

2024-2026 LWML IED MISSION GRANTS

1. Lutheran Family Service--Preventing Burnout in Lutheran School Teachers with Christ-Centered Counseling Resources--\$7,500

Where it will be used: Lutheran Schools Across Iowa District East

Why needed: As Synodical resolutions at multiple conventions over the past decade have recognized, our Lutheran Schools struggle to find roster teachers to serve in the classroom. Per Concordia University System Board for University Education Statistics, the number of new commissioned teachers has steadily declined from 63% in 2010 to 25% in 2022. While new candidates are in short supply, our existing Lutheran School teachers are increasingly taxed. Teachers are frequently doing double duty with bare-bones staff by taking on needed tasks that aren't in their job descriptions for the sake of the students.

What it will provide: Lutheran Family Service Church Worker Wellness counseling team will provide proactive resources as well as crisis response assistance for our teachers and other workers serving in Iowa Lutheran Schools.

2. College Hill Conservatory--Raising Up Future Church Musicians--\$2,000

Where it will be used: College Hill Conservatory and surrounding LCMS churches

Why needed: There is a dire need in the LCMS for more church musicians.

What it will provide: This grant will provide Lutheran liturgy and hymn resources to help support the development of our future and current church musicians. These resources will help get them involved in the musical life of the congregation sooner.

3. LCMS Office of Pastoral Education--Set Apart to Serve (SAS): Second-Career Phase--\$5,000

Where it will be used: SAS has the blessing and support of the executive leadership in the LCMS International Center, our two seminaries, our Concordia University System leadership, and district presidents. All who have contributed to this initiative have been supportive of the project's impact and confirmed the need for its necessity with both youth and second-career church worker candidates.

Why needed: The need for more pastors, and church workers is urgent. Without immediate attention, studies show the number of ordained pastors will decline from 6,000 to 3,000 over the next 15 years. The same studies show a 50-70% decrease in commissioned workers. An emphasis on second-career pastor and teacher candidates would help us fill a current need in the short term.

What it will provide: The SAS Second-Career phase focuses on the formation of adults in established secular career fields who could be candidates for professional church vocations. The primary outcome will be noticeable and sustainable growth of degreed professionals, well-prepared to serve and to lead through their vocations within church, school and parachurch settings. Most importantly, we expect this phase to have a more immediate impact on interest and enrollment in LCMS church worker degree programs over the next five years.

4. LCMS Office of National Mission--Proclaim the Gospel – Serve in Mercy– \$5,000

Where it will be used: Where needed most by LCMS RSO (Recognized Service Organizations) with special requests

Why needed: To extend its mission outreach, education and social ministry, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod supports and works with independent RSOs. Frequently an RSO will request consideration for resources such as Bibles, children's story books, and women's devotional studies in many languages. Others request guidance and resources for the leadership staff within the RSO organization. Also, requests are received for financial support for special Mercy projects.

What it will provide: RSOs are ministries who extend the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's work so that the love of Christ is poured out in various and creative ways. LCMS is truly blessed by these unique organizations. Through them the church can do more and the organizations themselves are strengthened through our relationship. From helping the homeless to bringing the gospel to the blind, these organizations are shining the light of God's mercy all over the world.

5. Concordia University Nebraska--Acts 1:8 Students in Mission–\$7,500

Where it will be used: Concordia University Nebraska

Why Needed: Concordia students are very mission minded with interest in how they can be involved in missions and mission opportunities here and abroad. More students would have the chance to serve and share the love of Christ and more gospel focused mission opportunities in the church and world could be possible with more funding available.

- During spring/summer 2022, 25 students requested gifts and \$13,550 was granted.
- During spring/summer 2023, 22 students requested gifts and \$11,165 was granted.
- At this point in time, we only have enough funds to support students in 2024.

What it will provide: Some students may not consider taking part in mission experiences due to financial concerns. This grant would cover some of the trip costs. Currently students can apply for up to a third of the cost of a Gospel-focused mission experience. This grant would provide funding beyond 2024.

6. Concordia Seminary, St. Louis--Expanding Gospel Proclamation Worldwide–\$5,000

Where it will be used: Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO

Why Needed: Concordia Seminary currently enrolls 61 international students from 20 different countries, many from developing nations. Some of these countries do not have seminaries nor sufficient funding to support these students. When these students graduate, they will return home to serve as seminary professors, theological instructors, and church leaders in their respective countries. They will help fill the void of theologically trained seminary professors to train the next generation of pastors who will share the Gospel as they serve their church bodies. They will have a considerable impact on Gospel proclamation.

What it will provide: Thankfully, Concordia Seminary receives annual financial contributions from individuals, LCMS congregations, and other organizations such as the LWML that support this important initiative. However, these funds fall well short of covering the total cost of these students' advanced-level education. Support for international students is an important ongoing seminary funding need.

7. Word of Hope--Suicide Prevention for Post-Abortive Women--\$5,000

Where it will be used: Online usage through a learning management system and in-person with Lutheran congregations and pro-life teams who desire face-to-face training in Iowa

Why needed: Like abortion, suicide is an imminent life issue that is vital to address because the parents' lives are valuable, even after the sin of abortion. Women with a past abortion are 70% more likely to self-harm than women without a past abortion. Additionally, 65% of women with a history of abortion had suicidal thoughts and 31% attempted suicide. Suicide among men with a history of abortion has not been researched yet. However, studies have shown that after an abortion, men are more likely to experience PTSD, chronic grief, hopelessness, guilt, anger, anxiety, isolation, and helplessness, all of which are highly associated with suicidal thoughts and behaviors.

What it will provide: The grant will result in the professional development of a free, online, interactive program: HOPE for Suicide Awareness, Intervention, and Postvention training. The HOPE curriculum is the only suicide intervention program that emphasizes Christ's promises in the face of hopelessness and addresses suffering from a Lutheran perspective.

8. Eastside Mission--Van Repair--\$7,500

Where it will be used: Both vans owned by Eastside Mission are at least 20 years old and are used mainly in the Quad City area to transport adults and children to and from the mission and mission related activities.

Why needed: In January 2023, God blessed Eastside Mission with Pastor Andrew Watkins, so the mission is once again able to provide Word and Sacraments. Worship services are well attended as well as evening ladies' Bible study and confirmation classes. In March 2023, Pastor Watkins baptized 11 people, two adults and nine children, and is currently meeting with others to lead them to baptism. Having vans in good working condition is not only a safety concern, but also is key to having successful programs at the mission.

What it will provide: The grant will provide the mission with the funds to fix the vans, which will ultimately provide two working vans, or purchase a newer van to transport people safely and in comfortable conditions.

9. LCMS Office of International Mission (OIM)--Walking Together in Mission Field-Alliance Missionaries--\$5,000

Where it will be used: Within the 4 OIM regions. Alliance missionaries do not replace LCMS missionaries; rather they work alongside and work together complementing each other on the work they do. There are currently such pastors in at least 10 countries. These native-speaking missionaries enrich the outreach, especially in Spanish-speaking countries.

Why needed: As the OIM continues its work, it continues to receive additional requests for pastors. While the LCMS is not able to immediately fulfill all the requests, often our church partners have pastors who are uniquely equipped for an open position in the mission field due to many factors. Alliance Missionaries are pastors supported by the budget of the LCMS through grants awarded to our partner churches. Most times the Alliance Missionaries' home national church body does not have a support system to teach and train them for network building.

What it will provide: It will support Alliance Missionaries working alongside and together with LCMS missionaries as they spread the Gospel and show mercy to hurting people. Alliance Missionaries may speak a different language; however, they walk together with LCMS missionaries in the mission field sharing the same confession of faith in Christ. Both have resources to carry out proclamation of the Gospel, and the unity of faith is reflected in the sharing of resources and gifts for the sake of the Gospel.

10. POBLO--Unequally Yoked Workshop Training--\$3,600

Where it will be used: Providing workshops for the leadership of congregations and young adults of Iowa District East

Why needed: The number of young American women who convert to Islam in colleges and universities has increased from 19,000 to 21,500 per year. Even though Christianity is the dominant faith, young women on college campuses in our state are being targeted by Muslims, in particular by young Muslim men, as access points to quickly increase the Islamic faith in a community. The goal of this training is to: 1) Offer a clear understanding of the falsehoods and half-truths throughout the Islamic doctrine, 2) Assist the Body of Christ, as well as the unchurched to connect with and understand their true identity in Christ, 3) Emphasize how He sees His people, and His definition of a relationship with Him and each other, and 4) Provide an aid to recognize, identify and appropriately respond to young American women being targeted by Muslim men, who manipulate and/or abuse women with the objective of locking them into a marriage.

What it will provide: The workshop and training kit provide one in-person workshop training of the circuit churches with a virtual option, and information on various topics, including how Islam views women and marriage, among other topics. The kits, to be sent to 15 of Iowa East's major churches, will remain with the district churches to facilitate their own subsequent training sessions on identifying and appropriately responding to this shrewd attack on faith, family, fellowship, and identity in Christ Jesus.

11. Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW)--Bringing God's Word to the Visually Impaired in Prison--\$5,000

Where it will be used: LBW Prison Large Print Ministry Production Centers to produce Prison Bibles and other Christian materials for the purpose of distribution to prison chaplains and prison inmates in Iowa and across the United States

Why needed: At the end of 2021, Iowa had the 31st highest prison incarceration rate of the 2.3 million people incarcerated in the American Criminal System. Approximately 12% of these inmates may have a visual impairment leaving them without access to the Bible, which offers the hope that comes from knowing Jesus as their Savior. LBW provides Prison Ministry materials in a large print font with a special prison-approved binding for free, so prison inmates will understand their ultimate worth is not based upon their own actions, but on Christ's salvation alone!

What it will provide: This grant will provide approximately 1,000 volumes of Large Print Prison Ministry Bibles and other Christian materials in English or Spanish to prison chaplains and prison inmates. These volumes will be vital in helping meet the spiritual needs of these prison inmates in Iowa and across the United States through the purchase of the supplies needed to produce these volumes. This project further benefits the spiritual well-being of our LBW volunteers by engaging them in this ministry to serve others in need of knowing Jesus as their Savior.

12. LCMS Office of International Mission--Life-Changing Care for People in the Dominican Republic Living with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)--\$6,500

Where it will be used: The home that was started in 2011 by the Dominican Republic Lutheran Mission (LCMS) to put forth a model of loving Christian care for people with IDD

Why needed: All funds for the care of the IDD residents in the group home must be raised by the mission. Conditions in government institutions are miserable and children and adults living there have no education or rehabilitation services. People with IDD are one of the most unchurched populations in the Dominican Republic and need to hear the message of forgiveness of sins and salvation in Jesus. Hogares Luteranos el Buen Pastor (HLBP) provides excellent care. Residents are loved and included in their community and local congregation. They are taught God's Word and are treated as people who have been created in the image of God. This model of care needs to continue to be put forth to the government to bring forth change in the country regarding the care for people with IDD.

What it will provide: The grant will help provide for on-going care of the residents in the group home which includes spiritual, educational, and rehabilitative care as well as vocational training. This grant will also help to promote awareness regarding inclusion of people with IDD in society and will support outreach to families with loved ones with disabilities.

13. Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch--Nutrition Center Transformation--\$3,000

Where it will be used: Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch Fargo, ND

Why needed: The kitchen facilities in the Fargo Nutrition Center need updating to serve the Ranch's children and staff more effectively by increasing the variety of items offered during meals, reinforcing good nutrition habits, teaching children how to build balanced meals, and providing the basic needs for children to begin healing.

What it will provide: Funds would purchase a standing fridge, a food slicer, and a food processor for the nutrition center on the Fargo Campus. The grant will help the Ranch meet the most basic needs of the at-risk children as they embrace the Gospel's healing care in the deepest ways possible.

14. MOST Ministries--LWML Iowa East District Short-term Mission Trip for Members of the LCMS Iowa District East--\$7,500

Where it will be used: MOST Ministries short-term eyeglass mission team in Central America

Why needed: Members of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) Iowa District East desire to serve on short term mission teams; however, financial and logistical considerations may hinder participation. MOST Ministries frequently receives requests for eyeglass mission teams. Teams are equipped to share the love of Jesus as they fit people with eyeglasses. Financial aid to meet rising travel costs will increase the number of volunteers able to serve alongside LCMS missionaries and national church leaders.

What it will provide: This grant will provide financial support for a MOST Ministries short-term mission trip to Central America during the 2024-2026 Biennium, coordinated through LWML IED. The average size of a MOST Ministries eyeglass mission team is 10-15 participants, and the average cost of an eyeglass ministry mission trip to Central America is \$3,000 per participant. Grant funds will be split evenly in support of all LCMS Iowa District East mission team members.

15. Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF)--Project 72: Jesus Sent Them Two by Two--\$5,000

Where it will be used: In countries throughout East Africa (e.g. Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda)

Why needed: The Holy Spirit has brought about explosive growth in countries throughout East Africa. But even as the Gospel spreads like wildfire, church leaders are left wondering how to faithfully teach new believers the Lutheran understanding of God's plan for their salvation. This is especially difficult when the number of churches far outnumber the number of workers! That's why the Lutheran Heritage Foundation created Project 72. Through Project 72, visiting professors from Europe and the U.S., as well as local pastors and professors, will travel in pairs to regions throughout East Africa, teaching seminars to area church leaders using good Lutheran books translated by LHF. Those church leaders will then go teach what they've learned!

What it will provide: The proposed grant sum will provide at least three Project 72 seminars to church leaders (covering the cost of travel and lodging for the two teachers, rental for a teaching location and teaching supplies). Each seminar will have around 15 students, which means grant monies will be bringing Lutheran teachings to at least 45 congregations in East Africa.

16. Community Lutheran, Readlyn, IA--School Science Grant--\$6,000

Where it will be used: Community Lutheran School, Readlyn, IA Science Program Grades 1-8

Why needed: Whether in high school or beyond, students will encounter challenging questions in science about evolution, climate change, and the earth's age that may have them questioning their faith. Our goal at Community Lutheran School is to provide students with a strong science education while allowing students to engage deeply and faithfully with such questions in a safe classroom setting. Hands-on science activities will prepare students for successful careers in building, technology, engineering, teaching, computers, and many more fields. Good science programs primarily help students develop good character traits, attitudes, and communication and social skills needed for the modern workplace.

What it will provide:

- Science books, carefully approved for Christian education
- "Hands on" activity kits
- Other hands-on science materials for life and earth science

17. King of Kings, Cedar Rapids--Disaster Relief Project--\$7,500

Where it will be used: In many states throughout the U.S. where natural disasters occur

Why needed: The disaster team will go to an assigned area and remove debris and trees and restore damaged homes by cleaning up a flooded basement, putting up dry-wall, roofing, repairing fencing and flooring and painting.

What it will provide: After 6 years of use in disaster relief and for safety reasons, the trailer and equipment need repair and/or replacement. To be efficient in assistance, the team needs to be restocked with safe equipment and supplies. This mission grant will help fulfill this goal, so our team may continue to be Christ's hands and feet in these areas, and share God's love to people affected by disasters.

18. Mission Central--Serving the Lord in Latvia-Rev. Samuel Bobby--\$7,500

Where it will be used: Riga, Latvia for general support of the LCMS missionary Rev Samuel Bobby and his family

Why needed: LCMS missionaries must seek their own funding. It is a privilege for LWML Districts to help support our foreign serving missionaries and their families. Also, the need for local pastors is crucial to bringing the Word of God back to the formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe.

What it will provide: General support, such as housing, utilities, transportation and salary, for Rev. Samuel Bobby and his family while he teaches at the Luther Academy, the seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia.

19. Lutherans For Life--Volunteer Relations--\$7,500

Where it will be used: LCMS churches and their life ministry groups will use the playbooks in their equipping efforts in their churches and communities to teach what God's Word says about the sanctity of life and to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

Why needed: The world promotes a culture of death that challenges God's Word regarding the sanctity of life, e.g., abortion, physician assisted suicide, human trafficking, gender ideologies, etc. Our church life ministries need information and plans on how to equip their members and their neighbors to overcome these life-threatening ideologies.

What it will provide: The grant will provide a means to equip congregants to be Gospel-motivated voices for life through the development of Frontline Playbooks. These playbooks will contain comprehensive strategies and proven resources for pastors and life ministry teams to share the sanctity of human life and how God's Word applies. This will provide needed materials in both digital and video format.

20. Wartburg Walther League--Reaching Today's College Students--\$2,500

Where it will be used: St. John Lutheran Church and Wartburg College in Waverly, IA

Why needed: Lutheran (Christian) college students need spiritual and material support during their college years to maintain, strengthen, protect, and defend their faith. College students also need a support network of peers and adults who share their Christian beliefs.

What it will provide: The grant will provide funding for a speaker to give a presentation relevant to college-aged youth, their faith and experiences. This event will be open to the entire Wartburg and Waverly community and neighboring LCMS Circuit congregations. The funding will provide honorarium, travel and lodging expenses for the speaker, food for the event, and event promotion. Remaining funds will provide food for weekly Bible study gatherings, end of year and beginning of year events, promotions and advertising, and possibly assist students to attend an LCMS-U conference.