



ILLUMINATIONS

Sharing the Gospel Always

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LBW Transforms Spiritual Lives

As we celebrate the joy and hope of the Easter season, we want to share a powerful story of transformation that highlights the impact of your support. Joel, a student in India, recently expressed his deep gratitude for how our ministry has transformed his spiritual life. In a country where Braille Scriptures are scarce and costly, Joel had difficulty accessing the Word of God. But through your generosity, Joel was able to receive a Braille Bible from Lutheran Braille Workers. He writes:

"Dear LBW,

I am Joel from India, and I am writing to express my deepest gratitude to the entire Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW) team for your incredible service to the visually impaired community worldwide.

Your dedication to making God's Word accessible through braille has profoundly impacted my spiritual journey. As someone living in India, I face significant challenges in accessing braille religious materials. In many parts of our country, especially in rural areas, braille resources are scarce and often prohibitively expensive. The waiting times can stretch for months, and the cost of shipping adds another layer of difficulty.

This makes the work of LBW even more precious to me and countless others in developing nations. Through your ministry, I have been able to read and study the Bible independently, allowing me to deepen my faith and participate more fully in my spiritual community. The ability to read Scripture in braille has given me a sense of connection to God that I cannot adequately express in words.

Your organization's commitment to providing these materials free of charge is truly a blessing, especially considering the economic challenges many blind individuals face in countries like India. You are not just providing braille materials; you are opening doors to spiritual growth and understanding for those who might otherwise be excluded.

I want to acknowledge the countless volunteers and supporters who make this ministry possible. Your work is literally helping to cure spiritual blindness across the globe, bringing light and hope to many who hunger for God's Word.

I want to wish the entire LBW family a blessed Easter. May this season bring joy, hope, and the warmth of knowing how many lives are touched through your ministry. I pray that the coming year brings even more opportunities for LBW to continue its vital mission of making God's Word accessible to all. Your work truly embodies the spirit of hope and new life that this season represents.

With heartfelt appreciation and warmest holiday wishes,

~ Joel, India



Dear Friends in the Risen Savior,

As we celebrate the joy and hope of the Easter season, a time filled with reflection, renewal, and hope, we are reminded of the greatest gift ever given to humanity—the promise of eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This profound promise has the power to change lives, to heal brokenness, and to offer peace to those in need.

Joel's story (see page 1) is a testament to the life-changing power of God's Word. Through the gift of the Bible in Braille, Joel has been able to fully experience the message of Christ's death and resurrection in a way that many in his community never thought possible. As he shared, *"Your ministry has opened doors to spiritual growth that many of us would not have had the opportunity to experience otherwise."*

Joel's transformation is a direct result of your generosity. It is because of your support that the Bible is made available to those who are visually impaired, allowing them to hear and experience the full promise of Easter—Christ's victory over death and the hope of eternal life. Your donations are not just gifts; they are lifelines that help us share the Word of God with those who need and long for it.

This Easter, we ask you to continue standing with us. Your support allows us to reach even more people, like Joel, with the message of Christ's resurrection. Together, we can provide access to the eternal joy that only comes through the hope of Easter and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Here's how you can help:

- **Make a donation:** Your gift directly helps provide Braille and Large Print Bibles and Christian materials to those who are visually impaired and seeking the light of Christ.
- **Pray with us:** Join us in praying for those who need the hope of the resurrection. Your prayers are as important as your donations.
- **Spread the word:** Share the mission of Lutheran Braille Workers with others who may want to join us in making God's Word accessible.

Thank you for being a part of this vital ministry. Your continued generosity makes the Bible accessible to people with visual impairment and it spreads the hope of Christ's resurrection to all corners of the world.

Easter blessings to you and your loved ones,

Rachel Potts

Rachel Potts
Director of Ministry Relations
Lutheran Braille Workers



*Jesus' death and
resurrection at
Easter guarantees us
eternal life with Him.*

*"He is not here; he has risen!"
Luke 24:6*

*Share the promise of Jesus' death and resurrection with
those who have visual impairments.*

Since January 2025...

25,000+

Volumes Have Been Produced

20,271

Orders Completed to Date

3,520 Volumes

United Bible Society Shipment of 80 Full Spanish Bibles (3,520 volumes)

Shipped to Paraguay, Argentina, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Chile, Costa Rica

Tonawanda, New York

New Large Print Ministry Production Center Now Open in New York

Volunteers will serve from six different churches from the Buffalo, New York area

A New Ministry Production Center Opens in Snowy New York

On a snowy February weekend, Lutheran Braille Workers was blessed to open our newest Ministry Production Center (#333) at St. Mark Lutheran Church in North Tonawanda, New York. Despite the icy, blustery weather, more than 30 dedicated volunteers gathered with Cynthia Keh and Rachel Potts for a two-day training to begin this exciting new chapter in ministry.

Located in a classroom of the church's former school building, this new center will focus on producing Large Print Bibles and Christian materials for people with visual impairments. Volunteers from six different churches in the Buffalo area have committed to serving at this location—an inspiring show of unity and mission-minded service.

Leading the center will be Alice and Mark Pfonner and Terry Hoffman, who bring a strong sense of purpose and leadership to this important work. The training was attended by a number of faith leaders and partners in ministry, including Pastor David Keating from St. Mark, Pastor Jeff Nickel from Holy Cross Lutheran, retired Pastor Richard Blemaster, LWML Eastern District President Dee Grbyz, and Bruce Sutherland from the LCMS Eastern District.

We give thanks to God for this new center, the faithful volunteers, and all who support the mission of making God's Word accessible to all.

As the first completed Bible was packed and prepared for shipment, Pastor Blemaster offered a heartfelt prayer:

"We pray that this Bible, and all those to follow, will be a blessing to those who receive them. Bless us as we do this work, and give us the full satisfaction of knowing that we are instrumental in bringing Your love to people all over the world who otherwise would not know it."



LBW Joins “Best Practices in Ministry” Conference in Phoenix

In February, several members of the Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW) team traveled to Christ Church Lutheran in Phoenix, Arizona, to attend the Best Practices in Ministry (BPM) conference—a three-day gathering focused on encouragement, education, and fellowship for both professional and lay church workers. BPM has been hosted by Christ Church for over a decade with a clear and heartfelt message: You are loved, you are not alone, and you matter.

LBW was well represented throughout the weekend. Staff members Cynthia Keh and Heather Farkas hosted an exhibitor table, engaging with hundreds of attendees from across the U.S. Board members Priscilla Newton and Deborah Rutt not only attended but also led breakout sessions, while former board members Ruth Martin and Paul Dasari stopped by the booth to reconnect and show their support.

Three LBW staff also presented insightful and impactful breakout sessions:



Brooke Pernice – “Engaging, Evangelizing, and Discipling the Visually Impaired”

Brooke shared practical ways churches can reach and disciple the blind community using a culturally aware, Gospel-centered approach, supported by free LBW resources.



Nate Paredes – “Nonprofits: Ministry, Business, or Both?”

Nate provided key insights into nonprofit financial management, showing how strong reporting and stewardship support sustainable, mission-driven growth.



Rachel Potts – “Are Your Church Members Too Old?”

Rachel challenged the notion that aging congregations are in decline, encouraging churches to see older members as vital, God-empowered contributors to ministry.

The BPM conference was a tremendous blessing and a wonderful opportunity to connect with ministry leaders, share LBW’s mission, and encourage others to join in making God’s Word accessible to people with visual impairments. We’re already looking forward to next year!



Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

As we step into the spring season, 2025 is already off to a fast start—and so is LBW!

By God's grace, LBW continues to be the world's largest producer and distributor of Braille and Large Print Bibles and Christian materials—provided FREE, NO CHARGE to recipients!

In 2024, we faced a challenge when the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) proposed changes to the eligibility criteria for the Free Matter for the Blind shipping program. As a major user of this service, LBW worked closely with USPS to improve the program's efficiency and clarify eligibility. Thanks to these efforts, we successfully streamlined and automated key aspects of Free Matter Shipping. Although we had to temporarily suspend the program last summer to accommodate these changes, the project ultimately proved to be a success.

With this challenge behind us, LBW is now rapidly moving forward in 2025, reconnecting with our mission and ministry partners—our Ministry Production Centers, volunteers, and, most importantly, the Blind and Visually Impaired members at the heart of our community.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we addressed critical issue in 2024. We are excited for what lies ahead in 2025, and we look forward to a vibrant, impactful year—To God be the Glory!



Glenn Mahnken

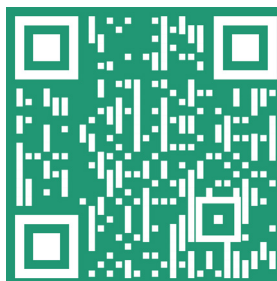
Glenn Mahnken
Chair, LBW Board of Directors

Discover the Heart Behind Lutheran Braille Workers – Through Song

Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW) has a rich and inspiring history that began in 1943, born out of a deep need and a faithful response. When blind pastors in Germany were without access to Braille Bibles, Helene Loewe Koehler answered God's call. She first learned Braille herself, then began the painstaking process of transcribing the Bible into German Braille—one dot at a time. With the support of her family, Helene's faithful work laid the foundation for what would become a global ministry.

Brooke Pernice, LBW's Director of Outreach, was so deeply moved by the origin story that she wrote a song honoring LBW's history. Titled "Light of the Savior," this beautiful piece captures the spirit of Helene's dedication and the heart of LBW's mission. It's a song filled with inspiration, history, and reverence—and once you hear it, you will likely find yourself listening again and again.

If you haven't heard "Light of the Savior" yet, don't miss it! It's a moving tribute to one woman's faith-filled obedience and the powerful legacy that continues today through Lutheran Braille Workers.



Scan QR code to watch
or follow this link:

<https://youtu.be/gJvBdn9RoQI>



Thank You Messages from Around the World

United States

I felt devastated after experiencing vision loss due to my congenital eye condition. Initially, relying on audiobooks was a good way to access information, but being able to read by myself in the form of braille allows me to maintain my independence and literacy. Thanks to LBW for making scripture and other faith-based materials available for the blind and visually impaired!

Thank you for the work you do to God be the Glory!

~ Stephanie Lyles

I would like to bless LBW with this gift to help get these Braille Bibles in the hands of those who need them, and the Lord.

~ Roger Sieber

As a long-time recipient of the Scriptures, in braille, from LBW, I want to say thank you and help others receive them too.

~ Stefan Slucki

I really enjoy getting your newsletters to see how you are bringing the Gospel to the visually impaired and blind. May God continue to bless your organization. ~ Melanie Algrim

Uganda

Greetings and Praise the Lord, Amen. Thanks for your support in kind, the Word, Bible. I'm so grateful for your support. May the Lord richly bless you. Amen

~ Rev Dr Robert Enyaku Eceru

Ghana

Well noted with happiness that you sent me the parcels at long last. Am indeed grateful to the kind gesture. Whilst waiting am organizing for donation to your outfit for the services to other destinations. Once again am grateful and excited in waiting to hear from you soon.

~ Elder Julius K Foli

Mexico

"I can touch the light through Braille," said Ezequiel. "...The light is the word of God which enlightens the darkness inside, can change lives and give new perspectives and hope." He stated that the darkness 'inside' is much more dangerous than not being able to see the light physically. After encountering God, the light comes out from inside and enlightens the lives of fellow people. The Light unites blind people and seeing people together. The Light makes inclusion possible on the highest level.

~ Ezequiel

Kenya

I happily salute you in the sweet name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many thanks for sharing God's love with me and the Brethren here in Kenya and other friends Globally. It has taken a long time since I received the literature from Lutheran Braille Workers and distributed them well and many people were blessed with gospel message.

~ Pr.Simion Sikweya Omwenga

Turkey

I really appreciate your church or establishment's help, kindness, and generosity. I look forward to receiving my large print or giant print ESV Bible soon. May God bless all of you.

~ Chau

Nigeria

I am so very happy to be a beneficiary of books, bibles in Braille and a Braille machine from the kindhearted Lutheran Braille Workers' organization. I am also very happy to know that my video of gratitude was uploaded on LBW's YouTube channel. I am grateful and may God be praised. I will continue to speak about LBW's good works and kindness to people. I look forward to an opportunity to meet LBW one on one, especially when your organization comes to Nigeria.

May the good Lord continue to bless the works of LBW. The joy you put in my life and that of many other visually impaired people cannot be quantified.

I am grateful. God bless LBW and all those who donate .

~ Ifeoma Lois Ugochukwu

Nicaragua

Omri is an indigenous Miskitu and is the representative of the Organization for the Blind in Bilwi, Puerto Cabezas. The center serves more than 50 blind people. He said: "On behalf of the blind people at our center, we want to deeply thank the Bible Society for coming to our center on the Caribbean Coast and giving us the Bible. We haven't had a Braille Bible for years."

"Now our library is equipped with the best books, so the brothers and sisters can come and strengthen their spiritual lives by reading the Bible. We have a devotional every Monday, and we can now use the Bible for Bible reading. So, thank you again."

~ Bilwi



From Maricela Toledo Center for the Blind Braille Bible Sandino City, Nicaragua...

Maura Pravia, 43, is a member of the Maricela Toledo Center for the Blind. She lives with her two children in Zone 4 of Ciudad Sandino. She attends the local Baptist Church and says this is the first time she has had a Bible in Braille. "At the center, I learned to read Braille, and my longing was to read the Bible in this format, but I didn't have access to it. Now that I have it, I am very happy because it will strengthen my knowledge of the Bible, to instruct my children in the best path, which is to follow Jesus."

~ Maura Pravia

Kener is a blind brother who lives with his family in the municipality of Ciudad Sandino. This is the first time he has received the Bible in a system he can read. He said: "First, I want to thank our Lord Jesus Christ for His Word. This is the first time I have received it. I am very happy because with the Bible I will draw closer to God, to receive hope and strength."

~ Kener Salvador Mena Morales

We are excited to present a new devotional in each newsletter written by our Director of Outreach, Brooke Pernice. Brooke is currently working towards her Doctor of Ministry and is writing these devotions to present a perspective on life as somebody who is Blind.



Perceiving Reality

Written by Brooke Pernice, Director of Outreach

Fr. Thomas Carroll, director of the Catholic guild for the blind, was a pioneer in the field that became known as Orientation and Mobility, teaching navigation through the Hoover cane method. He emphasized the cane as a tool used to perceive reality beyond the hand's natural reach, and to mitigate common fears of injury from unknown objects that were not actually there. Canes would accurately connect their users with the world, confirming the existing obstacles, and alleviating fears when no threat existed.

The Children of Israel lost their connection with reality in several drastic ways when, after delivering them from the armies of Egypt, God told Moses to send twelve spies into the land He had promised to give them (Num 13:1-24). Ten of them brought back reports of the giants in the land, the great defenses of the cities, and the mighty forces outnumbering Israel's hosts, convincing the people that the land could not be taken, and driving them to rebellion (Num 13:31-14:5). The other two spies, Joshua and Caleb, confirmed the existence of powerful defenses, armies, and giants, but assured the people that the land was good (Num 14:6-7). They said,

"If the LORD delights in us, he will bring us into this land and give it to us." (Num 14:8a). God declared that Joshua and Caleb would be the only two from that generation who would live to enter Canaan, along with the younger generation who would be allowed to enter after forty years of wandering (Num 14:10-38). God was against them, but the people decided to conquer the land, walking in their own presumed strength, and were driven back after taking heavy losses (Num 14:39-45).

God had delivered them from Egypt, and preserved their lives repeatedly in the desert, but new terrors caused the Israelites to lose faith and defy Him, so before the younger generation entered the land, God reminded them again of His mercies, charging them not to forget (Deut 8:11-16). Forgetting His mighty deeds would result in the false believe that their own strength had delivered them, and they would be destroyed (Deut 8:17-20). The responsibility to remember remains in the Christian era. St. Paul charged his disciple Timothy,

"Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David." (2 Tim 2:8a). He was willing to suffer prison and death, knowing everlasting life lay in Christ (2 Tim 2:9-10).

According to his wishes, Fr. Carroll was buried with a small cross bearing the words, "Everything must be built new." From an earthly perspective, the sighted man honored as "the blind priest", introduced countless individuals to a reality that first seemed new and foreign after losing their sight. From a Heavenly perspective, we view reality, only when we remember the death, resurrection, and future return of Jesus Christ.



"If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him." (2 Tim 2:11b-12a).

Brooke Pernice on the Road

Brooke Pernice, Director of Outreach, has been actively representing LBW at a number of key conferences in recent months. One of the major events she attended was the International Conference on Missions (ICOM), a non-denominational, non-profit organization that hosts an annual global gathering focused on missions. ICOM brings together unaffiliated Christian Church congregations from around the world to inspire, equip, and connect mission-minded individuals and organizations.

Brooke also represented LBW at the Global Missions Health Conference (GMHC) in Louisville, Kentucky. As the world's largest gathering of healthcare professionals, students, and organizations passionate about medical missions, GMHC offers a unique space to learn, connect, and collaborate. The three-day conference features dynamic plenary speakers, insightful breakout sessions, and numerous exhibitors, all focused on advancing the Kingdom through compassionate healthcare outreach.



We're grateful for Brooke's dedication and the opportunities these events provide to share LBW's mission and build meaningful partnerships for the future.



LaVelle Fund Partnership

In late March, Nate Parades, VP of Operations, and Glenn Mahnken, Chairman of the Board of Directors, traveled to New York City to meet with representatives of the LaVelle Fund and strengthen LBW's ongoing relationship with this valued partner.

The Lavelle Fund for the Blind has generously supported LBW through two major grants, the most recent of which enabled the production of Spanish Braille Bibles. Thanks to this support, over 100 Bibles have been distributed throughout Latin and Central America, sharing the Word of God with those who might not otherwise have access.

MPC #135 Lake Forest, California

In late March, the Large Print Ministry Production Center #135 at Abiding Savior Lutheran Church in Lake Forest, California, warmly welcomed Rachel Potts for a visit. Longtime leaders Jim Ryan and Margaret de la Cruz gave Rachel a tour of their beautiful church, school, and the spacious room where their faithful ministry takes place.

Jim and Margaret have dedicated many years to serving at this center, leading volunteer groups that meet every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday morning. We are so grateful for their leadership and for the ongoing commitment of all the volunteers at MPC #135. *Thank you for your faithful service!*

We are truly grateful for the commitment and generosity of the LaVelle Fund. Their partnership continues to be a blessing to countless individuals around the world.





Seedlings Braille Books

In early April, Rachel visited Seedlings Braille Books for Children and met with their new Executive Director, Amanda Hercula. During the visit, Amanda gave Rachel a tour of the organization's impressive facility in Livonia, Michigan. Much of the equipment at Seedlings is similar to what is used at LBW, and like LBW's Ministry Production Centers, Seedlings relies heavily on volunteers to assemble the Braille books.

Seedlings provides Braille books free or at low cost to children who are blind or visually impaired, distributing books not only in the U.S. but also across Canada and over 75 other countries. Key programs like the Book Angel Program, which offers four free Braille books annually to children under 21, and The Rose Project, which transcribes World Book Encyclopedia articles into Braille, are central to Seedlings' mission. They also offer free books to Teachers of the Visually Impaired in the U.S. every year.

Amanda and Rachel discussed potential collaborations, both excited about the possibility of partnering to increase the availability of Braille worldwide. As Amanda put it, "The more Braille there is in the world, the better!"



Fold Homeschool Fellowship

In late January, more than 20 homeschool students and their parents from the Fold Homeschool Fellowship visited LBW Headquarters for a special day of learning and service. Their visit began with a one-hour tour of our warehouse and the LBW Museum, where they had the opportunity to see firsthand how Braille and Large Print materials are produced and distributed.

Following the tour, the group took part in a two-hour servant event, where they rolled up their sleeves to help assemble several LBW Braille books. Their enthusiasm, curiosity, and willingness to serve made it a truly meaningful experience for all. Thank you, Fold Homeschool Fellowship, for your time, your helping hands, and your heart for ministry!

Celebrating 100th Large Print Bible!

Just a little over a year ago, in January 2025, LBW staff member Heather Farkas (Director of Operations), along with LBW Board Member Ken Loeber and his wife, Kathy, traveled to Zion Lutheran Church in Alva, Oklahoma, to help launch Ministry Production Center #330. Since then, this dedicated center has been faithfully producing Large Print resources—and just last week, they marked a major milestone: their 100th Large Print Bible completed!

Congratulations, MPC #330! We celebrate with you and give thanks for the incredible impact of your work, bringing the Word of God to individuals with visual impairments. What a beautiful blessing!



Graduation Celebration

We are excited to share that Brooke Pernice will be receiving her Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree from Knox Theological Seminary this coming May! The DMin is a practical, advanced degree designed for those actively serving in ministry, and we are thrilled to see Brooke reach this important milestone.

She is currently in the final stages of completing and defending her thesis, titled “Biblical Glimpses of a World Unseen.” We ask that you keep Brooke in your prayers—specifically for the Holy Spirit’s guidance and wisdom in the final days of her work. Please also pray that the insights from her thesis will be a powerful blessing to many and a meaningful contribution to the Church.

Congratulations, Dr. Brooke Pernice! We’re proud of you and grateful for your dedication to ministry.

Summer Events

LBW is thrilled to be part of two major events this summer! Staff, board members, and volunteers will be heading to Omaha, Nebraska at the end of June for the LWML National Conference, followed by a trip to New Orleans, Louisiana at the end of July for the LCMS Youth Gathering.

At both conferences, LBW will host an exhibitor table and lead Braille servant events. During these events, participants will receive hands-on training in using Braille production equipment to help create a brand-new devotional book written by author Donna Snow. In addition to producing Braille materials, attendees will engage in interactive activities designed to increase awareness and understanding of Braille and visual impairments.

Braille Literacy Initiative

Lutheran Braille Workers is excited to begin laying the foundation for a new Braille literacy initiative—an effort aimed at addressing a critical global need. Braille literacy rates are alarmingly low, with only 10% of the visually impaired population in North America being Braille-literate, and rates in other parts of the world even lower (Thinkerbell Labs, 2023). The impact of this is profound: Braille literacy is closely tied to academic achievement and long-term independence. In fact, 75% of blind individuals who are not literate rely on government assistance (The Literacy Project, 2019).

LBW is committed to changing this narrative. Through this initiative, we aim to increase access to Christian Braille books for those learning to read—particularly children. The project will include the production of Braille materials for beginning, intermediate, and advanced readers, the creation of a Braille Bible designed specifically for children, and the development of resources for blind parents to read aloud to their sighted children.

We believe every person, regardless of visual ability, deserves the opportunity to read, learn, and grow in faith. This initiative is a bold step toward making that vision a reality.

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT SEARCH

Presidential Search

Lutheran Braille Workers is conducting a national search to locate a qualified candidate for the position of president.



LBW

LUTHERAN BRAILLE WORKERS

Responsibilities, qualifications, and a job description can be found at:

www.lbwloveworks.org/president-search

Questions regarding this position may be directed to Board Member Gregory Moffitt at: greg@lbwloveworks.org

LBW is seeking grant opportunities! Partner with Us to Make Braille and Large Print Bibles and Books Accessible for People Worldwide

At Lutheran Braille Workers, we are constantly seeking partnerships with foundations, grantmakers, and philanthropic organizations to help expand our mission and reach more individuals with vision impairment across the world. Your generous support can make a meaningful difference in the lives of thousands of people by helping us:



Provide Bibles and Books at No Cost

Lutheran Braille Workers ensures that Bibles and other Christian books are available in Braille and Large Print to anyone who requests them.



Share God's Love

All people in the world who are Blind or Visually Impaired have free access to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ.



Create New Titles

Each year, we develop and add engaging new books to our growing collection, designed to provide new materials that will develop, expand, and deepen individuals' walk with Jesus.

We invite you to join us in sharing God's Word with those who are blind or visually impaired. To learn more about partnering with Lutheran Braille Workers or exploring funding opportunities, please contact:

Rachel Potts by email at rachel@lbwloveworks.org or phone (800) 925-6092.

Together, we can bring the Good News of Jesus to people with visual impairments throughout the world.



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