



#7132

## **Gaining, Training, Maintaining LWML Members**

The mission of the  
Lutheran Women's Missionary League  
is to assist each woman  
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.

The mission statement of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League does not address gaining, training, and maintaining members. So how do they come about?

We believe that when we reach out to each woman by:

- Assisting her in **affirming her relationship with the Triune God** (getting her into the Word)
- Praying that the Holy Spirit will work through the Word to inspire and **enable to use her gifts**
- Inviting her to observe and experience the opportunities LWML offers as natural and obvious ways for her to use her gifts **in ministry to the people of the world**

### **What Are Ways to "Assist Each Woman?"**

1. Try to get all the women in your church involved in Bible study. Offer it at all times of the day to allow more women to fit their schedules around those times. Consider forming monthly circles, which use the topics in the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly*. Encourage women to lead the studies. Bible study leads to Christian service.
2. Personally invite the new and inactive women to a meeting or a Bible study. Assign "big sisters" from your LWML society so that no one feels uncomfortable attending a meeting or Bible study for the first time.
3. Assume every woman in the congregation wants to be involved in Christian service. Do not prejudice interests or time available. Even working women or young mothers can be part of a prayer chain, make phone calls, write e-mails, and contribute mites, although they might not be able to attend meetings.
4. Plan a meeting once or twice a year with a special theme and at a different time than usual. Try a Saturday brunch, a Lenten prayer service, an evening picnic with vespers in the summer, or having a special speaker. Plan programs that meet a variety of interests.
5. Provide babysitting services for meetings, Bible studies, and special events to encourage young mothers to attend.

6. Plan frequent receptions to welcome women into your congregation. Informally share information about LWML and service opportunities. Leave time for visiting and use name tags to help newcomers become acquainted.
7. Be an example of service to the inactive women, just as Christ is our example. Offer meals, babysitting, and housecleaning to the hospitalized and new mothers.

Once the women in your congregation are interested in showing their faith through service, your society needs to help them identify their gifts and talents and put them to use. Hebrews 10:24 says, "Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."

### **How Do We Offer Opportunities to "Use Her Gifts?"**

- Consult your congregational talent survey to learn of interests and talents of women in the congregation.
- Do not assume that the women will automatically start to serve in the areas of interest they have indicated. Personally invite them to take part.
- Help a newcomer learn a service by doing it with an experienced person. It is easier and more fun to learn by doing.

### **What Are the Reasons Women Join a Service Organization? <sup>1</sup>**

- ✚ To be needed
- ✚ To help others
- ✚ To make a difference (in society, in an organization)
- ✚ To learn new skills or use skills already developed
- ✚ To belong to a caring community
- ✚ To feel accepted
- ✚ To grow in faith
- ✚ To share God-given talents
- ✚ To support causes believed in

Does your LWML society provide opportunities for fulfillment in these areas so women will want to become a part of it?

### **Keep Your Women From Losing Interest By:**

- Using members' time well. Busy work without a purpose is a waste of time and a sure way to lose members.
- Spreading the workload rather than overburdening a few.
- Recognizing a job well done. Do not take people for granted. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 says we are to "encourage one other and build each other up..."

Women can be a powerful force in fulfilling the Great Commission. Your LWML society can be a catalyst in involving the many talented, dedicated women in your church.

<sup>1</sup> **Lutheran Woman's Quarterly** (Summer 1989)