

**LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE
EASTERN DISTRICT
RETREAT GUIDELINES**



LWML

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LWML EASTERN DISTRICT (ED)

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LWML Eastern District (ED)

RETREAT GUIDELINES

SECTION I GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Executive Committee (EC)

1. The EC is responsible for selection of the Retreat theme, speaker, Host Zone, and dates. The Retreat location is chosen by the EC and the Host Zone one year in advance of the Retreat. Selection generally takes place at the Fall EC meeting (September of each year). In any given year, the retreat may be held on multiple weekends at the discretion of the EC and based upon previous retreat attendance.
2. For the speaker, there may be three approved by the EC and ranked accordingly. The LWML ED President will coordinate with the potential speaker(s), provide them with the pertinent information and receive/approve any contracts.
3. The EC suggests a Zone to host the ensuing Retreat. This responsibility is shared on a rotating basis. The Zone selects the Retreat Coordinator(s).
4. The LWML ED President ask the Host Zone if they have any suggestions on the Retreat theme. The LWML ED President will notify the Host Zone of the name of the speaker, choice of theme, location, and dates of the Retreat in the Fall of each year. This gives the Host Zone approximately one year for preparation.
5. The EC will arrange for clergy to officiate at the Sunday worship service. Generally, the clergy will be the LWML ED Pastoral Counselor(s), however, any LCMS Pastor may be asked in lieu of the Counselor(s). Lodging will be paid for by the LWML ED.
6. The LWML ED President may request a Board of Directors (BOD) member to serve as liaison to the Retreat Committee.
7. The LWML ED President will receive a quote, consult with the EC, and then sign a formal contract for accommodations and meals for the Retreat venue.
8. Upon approval of the LWML ED President, the LWML ED Treasurer will pay the initial deposit (to hold the LWML Eastern District's reservation) and all amounts due to the venue.
9. The LWML ED President may extend invitations to other LWML Districts (i.e., Ohio, English, Atlantic, SELC, New Jersey).

10. The EC will appoint a Crisis Committee during the EC Fall meeting and include the Retreat nurse/EMT as determined by the Retreat Committee.
11. The LWML ED Editor will provide guidelines and deadlines for flyers/articles/forms to appear in the LWML LINK newsletter.
12. The LWML ED VP of Communication will provide guidelines and deadlines for flyers needed for convention manuals.
13. The EC will review and approve the Retreat Registration Form at the February/March Spring EC Meeting of the retreat year.
14. The LWML ED President will receive the evaluations and summaries of comments from the VP of Gospel Outreach/Organizational Resources and will provide summaries to the next Host Zone and, if appropriate, to the Retreat venue.
15. The LWML ED VP of Gospel Outreach/Organizational Resources contacts the Retreat Registrar for the names of first-time attendees. She contacts the LWML ED VP of Christian Life/Special Focus who (with her department) purchases materials from the LWML store and enough welcome gifts for the first-time attendees. The LWML ED VP of GO/OR prepares the gifts and welcome notes. At Retreat, the LWML ED VP of GO/OR welcomes and presents gifts to first-time attendees.

B. Host Zone – Retreat Committee

1. The Host Zone is responsible for the program planning and hosting of the Retreat.
2. The Zone selects the Retreat Coordinator (s). This should be communicated to the EC by January 1st, preceding the Retreat.
3. The Retreat Committee will assign one or more women to manage registration and housing assignments when not handled by the venue.
4. In consultation with the LWML ED President, the Retreat Committee will prepare a Retreat Registration Form and submit it to the EC for approval prior to publication.
5. The Retreat Committee will prepare Retreat publicity items as directed by the LWML ED Editor.
6. In the year of a District Convention (even years) the Retreat Committee will prepare Retreat flyers for distribution at the Convention. Flyers will be provided to the Convention Chairman and VP of Communication for inclusion in convention folders/manual.

7. The Retreat Coordinator may meet with venue personnel by appointment, if necessary. In general, all communications can be handled over the phone or by e-mail. Items to discuss with venue personnel in the planning phase may include programming, meal times, activities/break-out sessions, ingathering needs, communion supplies, facilities to be used and when, and any other special needs or questions.
8. The Retreat Committee will coordinate an ingathering (Gifts from the Heart). This is generally for the benefit of the venue. The committee may wish to consult with the Special Focus Committee chairperson for other ingathering ideas.
9. The Retreat Committee will identify a volunteer to serve on the Crisis Committee as nurse or EMT.
10. The Retreat Committee is responsible for assisting with the Sunday worship service including:
 - Coordinating a Choir Director and organist/pianist
 - Providing communion wine and wafers
 - Communion set up and clean up
 - Ushers
 - Flowers, if desired
11. It is beneficial if the Retreat Committee raises funds to cover expenses that are not passed on from year to year and not covered by LWML EC, such as name tags. (See Financial (O) #7)

SECTION II RETREAT VENUE

A. General

1. The venue should be chosen by the EC and Host Zone one year in advance of the Retreat.
2. An appointment with the venue is advised if there are major changes to the contract or lodging and to observe the conditions of accommodations.
3. A representative from the venue will be available throughout the weekend to provide help, as necessary.

B. Facilities

1. Venues may provide adequate supplies in cabins such as toilet tissue, light bulbs, heaters, linens, blankets, and pillows. Check to be sure.
2. Review with venue the smoking policy for the building and grounds.
3. Check to see if a stove, full-size refrigerator, and sink are available. Check to see if coffee makers are available or if the venue has agreed to provide coffee during the days of the Retreat.
4. When selecting a venue be sure there is enough low bunk housing, meeting rooms with tables/chairs, eating areas, piano and AV equipment. Plan on 150 people, which includes the speaker and 2-3 camperships.
5. Decide with the venue where Sunday worship can be held.
6. Check to see if copies can be made at the venue. Plan on the answer being: No. The Host Zone should make alternate plans for copies to be made in the event the venue will not do so. This should be communicated to the LWML ED President for approval.

SECTION III RETREAT PROCEDURES

A. General

1. Pray unceasingly for God's guidance and direction, that all be done to His glory. Rejoice in the discovery as you watch His plan unfold. Minor setbacks are often other opportunities in disguise.
2. Retreat Coordinators will provide leadership for the whole effort. Meetings are at their discretion and will assign/delegate responsibilities as deemed best to fit the Host Zone. Volunteers are needed for Registration, Housing Assignments, Vesper/Devotion Leaders, Meal Prayers and Favors, Refreshments/Fellowship, Music Leaders, Interest Session Coordination, Entertainment Coordinator, Sunday Worship Service, Programming, Publicity, Participant Folders, Retreat Check-in/Hospitality, and Financial.
3. For those who volunteer to serve the Retreat Coordinator will maintain contact with them. A reminder or other type of confirmation letter prior to completing the program booklet is recommended in case changes need to be made. Thank you notes post-retreat can be handled in any way deemed appropriate by the Retreat Coordinator.
4. Retreat Coordinator will review the "Sharing My Time and Talents" and evaluation summaries from the previous Retreat for suggestions and those willing to serve on future retreats.

5. According to district policy, the only displays with “for sale” items allowed are LWML. Any exceptions should be brought before the EC and have permission granted prior to having items displayed for sale.
6. The EC normally has its Fall meeting at Retreat. This meeting is arranged and coordinated by the LWML ED President with the venue. EC members and Retreat Committee members will know well in advance when they should arrive at the venue for meetings and set up.
7. The Retreat Coordinator will adhere to the guidelines and deadlines provided by the LWML ED Editor for articles/forms to appear in the LWML LINK newsletter. All publicity must be sent to the Editor. As a courtesy, a copy may also be sent to the LWML ED Public Relations Director and VP of Communication for review and comment prior to publication.

B. Speaker

After the LWML ED President has provided information about the speaker and in coordination with the President, the Retreat Coordinator will:

- Contact the speaker and introduce yourself as the coordinator.
- Keep in touch with the speaker throughout the year communicating programming and any special needs such as AV requirements and speaker handouts.
- Ensure you have a completed registration form for the speaker and share it with registration/housing committee. The speaker’s meals and housing are provided at no cost.
- Arrange for any transportation needs. Consult with LWML ED President for liaison on travel arrangements, associated costs, and reimbursements.
- The speaker is generally responsible for three presentation sessions (Friday evening, Saturday morning and Saturday afternoon) of approximately one to one and a quarter hour each session.
- Speaker may be given the option of a fourth session as part of the general activities/break-out sessions.
- If the Speaker is an LCMS Pastor he may also lead Sunday Bible Study and conduct the Sunday worship service after consulting with the LWML ED Pastoral Counselor(s).
- Check on the speaker’s arrival and departure times. Plan on assigning someone to travel to the airport to greet the speaker and provide transportation.

C. Registration and Housing

1. In consultation with the LWML ED President, the Retreat Coordinator will prepare a registration form for the February/March Spring EC meeting. The EC will review and approve the registration form, including any increase in costs to be charged to participants, and the logo to be used. The form needs to be completed by the deadline prescribed by the LWML ED Editor. The form will appear two times in the April and July issues of the LWML LINK newsletter.
2. The Retreat Coordinator will be in constant contact with the person(s) handling registration and housing assignments in order to adjust and inform those concerned with the number to be in attendance.
3. The Registration/Housing personnel should become familiar with the following:
 - Registration Form (sample attached)
 - Registration Confirmation Form (sample attached)
 - Deadlines and LWML ED policies established for the current year regarding deposits, late fees, refunds, and cancellations
 - Venue's lodging and accommodations
4. Registrations will be recorded and detailed records maintained in a timely fashion throughout the registration period. At the end of the registration period, the LWML ED Treasurer will receive a copy of the registration records
5. A registration confirmation form will be sent to each person who registers. Additional information may be provided on the confirmation form such as Ingathering requests , maps, check-in directions for those arriving late, and frequently asked questions. Sample forms are attached.
6. All monies collected will be coordinated with the LWML ED Treasurer. Monies will be deposited as directed by the LWML ED Treasurer.
7. If there are refunds that need to be given, the information must be sent to the LWML ED President for approval who will forward it to the LWML ED Treasurer to remit the refund.
8. Per the contract with the venue, a meal count for each meal must be provided two weeks in advance of the Retreat. This number is used to determine the amount of food that is ordered. The number can be fine-tuned when paying the final bill.

9. Registrations postmarked after the deadline (3 weeks prior to the Retreat) are subject to an additional Late Fee. The Late Fee is determined by the LWML ED and is needed to provide the venue with counts for planning. The Registrar may want to make some phone calls or e-mails in mid to late August to collect as reminders. This is a courtesy gesture only. All participants are responsible for payment of the full amount by the deadline; otherwise, the late fee as noted above will be added to the balance due.
10. Check-in is to be held in a location mutually agreed upon with the venue with signs prominently posted indicating where this will take place. The registrar should man the check-in table on the first day of the Retreat and ensure there is an adequate number of lists of participants and cabin assignments. Leave directions at the main entrance/office if the check-in site is moved or different than provided in previous communications.
11. As registrations are received, housing assignments will be made. This may be done on a lodging diagram in addition to the records being maintained by the Registrar.
12. It is important to contact the venue at the beginning of the registration period to identify any changes in lodging accommodations status. It is recommended that the housing person contact the venue periodically throughout the registration period.
13. Provide the venue with a copy of the housing assignments three weeks prior to the Retreat and with updates as they come in. This may be done in conjunction with the Registrar.

D. Leaders – Devotions, Vespers, and Litany for Ingathering

Retreat Coordinators need to arrange for devotion and vespers as follows:

1. Three leaders for devotions. Devotions precede each session of the speaker. Presentations should be approximately 5 minutes in length.
2. Two leaders for vespers. Occurs in the evening prior to fellowship/refreshment time. Presentation should be 5-10 minutes.
3. One leader reads the ingathering litany when the ingathering is dedicated. This should be included in the program booklet. Special Focus Committee responsibility.
4. Devotions, vespers, and the litany for the ingathering must be submitted to either Pastoral Counselor before being used at the Retreat for doctrinal review.

E. Meal Prayers and Favor

1. Meal prayers and people to lead the prayers are needed for the dining room for before and after meals. A leader is needed for the dining hall. Meal prayers need to be submitted to a pastoral counselor for doctrinal review.
2. Mealtimes include Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner and Sunday breakfast.
3. Favors are nice, but not necessary for each meal. The Retreat Committee may opt for a single favor to be provided at the largest attended meal (normally Saturday dinner).

F. Refreshments/Fellowship

1. Coordinate the refreshments offered Friday and Saturday evening usually indoors. Sometimes, the Host Zone provides all refreshments and in other years, retreat participants are requested to bring something to share. Need to check with the venue to see if this is allowed.
2. Bonfires may also be requested of the venue to continue fellowship in another setting.

G. Music Leaders

1. Arrange for someone to lead singing prior to devotions and other designated times, as needed. Any songs to be printed need to have copyright approval by contacting the LWML ED VP of Communication who handles the CCLI license. She will inform where such approval can be requested if not covered by license. This needs to be done in ample time to ensure processing in time.
2. Arrange for a Choir Director and an organist for Sunday Worship. The Choir Director will need ample time to select an appropriate anthem. This needs to be communicated to the LWML ED Vice President of Communications who will also check on CCLI licensing. The Organist will need to coordinate with the Worship Leaders (Pastoral Counselor(s)).

H. Activities/Break-Out Sessions

The Retreat Committee is responsible for the selection and coordination of multiple concurrent Activity/Break-out Sessions which are held on Saturday afternoon. These need to be communicated with the LWML ED President and the LWML EC. Check with the venue for spaces available to hold these sessions. The venue may suggest some events if asked; traditional include service projects, nature hike, camp tour and others. The speaker can be given the option for a fourth session. Other sessions are open to the creativity of the Committee.

I. Entertainment

The Retreat Committee is responsible for the selection and coordination of entertainment held on Saturday evening. Entertainment can be “external” talent; however, this should be chosen with discretion since entertainment fees are not normally covered by the retreat registration fees. Any fees to be paid need to be cleared through the LWML ED President.

J. Sunday Worship Service

1. The Sunday Worship Service is prepared and led by the LWML ED Pastoral Counselor(s), or another LCMS Pastor. The EC will arrange for clergy to officiate at the Sunday worship service. The Worship Leader will coordinate the preparation of worship folders and may ask the committee to assist with the copying.
2. Worship Leader needs prayer requests made early. The Retreat Committee will assist with this by providing the mechanisms to make prayer requests.
3. The Retreat Committee will assist with the service by setting up/cleaning up communion and ushering.
4. The assigned choir director will coordinate with the Worship Leader, the anthem of their choice based on the theme. The Choir Director will schedule choir practice at a convenient time on Saturday (normally during or immediately following the Activity/Break-out sessions).
5. The organist/pianist will coordinate with the Worship Leader to obtain the assigned hymns.
6. Altar flowers may be obtained by the committee for Sunday worship and should be included in the Registration Committee Budget.
7. The assigned ushers will greet, hand out worship folders and take the offering. Ushers will meet with the Worship Leader for any special instructions.
8. The ushers will give the offering to the LWML ED Financial Secretary immediately following the service. The LWML ED Financial Secretary will count and sort out the checks, be they for LWML ED or the venue. The offering for the LWML will be allocated by the LWML EC.

K. Programming

The Retreat Committee is responsible for the programming and will keep the LWML ED President informed of the progress of the programming. Creativity is encouraged and will usually include a mixture of the traditional and something new to make each retreat unique. The major programming will be dictated by the theme and featured speaker.

1. The program booklet will contain all necessary information for the Retreat participant. It is extremely important that a notation is prominently visible in the program booklet informing participants to be aware scheduled times may vary due to unforeseen circumstances. Friday Opening is done prior to the speaker's first session and should be a mixer/get acquainted time.
2. The programming will include time for announcements which are made routinely or on an as needed basis for:
 - Process and deadline for prayer partner forms
 - Placement of Sharing My Time and Talents forms
 - Reminders and placement of Evaluation forms
 - Where to drop off empty name holders at conclusion of Retreat
 - Placement of container for collection of items (i.e., stamps.)
 - Process for Worship prayer requests as directed by Worship Leader
 - Location of Saturday activities/break-out sessions
 - Worship offering checks should be made out to "LWML Eastern District"
 - Choir practice time
 - Displays
 - District Pastoral Counselor(s) – identify name and phone number. They are available for individual prayer and counseling.
3. The programming will include other speakers including the venue spokesperson, LWML ED President, VP of Gospel Outreach/Organizational Resources, and others. This needs to be coordinated with the Retreat Coordinator and the LWML ED President.
4. The Retreat Committee will create a program booklet or other alternative. This contains the weekend agenda, time frames and other useful information.
5. The appropriate number of booklets need to be printed. Generally, the final printing of the program booklet and stuffing of participation folders are two of the last things done prior to Retreat. A final copy of the program booklet is provided to the venue two weeks prior to the Retreat and LWML ED President four weeks prior to the Retreat. Any changes to the program can be communicated orally at the Retreat and should be communicated to the venue one week prior to Retreat. A copy to the speaker is recommended.

L. Participant Folders

The committee will assemble Retreat Folders. NOTES: Contact with a Thrivent representative might yield folders, note pads, pencils and, perhaps, another token. Remember to give them credit in the program booklet. LWML may also have bookmarks, folders, pencils, or similar token. A list of retreat participants – name, address, cabin assignment **cannot** be included due to LWML ED Standing Rules and privacy laws. Assemble approximately 10 extra folders for potential walk-ins

Items to include in the folders:

- Name tags (with meal choices identified)
- Program booklet
- Prayer partner form
- “Sharing My Time and Talents” form to obtain volunteers for LWML District board positions along with retreat and convention assistance. Copy can be obtained from the VP of Gospel Outreach/Organizational Resources. (She will collect, compile, and then submit to LWML ED EC for review. Then to the Retreat Committee to include in their final report.)
- Retreat Evaluation – feedback of current retreat for subsequent retreat. Copy can be obtained from the VP of Gospel Outreach/Organizational Resources. (She will collect, compile, and then submit to LWML ED EC for review. Then to the Retreat Committee to include in their final report.)
- Speaker’s sheets and other pages provided (i.e., National LWML, LWML ED President, Bible Study, Vespers, Devotions, PR Director, and Stamps.)
- Song sheets. Be careful of copyright laws; public domain songs can be used without restriction. Coordinate with the VP of Communication to check CCLI license for all songs printed.
- Prayer request forms
- Any other items of interest

M. Retreat Check-in/Hospitality

1. The Retreat Committee is responsible for checking in all registered guests. This check-in typically begins at 3:00 p.m. with a registration table(s) set-up in a convenient location and coordinated with the venue.
2. Retreat folders will be handed out at this time with name tags. Check-in for the EC may be performed prior to 3 p.m. and folders/name tags brought to them at the EC meeting.
3. Need to have enough volunteers to help with check-in, special needs, welcome, greet arrivals, assist guests in the parking lot upon arrival as needed, and general overall assistance with directions and luggage.

N. Reports

1. The Retreat Coordinator is responsible for preparing reports including:
A written/verbal report on preliminary plans to date should be available for the February/March Spring meeting e-mailed to the LWML ED Planner in advance. A written/verbal report will also be required for the Fall EC meeting, e-mailed to the LWML ED Planner in advance.
2. At the conclusion of the Retreat, a written final report should be prepared. Prepare or obtain final registration and accounting reports. Forward all final reports to the LWML ED President.
3. Provide suggestions to the LWML ED President for action items, and/or changes for the Fall Retreat guidelines to be considered by the EC/BOD.
4. Review the evaluation sheets and compile any comments or suggestions. Provide copies of sheets and summary to the LWML ED President. The summary should also be given to the LWML ED Executive Committee.
5. Provide the LWML ED Archivist/Historian with an extra participant folder and other items of interest for permanent historical retention.
6. Assemble and forward all materials to the next Retreat Coordinator. The LWML ED President will inform you to whom the items should be sent. Include the Retreat Guidelines document, copies of forms and programs used, final reports, master copy of participant folder from current Retreat, name tag holders to be recycled, any leftover paper or other supplies and any other pertinent information.
7. Historical data within the "Retreat Materials" is to be retained for four years. Each year outdated materials may be purged and discarded. Consult with the LWML ED Archivist/Historian prior to permanently destroying any records. As the individual registration forms contain confidential information, they should be shredded once there is no longer need of them.

O. Financial

NOTE: A copy of the quote/contract may be provided to the LWML ED Treasurer and the Retreat Coordinator for information.

1. All registration fees will be determined by the EC/BOD and be based upon the contract costs and speaker fees.

2. The EC/BOD offers a limited number of camperships. These consist of the price of a ~~full~~ registration package. Policy and number of camperships to be offered is set on an annual basis by the EC. All information regarding camperships will be provided by the LWML ED President to the Retreat Coordinator and/or Registration Chairman to be accounted for as a registered guest. This information is considered confidential in nature and should not be announced or shared publicly.
3. A budget may be set each year at the discretion of the EC/BOD. Committee members are asked to please hold their cash expenses to a minimum and be prudent in spending. Requests for in-kind donations (non-cash or exchange of goods or services) are allowed. Thrivent Action Team cards are a good source to cover expenses. Thrivent card must be used within 120 days of issuance. Can only apply for card 120 days before event.
4. An accurate accounting of all expenses and copies of receipts should be maintained. Prepare and send a detailed copy of all expenses to the LWML ED President for reimbursement. These will be approved and forwarded to the LWML ED Treasurer for payment. In-kind donations (receipt must be attached to establish value) can be forwarded and will be acknowledged with a receipt upon request.
5. It is preferred that meal choices be designated on attendee name tags in place of meal tickets.
6. Speaker and/or worship leader honorariums and transportation costs will be handled directly by the LWML ED President and the LWML ED Treasurer.
7. Committee expenses paid by the LWML ED include:
 - a. Paper supplies and copying costs (program, registration forms, maps) Host Zone is encouraged to ask their churches to print the program for the retreat
 - b. Postage
 - c. Speaker gifts (Expenditure of \$100 or less)
 - d. Name tag holders, as needed (recycle from the prior year)

P. Additional/Miscellaneous Items

1. The Retreat Committee may prepare an optional Retreat banner or logo.
2. The LWML ED Banner carried at the prior National Convention may be displayed.
3. Display of LWML items are provided by the LWML ED Christian Life Committee.
4. Other EC/BOD personnel may have displays including Legacy of Love Coordinator, Archivist/Historian, Public Relations Director, or another officer.

5. A specific location and time to distribute 1st timer gifts should be coordinated with the LWML ED VP GO/OR. This should be at the LWML ED display table to avoid congestion.
6. A Friendship Circle will be held immediately following the Worship Service. A prayer and a song – “God Be With You ‘Til We Meet Again” is traditionally sung. It is recommended that the words be included in the program booklet.
7. There is typically a Cook’s Parade and tips during Saturday lunch or dinner. The venue and LWML ED President should be consulted prior to announcing at the Retreat.

Q. TIMELINE

YEAR PRIOR TO RETREAT

September	EC Selects Host Zone, theme, speakers, venue, dates
November 1	LWML - ED President confirms speaker to Host Zone Zone receives materials & evaluation summary

YEAR OF RETREAT

January	Host Zone has met, selected Retreat Coordinator (RC) and identified other volunteers Communicate this information with LWML ED President/EC
February	Venue Contract Signed by LWML ED President - she will check on venue accommodations LWML ED President checks on Speaker and contract is signed
March	Draft registration form completed EC approves form Initial publicity is included in Spring LWML LINK issue (March 1 deadline) Provide flyer for convention manual (even-numbered years)
April	Registration form is published Registrar has prepared confirmation form
May 1	Registration is open
June	RC checks on venue, volunteers, and worship leader LWML ED President checks on speaker

<p>July</p>	<p>RC checks on venue, volunteers, and worship leader RC encouraged to schedule a site visit LWML ED President checks on speaker</p>
<p>August 4 weeks prior</p>	<p>Registrar may send reminders for accounts receivable RC has prepared draft program booklet – send copy to LWML ED President for review RC checks on venue, volunteers, speaker, worship leader</p>
<p>3 weeks prior to Retreat</p>	<p>Registration is closed Counts provided to venue Program booklet finalized Program booklet copies provided to venue/President/Speaker RC checks on venue, volunteers, speaker, worship leader</p>
<p>September 1-week prior</p>	<p>Updated counts to venue Folders prepared including name tags Copies of lists for check-in made RC checks on venue, volunteers, speaker, worship leader</p>