



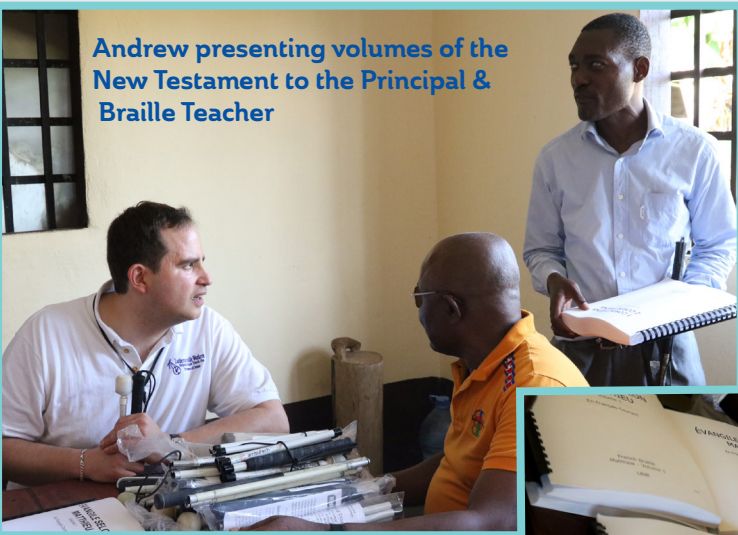
LBW

LUTHERAN BRAILLE WORKERS

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

You Can Add Cameroon To The List of Countries You Serve

Andrew presenting volumes of the New Testament to the Principal & Braille Teacher



Andrew L Diaz Russell, was in church one Sunday and saw a sign, Read the Bible in one year. January came and he said to himself, "Okay, it's January, let's go read the Bible."

Soon after he began his goal of reading the Bible, Andrew encountered a massive headache. The next thing he recalls was waking up from a four and a half week coma hearing the doctors and nurses rushing him for a scan of his brain. His thoughts were, "are these people crazy, they are going to bump into something?" That's when he realized, they could see but he could not.

When the doctors came back with the results of the scan they told him, "Sorry Andrew, your optic nerve has been crushed, which means your eyes can see, but your brain does not receive the message. Unfortunately you are blind."

Where does Andrew go from here, all his hopes and dreams have been crushed. How does he write on the blackboard as a teacher, how does he play soccer with his friends. He lost his independence, he had to ask for help to do everything. Andrew was hopeless, he thought God was punishing him for his sins.

(Con't inside)



Students, & Teachers giving praise & thanks.



New President for Lutheran Braille Workers



Jay Zemke, President

Dear Supporters of Lutheran Braille Workers,

It is hard to believe I started as President of LBW two short months ago. Moving from Minnesota to Southern California has been quite an exciting change, and I am thrilled to be at the Yucaipa Headquarters leading this organization forward.

After accepting this position, I have taken time to study the history of LBW, particularly noticing how God has provided for this ministry time after time. I was inspired by a story from the beginning of LBW's history, when there was an overwhelming response from pastors in Germany to the German Braille Bibles which had been produced

by Helene Koehler. Upon receiving a flood of requests for more Braille Bibles, Helene wrote, "How could we possibly meet them all? More importantly, how could we NOT fill them when the need for His Word was so great?"

According to the World Health Organization there are approximately 285 million people in the world who are Blind or Visually Impaired, 95% of whom are unchurched. There is an ever growing need for God's Word to reach people who live in both physical and spiritual darkness! While some may think this is an overwhelming task, I am overjoyed God has chosen LBW to reach this underserved population in every possible manner, and I especially look forward to taking on this mission each day.

I look forward to guiding this organization through strategic planning and development as we look to reach even more people throughout the world in new and exciting ways. With the rapid advances in technology, LBW will continue to evolve in the formats and methods used to reach people who are Visually Impaired. But rest assured, the message of LBW, the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, is forever unchanging!

Your support through prayers, time, and gifts will allow this ministry to grow and continue to serve people who are Blind or Visually Impaired free of charge. I look forward to meeting and speaking with as many of you as possible as we walk alongside each other in service to others. Thank you for your continued efforts and support! -- Jay Zemke

A Time for Everything

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

Ecclesiastes 3:1 (ESV)

For Jan and Roy Fisher, the time has come to say good-bye as staff members of Lutheran Braille Workers. Jan started back in 1995 and leaves the position of Vice-President of Ministry Operations. Roy started back in 2004 and leaves the position of Large Print Administrator.

Their retirement plans include seeing as much of the country in their RV as possible, enjoying time with their children and grand-children.

"We both cherish the time we've had here and take with us many fond memories of working with fellow staff members and volunteers serving people who are blind and visually impaired. May God continue to bless LBW!" --Jan & Roy



LWML District Grants

In 2018, multiple LWML districts generously approved grants to support Lutheran Braille Workers' efforts to bring Specialized Large Print materials into prisons. These grants will help fund the start-up costs of a 14-point Ministry Center to print, bind, and distribute Bibles to prisoners who are Visually Impaired. Currently, we have started Ministry Centers in two districts Texas and Louisiana/Mississippi. We are looking

for assistance from churches and individuals to start centers in the following districts:

Iowa East
Missouri
Oregon
Washington/Alaska
Northern Illinois

If you or church would be interested in starting this type of Ministry Center, please contact Mr. Sky Ervin at headquarters via e-mail: sky@lbwinc.org or via phone: 800-925-6092

Rural & Small Town Mission Webinar

On May 23, 2019, Daniel Jenkins, Vice President for Ministry Advancement, presented a one hour webinar for the LCMS Rural and Small Town Mission. This presentation, "Outreach Through Lutheran Braille Workers," discussed ways in which LBW is able to support churches with free materials to reach individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired, including in rural areas. In addition, Mr. Jenkins

discussed how churches in small communities are still able to connect to the sharing of the Gospel worldwide through volunteer efforts, including starting Ministry Centers for LBW. If you are interested in viewing this webinar, it is available for free on the LCMS Rural and Small Town Ministry website in its webinar archives. Please visit www.facebook.com/lutheranbrailleworkers for a link to this website.

Board of Directors

Mr. Ken Loeber - Chair
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LLL Servant Event

On May 4, 2019, multiple individuals participated in a servant event at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee, in conjunction with the Tennessee District of the Lutheran Laymen's League at their annual district conference. These men and women graciously collated and assembled over 800 Lutheran Hour Sermons and Project Connect Booklets in Specialized Large Print. Thank you to the wonderful men and women of the LLL Tennessee District for their help supporting LBW's ministry.



Upcoming Events

Thursday, June 20, 2019- LBW will be hosting a servant event at the LWML convention in Mobile, Alabama. Volunteers will be helping to assemble thousands of Braille and Large Print calendars for distribution throughout the world! This is one of LBW's longest running servant events in conjunction with the LWML and has produced thousands of volumes for people who are Blind or Visually Impaired. If you are going to be in Mobile at the convention, stop by and help during the event, or come by our booth during the rest of the week!

Saturday, July 11, 2019
LBW will be hosting a

servant event during the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota at Trinity First Lutheran Church. Approximately 40 young men and women will be coming to the Outreach Center to help serve a hot meal to individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired, join them in Bible Study, and share in laughter and conversation.

If you, your church, or organization is interested in supporting these servant events, or if you are interested in hosting a servant event, please feel free to contact the Headquarters of LBW directly, or make a gift online at www.lbwinc.org.

The Lord Has it Covered!

Ministry Center Leader, Arla Richter, of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ft Worth, TX is inspiring and a fantastic ambassador of Lutheran Braille Workers. She loves serving the Lord and this ministry.

"An interesting thing happened this week at the Braille Center. When a large group of volunteers cancelled their scheduled work session I knew not to worry. I told them the Lord has it covered. Later in the day I received a request from a local center, which houses and works with foster children, for a tour and volunteerism opportunities. I cautiously proceeded with suggesting a trial session next week."

"Well, a very large group of foster kids showed up, I got to observe them and their adult counselors all day long."

"I know that they are going to be a great addition to our center, especially now with the college and high schoolers off for the summer. God is Great!!"



Arla Richter with students of
St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ft. Worth, TX

You Can Add Cameroon...(con't from pg. 1)

A social worker was assigned to Andrew. That social worker gave him a list of names and contact information to organizations that provided services for people who are blind. On that list was Lutheran Braille Workers, with a description of providing Braille Bibles. This caught Andrew's interest, with help from his wife they contacted us. Soon he began receiving volumes of the Bible in Braille. After receiving his first Braille Bible he states; **"It was liberating!"** He began to learn Braille in Spanish, French and English.

Growing up in Spain, his first language was Spanish, but he also spoke French and English. He was an English teacher and was attending college to become an interpreter for the courts of Madrid.

Once again Andrew had access to God's Word. He states, *"I don't know how to put my feelings into words. It's just wonderful! Thank you Lord, you bridged the gap."* All of the sudden it hit him, *"God is still with me, He speaks to me through Braille."*

"These Bibles have changed me and it continues to change me. I love using my linguist skills by spreading the Gospel and encouraging others from all over the world. The fact that I'm blind doesn't stop me. If it wasn't for Lutheran Braille Workers, I wouldn't be able to do the work that I now do. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I know all the blind people I've met in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and other countries would echo the same words. Thank you Lutheran Braille Workers!"

A note from Andrew after his last trip:

"I just arrived from Cameroon yesterday and here I am to write to you. You can add Cameroon to the list of countries you serve in!"

"The teachers were teaching braille to the students without any braille books. Can you believe it? Well, they now have two New Testaments. Yes, two!. The students will now learn how to read Braille with the Word of God."



Andrew witnessing to students in Cameroon

View Andrew's video by going to:
www.facebook.com/lutheranbrailleworkers

We Don't Want to Lose You!

In an effort to be as efficient as possible in its mailings, and to be good stewards of the resources given to this ministry, LBW began cleaning up its mailing list in January. If LBW does not receive a gift, have you listed on a volunteer roster, or had communication with you since January 1, 2013, you will be removed from our mailing list. However, if you would like to continue to receive our mailings, please contact the Home Office and LBW will add you back onto the mailing list. Thank you!

SERVING

For 75 years we've been serving
the blind and visually impaired.
Spreading the Good News of Jesus,
letting them know that we care.

We serve a host of countries
not just serving the USA.
Our Braille and Large Print Bibles
are sent far, far away.

Yes, LBW and its volunteers
serve both far and wide.
Helping those who are visually
impaired and others who may be blind.

We serve these people and let them
know that Jesus, He is the way.
Letting them know, His Love Works
and He can brighten their darkest day.

By
Charlotte M Wilson
May 2019

Thrivent Action Team's

Since the generous inception of Thrivent Action Teams in 2016 we have received \$25,199.15 to help cover supplies for several of our Ministry Centers. Plus other centers are applying their cards for team fundraising efforts or using their cards 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. Chose 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.

Choice Dollars- If you have allocated your Choice Dollars to LBW and would like your funds to go to a particular Ministry Center, please call or email Deanna Bowles at (800) 925-6092 or deanna@lbwinc.org. She will need your name, amount and date allocated.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to give her a call. --Deanna Bowles

This past May, 800 Chaplains were mailed a letter with information about LBW's new Specialized 14 point Large Print Bible that is now available. This seven volume Bible is accepted into prisons because of its soft cover with no plastic comb binding. **Wow, what a response,** in the first week over 50 Chaplains called or emailed their requests for these Bibles. As you read in the article earlier, we need to open a few new centers to help produce these Bibles. With the price of paper prices going up 9%, we also need your financial help.

Please prayerfully consider Lutheran Braille Workers in your Estate Planning.

I'm Interested in Providing a Bible(s) for a Person Who is Blind or Vision Impaired

- _____ \$185 for a 37 volume Braille Bible
- _____ \$185 for a 26 volume Large Print Bible (18pt font)
- _____ \$185 for a 7 volume Large Print Bible (14pt font) for a prisoner
- _____ A gift in the amount of \$_____

Please contact me with information on:

- _____ Volunteer Opportunities
- _____ Opening a Ministry Center

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State & Zip _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

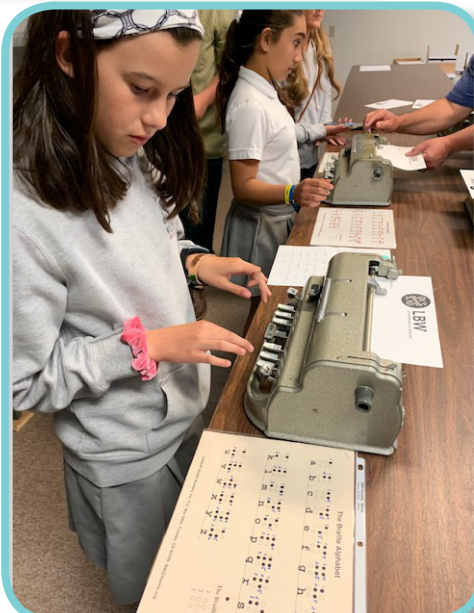
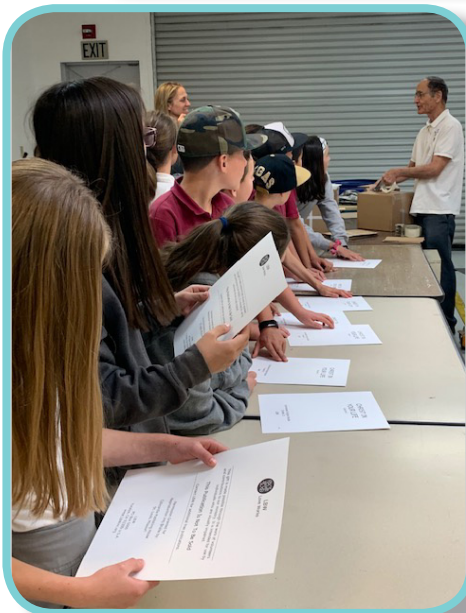
Wildwood Christian Academy Tours Lutheran Braille Workers

On April 23, 2019, Ms. Pearson brought thirteen of her 5th grade students from Wildwood Christian Academy, for a tour of LBW. Heading up the tour was staff member Joanna Ervin. Following behind the students were Board of Director's Chairperson, Ken Loeber and staff member Michelle Jordan. The students were very inquisitive as to how the covers for our Large Print and Braille books were produced. They also had many questions... how would one read Braille on the front of the Braille covers? How are numbers written in Braille? Volunteer Warren Werbelow, who reads Braille, assisted with answering a few of their questions.

With assistance from the staff, the students were able to use the Perkins Braille Writers and were very excited to see how their names appeared in Braille. Ms. Pearson even used the Perkins Braille Writer to share with her students and their school what Wildwood Christian Academy looked like in Braille.

The kids were able to emboss sheets of John 3:16 using the Braille Press. They were happy to take it home with them along with a bag of Braille material.

At the end of the tour they sat in our chapel to receive a drink and snack offered by LBW. The students along with Ms. Pearson prayed over the food. They also prayed for LBW's staff and volunteers to continue to produce Large Print and Braille Bibles along with Christian material for those who are blind or vision impaired.



LUTHERAN BRAILLE WORKERS APPOINTS JAY ZEMKE AS PRESIDENT

YUCAIPA, CA, May 1, 2019 – Jay Zemke, has been appointed President of Lutheran Braille Workers – the Yucaipa, California-based non-profit which provides free Braille, Specialized Large Print and Audio Bibles, Hymnals and other Christian materials to people who are Visually Impaired throughout the world.

A life-long member of congregations belonging to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Zemke brings to the ministry his 30 years of experience in leadership, business development, problem solving, team building, strategic planning and operations. As President of Lutheran Braille Workers, his responsibilities will now span organizational mission, operations and strategy; securing financial stability and serving as an organizational spokesperson to constituents, the media and the public.

“I’m humbled for the opportunity to lead and further develop a strategic vision for Lutheran Braille Workers. A vision which enhances brand visibility and presence on the world stage to produce high-quality, Gospel-based materials to help people with visual impairments touch the promises of Jesus and bring them into a growing relationship with Him,” said Zemke. “With 150,000 volumes distributed per year through 167 ministry centers with over 3,000 volunteers, LBW has been uniquely successful in getting the Word of God into the hands of people in 168 countries who are Blind or Visually Impaired – in over 30 different languages, at no expense to them. I’m grateful to have this role with this extraordinary organization and contribute to its sharing of the love of God.”

Zemke succeeds Rev. Dennis Stueve, who retired in January 2019 after 17 years of faithful service to Lutheran Braille Workers in roles including Pastoral Advisor to the Board, Board Member and President.

Jay’s volunteer work with non-profits and philanthropic organizations spans his serving as Senior Team Lead for Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritans Purse, Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Healing Haiti and the rebranding of Lutheran Braille Workers while at a respected agency.

In the for-profit sector, Zemke has served in senior leadership roles for the past three decades, building long-term executive level relationships with Fortune 100 corporations, developing and implementing how we receive brands into our lives. He has worked with such respected corporations as 3M, Colgate, General Mills, Johnson & Johnson, Hasbro, Target, Arctic Cat, Coca-Cola, Under Armour, Medtronic, U.S. Bank, Adidas, Coleman, Walmart and SC Johnson.

“Jay’s commitment to our mission at Lutheran Braille Workers – combined with his team leadership, people-oriented philosophy and three decades of experience in business development and organizational communications – make him an exceptional choice to lead our organization into its second 75-year history,” says Ken Loeber, chairperson of the Lutheran Braille Workers Board. “His faith, enthusiasm for service to God’s Kingdom, servant leadership and innovative ideas, along with his business and communications skills, will be great assets for his new responsibilities. Our Board expresses its thanksgiving and praise for God’s guidance and wisdom throughout our search process.”

Jay, who earned his BA degree in Communications and Psychology from Concordia University in St. Paul Minnesota, has moved to Southern California to work directly from LBW’s home office as of April 2019.

For more information on Lutheran Braille Workers, visit their website or Facebook page at: <https://lbwinc.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/lutheranbrailleworkers> | <https://www.linkedin.com/company/lutheranbrailleworkers>

Installation of New President

On April 24, 2019, LBW installed the 6th President in its 76 year history, Mr. Jay Zemke. Past President, Reverend Dennis Stueve, led the installation service with the entire staff in attendance, along with the Chairperson of LBW's Board of Directors, Mr. Ken Loeber. When sharing his thoughts for the future of LBW, Mr. Zemke stated, "I am honored to be a part of this important ministry in sharing God's Word with people who are Visually Impaired. This organization has a long and successful history, and I look forward to crafting a vision for the future success of LBW!" Mr. Zemke looks forward to meeting volunteers, donors, and ministry partners to thank them for their long-time support and efforts, as well as sharing what the future will look like in Yucaipa, California. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact Mr. Zemke directly at 800-925-6092.



**Rev. Dennis Stueve installing,
President, Mr. Jay Zemke**



**Mr. Ken Loeber, Board of Directors' Chair,
welcomes, President, Mr. Jay Zemke**



Closing prayer led by Rev. Dennis Stueve