledge Him our willing service wherever and whenever He has need of us.**

L: That the joyous truth of the Gospel may be known in every generation;

 **C: We consecrate to our Savior our hands to work for Him, our feet to go on His errands, our voice to sing His praises, our lips to proclaim His redeeming love, our silver and our gold to extend His Kingdom, our will to do His will, and every power of our life,**

L: We are mindful of the shortness of time and uncertainties of life. Preserve our faithfulness and strengthen us for service in our generation.

 **C: to the great task of bringing the lost and the erring into eternal fellowship with Him.**

 **Amen!**

**Benediction**

L: The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit,

 **C: Bless and preserve us. Amen.**

**“O God, Our Help in Ages Past”** LSB 733



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Mission: *Assist each woman of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry*

*to the people of the world.*