

A Message From The President

Dear faithful Lutheran Braille Workers,

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13 (NKJV)

So often we hear certain passages and gravitate to what we understand of its meaning. We interpret, not by any pretenses, but by the learning which has been instilled by our worship.

Have you ever been in a situation where your words have been taken out of context? Or you hear part of a conversation? Or the news reports a small piece of the actual story which makes you think in a different direction or thought process? Or maybe it's a government leader saying something which is so vague, we all may interpret it differently?



LBW President, Jay Zemke

Within our society, cultures take pieces of Bible verses and condense them down to an element which becomes meaningful to them. They are placed on T-shirts, written on the shoes of famous athletes, or even tattooed on a person's body. Elements or key sentences in an otherwise long paragraph can lose the meaning of why they were written, or worse, be changed all together because the masses have heard it before. As an example, people have taken Paul's writing in Philippians 4:13 out of context by shortening the verse to only say "I can do all things" or "I can do anything" or interpreting the passage to mean that I can do "anything" I want as long as I believe that Christ is with me...NO.

Paul wrote about how his strength comes solely from God no matter what the circumstances may be. "I can do all things through Christ who Strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13) Leading up to Philippians 4:13 Paul writes no matter what his circumstances were (whether well fed, hungry, living in plenty, or in want) Paul can manage any of his circumstances because of Christ's strength in all situations.

So, as you look to the Lord in your daily living and individual circumstances, believe that the Lord wants you to be content in your situation for He is with you and brings you peace.

Thank you for your partnership in this Gospel ministry. Because of you, thousands of people now recognize Jesus and know of His love and His salvation.

In HIS awesome service,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jay Zemke". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.

Jay Zemke, President of Lutheran Braille Workers

Please prayerfully consider Lutheran Braille Workers in your Estate Planning.

Joyful news from Mobile

In June, staff and volunteers from Lutheran Braille Workers descended on Mobile, Alabama for the Biannual Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) National Convention. In addition to setting up an exhibit and sharing information about Lutheran Braille Workers with thousands of attendees, two exciting things happened.



First, Lutheran Braille Workers is extremely grateful to the ladies of the LWML for approving the national grant request in the amount of \$100,000 to be used for the purchase of a new Plate Embossing Device (PED) which will produce the zinc plates needed in Braille assembly.



Second, Lutheran Braille Workers hosted a servant event in which hundreds of women and some men came through and helped assemble Braille (in both English and Spanish) and Large Print volumes and calendars. Over 1500 calendars were assembled and over 200 volumes of material were created in one day thanks to the tremendous efforts of these servant hearted individuals.



LBW President, Jay Zemke with volunteers

Overall, the week in Mobile was a memorable experience and a wonderful way to thank and connect with the ladies of the LWML. We look forward to being in Lexington, Kentucky in 2021!

**Thank You Women of the
LWML!**

LCMS National Youth Gather with Ministry Centers



LBW Volunteers watching Marvin

Forty high school students, plus chaperones, interacted with members of the Blind Outreach Center from Faith Lutheran Church, Minneapolis MN. Elaine Taggatz, leader of the ORC, blindfolded the students before they played Yahtzee, card games and “Guess what’s in the bag” with the attending members who were blind. Member Marvin taught the students how to braille their names with a Perkins Brailier, a special braille typewriter. He was so inspiring, some students never left his area and there were definitely life-long friendships created.

Minneapolis, birthplace of the US flour mills, NFL Vikings and Mall of America. While those things are exciting, the staff and volunteers of Lutheran Braille Workers didn’t go there for any of these points of interest. Our visit was to host a Servant Event at the LCMS National Youth Gathering. Three aspects of Lutheran Braille Workers ministries were represented; Outreach, Braille production, and Large Print production.



**Longtime LBW Volunteers
Anna Gerber, Donna Tupa, Barb Hagen**



LBW President, Jay Zemke with youth volunteers

The Students also collated and stapled thousands of Large Print Pamphlets while Donna Tupa, Large Print Center leader at Zion Lutheran Church, Hopkins MN and Lutheran Braille Workers’ President, Jay Zemke walked around with encouragement and witty humor to all those who were there enjoying the servant event. It was such a fantastic event!

We say, “thank you” to Traci Kohls for allowing Lutheran Braille Workers to participate with the National Youth Gathering. A special thank you to Trinity First Lutheran School for opening your church/school to us, and to Carrie Butcher, Director of Community Outreach for being our support.

“I’ve worn down my first two copies from reading them so much.”

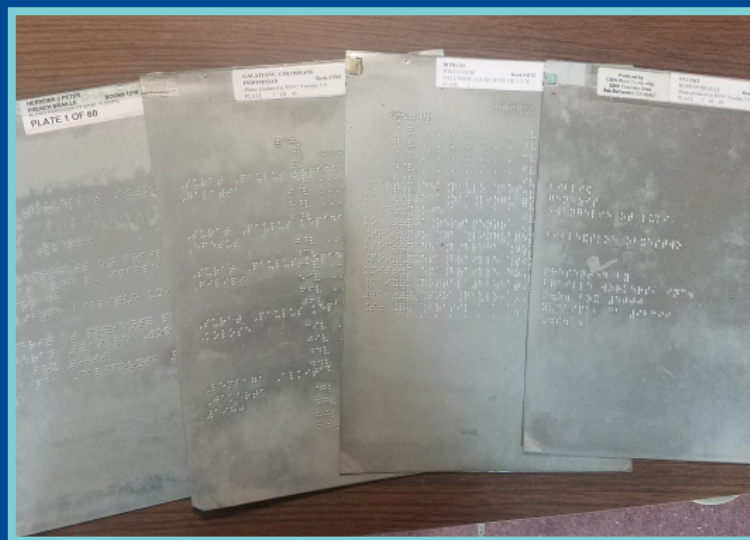


At the National Federation of the Blind convention held in Las Vegas in July, representatives from Lutheran Braille Workers were approached by a lady in the exhibit hall. As she quietly approached the table, she asked if we had the two volumes of the Psalms available for her to get. Thankfully both volumes were at the booth. When asked if she had owned a set before, she admitted, *“I have, but I’ve worn down my first two copies from reading them so much. Is it a problem to get another?”* She also acknowledged that while she listens to a number of books in audio formats, *“I prefer to read the Bible with my fingers. It makes me feel closer to God.”* Your support brings people closer to God through Braille, Large Print, and Audio materials!

New Growth in Braille Ministry

In 2019, Lutheran Braille Workers brought 8 languages back for Braille production. These languages included French, Indonesian, Portuguese, and others. The demand for these, and other Braille materials, has been extraordinary in this current year. In the past few months LBW has received an order for 500 complete Indonesian Bibles (35 volumes per Bible) and 700 complete Kiswahili Bibles (37 volumes per Bible), in addition to the other thousands of orders which have been placed by phone, e-mail, Facebook, or through the website.

Praise the Lord! It is exciting to see so many people desire to have the Scriptures for themselves. But this does place extra demand on machines, especially with so many zinc plates needed for the production of Braille volumes.



As such, Lutheran Braille Workers will be purchasing a brand new Plate Embossing Device (PED) before the end of the year! This new machine will be coming from the last remaining vendor in Germany! The total cost for this package is approximately \$230,000. Thankfully, the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League has approved a \$100,000 grant to help assist in the cost of this purchase. Lutheran Braille Workers will be launching a new campaign this fall to help raise the remaining funds.

Your prayers and financial support will be greatly appreciated as Lutheran Braille Workers continues to grow and expand its ministry to more people who are Blind or Visually Impaired. As long as people are asking for the Word of God, we will continue to provide it free of charge through God’s blessings, faithful volunteers, and prayerful support from brothers and sisters in Christ!

Thrivent Action Team's Update



Since the generous inception of Thrivent Action Teams in 2016 we have received \$28,949.15 to help cover supplies for several of our Ministry Centers. Plus, other centers are applying their card for team fundraising efforts or using their card to buy supplies locally. Thrivent would prefer for the Ministry Centers to do some kind of fundraising with these cards so that the \$250.00 could raise more funds for your center, however if that is not possible they will allow for it to cover supplies as long as they know a team will be meeting and producing the books. Please only apply for one card at a time per Ministry Center or Thrivent may deny you.

Who is eligible? All Thrivent members are eligible to lead a Thrivent Action Team. Benefit members are eligible to lead two Thrivent Action Teams per calendar year, and associate members are eligible to lead one per calendar year. Each Action Team is eligible for a \$250.00 card.



How do I apply? Go to www.thrivent.com click on MYTHRIVENT in the top right corner. Choose Apply for a **Thrivent Action**

Team. Sign in with User ID and password or Register for account access. Complete all information making sure you are requesting **Lutheran Braille Workers** as your project. You can either do a fundraiser for your center or just request to help pay for your supplies.



How do I know if I'm approved? You will receive an email within three business days indicating whether or not you are approved (watch in Junk Folder also). Once approved it will take approximately 2-3 weeks to get your card. Once you receive your card, follow the steps to activate it and then call Deanna Bowles-Donor Relations at LBW (800) 925-6092 and give her your card information. She will run your card and once funds are received, give your center credit.

The Thrivent Choice program encourages benefit members to recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes an amount of its charitable grant funds. Members make this recommendation by directing Choice Dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations, including churches.

Please make Lutheran Braille Workers your organization of choice so that you can allocate your Choice Dollars to us. These funds will help us to provide Braille, Large Print and Audio materials to those who are blind or visually impaired, free of charge.

If you have allocated your Choice Dollars to LBW and would like your funds to go to a particular Work Center, please call or email Deanna Bowles at (800) 925-6092 or deanna@lbwloveworks.com

Choice Dollars designated during the calendar year can be directed until March 31 of the following year.

Illuminations

Fall 2019

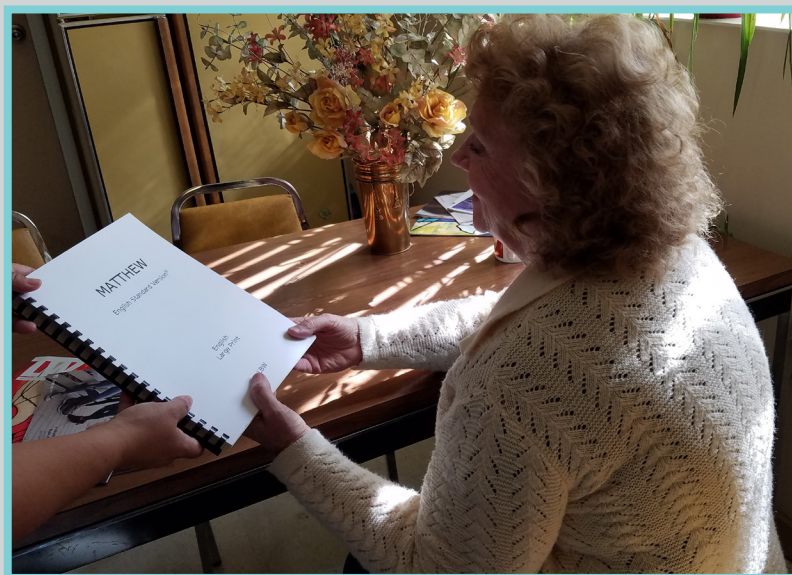


LBW

LUTHERAN BRAILLE WORKERS

"We live by faith, not by sight"
2 Corinthians 5:7

I can actually read this!



On a recent visit to a church, a pastor approached a Lutheran Braille Workers representative with a problem. Alice*, a member of his church, had asked for a "Jumbo Print Bible" only two days before and he had no idea where to turn. He knew Lutheran Braille Workers served individuals with Visual Impairment in Braille, and he hoped the representative could direct him to the correct website or organization, not knowing Lutheran Braille Workers produces Specialized Large Print Bibles and other materials.

In yet another example of God placing people where they need to be, the LBW representative happened to have a complete Large Print New Testament in his trunk, and with the delighted pastor, visited Alice at

her home. Upon being presented the box of New Testament volumes, Alice pulled out the first volume on top, the book of Luke. Using a magnifying glass, she slowly read a few verses before stopping with an astonished look on her face. She exclaimed, *"I can actually read this,"* and then broke down into tears of joy. Eventually she admitted she hadn't been able to read a Bible for almost a full year due to her failing eyesight but was so excited she could read God's Word again!

What joy it is to bring the Word of God back into somebody's life through the Specialized Large Print format!

*name changed, per request, to protect identity

"I received my box of large print materials today and I can't thank you enough. I am raising my autistic granddaughter and when she asked why was I about to cry, she saw what was in the box, smiled and said to me, "See!!! God loves you!" You don't know how much what you do means to me and so many others. Thank you and God bless. - Lea Hutto"