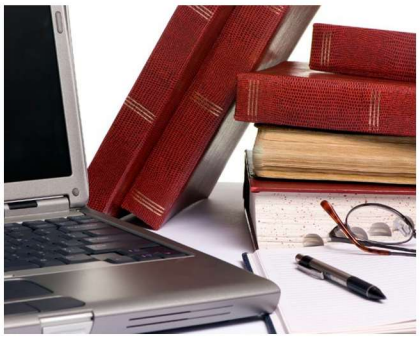
Lutheran Women in Mission

Style Guide

AN ADDENDUM TO *THE OFFICIAL STYLEBOOK* OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD





INTRODUCTION

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) follows *The Official Stylebook* of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and *The Associated Press Stylebook* (AP). The following exceptions and organization-specific additions supersede any with which they are in conflict. These styles are to be used in all Lutheran Women in Mission publications and communications. Terminology specific to the LWML is included throughout this document.

Please direct any style questions to the LWML VP of Communication at *depcom@lwml.org*

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Style Sheet

#

2-Minute Tuesday — 2-Minute Tuesday articles are an effort to encourage women to share the Good News of Jesus and about LWML in short, "pep talks" via email. Each recipient receives an email with helpful tips that take only a short while to read and are sent every other Tuesday. The preferred way to identify these articles is "2-Minute," not "Two-Minute."

A

a or an — When using an acronym preceded by "a" or "an," be guided by the sound of the first letter of the acronym. For example, LCMS sounds like it starts with an "e" so use the article "an" in front of it. Example: Rev. Smith is an LCMS pastor. A CHI staff member joined the meeting. (*LCMS Stylebook*)

adviser — not advisor (AP)

app — Short for "application," an app is a program that runs inside another service. Many cellphones, tablets, operating systems, and web browsers allow apps to be downloaded to give the user access to additional functions. With the LWML App, Mustard Seed Devotions, LWML Mission Grant updates, the League Pledge and songs, LWML Mission Goal progress, Mission Servants activities, and LWML news are easily accessible on your cellphone or tablet.

Archivist-Historian — A hyphen is preferred when linking a job description. (AP)

Audio-Visual Director — As a formal title, capitalize it directly preceding the full name. Following the name, it's lowercase. (AP) Examples: Audio-Visual Director John Doe. Pete Smith is the audio-visual director.

B

biennial, biennium, biennia — Lowercase unless using the official name of a biennium or biennial convention. For example: The 41st Biennial Convention was held in Omaha, Nebraska. We approved 33 grants this biennium.

board of directors — Capitalize Lutheran Women's Missionary League Board of Directors or LWML Board of Directors. The abbreviation BOD is acceptable on second reference. Do not capitalize board when not used as part of the official title: The board met to discuss the budget.

bylaws — Capitalize bylaws when referring to the official name: the Bylaws of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League. Use lowercase when using general terms: Our bylaws need to be revised.

C

capitalization — Capitalize district, zone, local group, committee, etc., only when part of a proper name. Always capitalize LWML committee and department names. For example:

- The LWML Ohio District hosted the event. Sally attended the district convention.
- The Christian Life Committee will meet in January. Each committee should submit a report on its progress.

When writing a title, the first and last words are always capitalized. Capitalize all nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Do not capitalize the words "to, a, an, or the." Capitalize all prepositions with five or more letters like "Among, Within, About."

Capitalize Baptism, Holy Communion, and Sacraments (when referring to both Baptism and/or Communion); Scripture (when referring to God's Word); God, Jesus, Holy Spirit; and all other nouns and pronouns when they refer to the Godhead, such as He, Him, His, You, Your, Yours, etc. Adjectives describing these words are **not** capitalized. Example: heavenly Father, almighty God. Note: when quoting

from the ESV translation, the pronouns are not capitalized. See *The LCMS Stylebook* for more examples. Refer to individual style entries for capitalization of various terms. See also titles.

comma in a series — Comma (in serial lists) — the comma will be used before the conjunction in all lists of three or more. Example: The report needs to be sent to local groups, zones, and districts. The LWML's focus is on growth in the Word, missions, mites, and fellowship.

citations — The following shall be added to the publication data on all LWML Christian Life resources:
"Scripture quotations are from ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version), Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved."

committees — LWML committees names may be abbreviated after first reference. See the LWML Personnel Directory for the official names of committees. Example: Convention Programming Committee (CPC).

composition titles — See italics.

compound words — When two words are used together to yield a new meaning, a compound is formed. Compound words can be written in three ways: as open compounds (spelled as two words, example, ice cream), closed compounds (joined to form a single word, example, doorknob), or hyphenated compounds (two words joined by a hyphen, example, long-term). Sometimes, more than two words can form a compound (example, mother-in-law). Compound words used as adjectives are always hyphenated. If unsure, use an online dictionary to check for preferred spelling.

convention — Lowercase except when using the official name. For example: The convention is in June. The 42nd Biennial LWML Convention will be held in Oklahoma City. To incorporate Lutheran Women in Mission: **Long form**: Lutheran Women in Mission 42nd Biennial Convention. **Short form:** 42nd Biennial Convention.

Put convention themes in quotation marks.

D

dashes — Put one space on each side of an em dash. See types of dashes below. Also see ellipsis.

- **hyphen** — A hyphen is the shortest and is used between words and phone numbers. (AP) On a standard keyboard, a hyphen can be made using the key next to the zero key.
- **en dash** — The medium length en dash is used to mean "through" or "to" like date ranges and Scripture citations. Spaces are not used before or after an "en" dash. To access, type (ALT+0150) or (alt and then the minus sign on the keyboard's number pad, not the numbers on the top row of the keyboard). On a Mac, hold down "option hyphen" keys at the same time.
- **em dash** — The longest dash is an "em" dash and is used in place of ellipses (…) or in place of parentheses, or for emphasis. Example: "Mary — my adopted sister — looks just like me!" or "Steve — although he could not carry a tune — was asked to sing at the party." "Em" dashes do have a space before and after with the exception of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. To access, type (ALT+0151) or (alt plus control plus the minus sign on the number pad). On a Mac, hold down "shift option hyphen" keys at the same time.

dates — Spell out all months and days of the week. When writing a month, day, and year, place a comma after both the day and the year: The zone rally was held on October 9, 2025, in the sanctuary. When writing only a month and a year, do not separate with commas: The convention will be in June 2026.

When writing a weekday and date, use commas after both: Bring donations by Sunday, March 12, in order to meet the deadline. Examples are: "On March 4, 2025, we went to … " "In January 2025, we drove to … " " From Tuesday, July 4, through Friday, July 7, we were at … "

Do NOT use ordinal numbers (e.g. 23rd) in dates.

See AP Stylebook. Periods to be placed after each letter in both A.D. and B.C. A.D. is placed before the figure for the year. B.C. is placed after the figure

for the year. Do not write, “in the fifth century A.D.” Use “in the fifth century B.C.”

deaf — Lowercase unless it is part of an organization title. Same with hard of hearing.

deaconess — Always spell out. Capitalize “deaconess” only when used as a title before a person’s name. If necessary, due to space limitations, such as on a name tag, the abbreviation “Deac.” may be used before a name. (*LCMS Stylebook*)

directional indicators — Write north, south, east, west using lowercase**.** The exception is when they refer to specific geographic regions or popularized names for those regions. For example, "the Northeast" or "the Midwest."(AP)

district — Each district is a subordinate organization of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. When referring to a specific district of the LWML, write “LWML” or “Lutheran Women’s Missionary League” preceding the district name (see below). The full title of a district president should be written in the following order: LWML Kansas District President Jane Doe. See also capitalization.

Following are the legal names of the LWML districts, which should be preceded by “Lutheran Women’s Missionary League” the first time it is used in official documents.

LWML Atlantic District
LWML California-Nevada-Hawaii District
LWML Carolinas District
LWML Central Illinois District
LWML Chesapeake District
LWML Eastern District
LWML English District
LWML Florida-Georgia District
LWML Gulf States District
LWML Indiana District
LWML Iowa East District
LWML Iowa West District
LWML Kansas District
LWML Louisiana-Mississippi District
LWML Michigan District
LWML Mid-South District
LWML Minnesota North District
LWML Minnesota South District
LWML Missouri District
LWML Montana District
LWML Nebraska North District
LWML Nebraska South District
LWML New England District
LWML New Jersey District
LWML North Dakota District
LWML North Wisconsin District
LWML Northern Illinois District
LWML Ohio District
LWML Oklahoma District
LWML Oregon District
LWML Pacific Southwest District
LWML Rocky Mountain District
LWML SELC District
LWML South Dakota District
LWML South Wisconsin District
LWML Southern Illinois District
LWML Texas District
LWML Utah-Idaho District
LWML Washington-Alaska District
LWML Wyoming District

See zone for correct naming of zones.

divine pronouns — Capitalize divine pronouns (You, Your, He, His, Him). However, if these pronouns are part of a phrase, such as “Your holy name” or “Your Holy Church,” only capitalize the proper nouns. Example: “Holy Church” (meaning the universal Church) might be capitalized, but “holy name” would not.

Don’t capitalize words that describe Jesus, such as “Jesus is our friend” or “Jesus is the light of the world.” Exceptions: If these descriptive words are used in a series and one item is capitalized, capitalize all of them. Example: “Jesus is my Savior [proper noun], Redeemer, and Friend.” If the descriptive word is used in place of “Jesus” or “God,” such as “The Giver provides our daily bread” (vs. “God, the giver, provides our daily bread”). Some words are always capitalized, such as “Light of light,” King of kings” or “Prince of Peace.”

Note: There isn’t a definitive answer in regard to whether “holy” should be capitalized. The key is to be consistent. Using *The LCMS Stylebook* as a guide, capitalize “holy” when used as a proper noun.

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Example: Holy Trinity, Holy Land, Holy Spirit, Holy Baptism, Holy Bible, etc. When used in context of a prayer, do not capitalize. Example: In Jesus' holy name.

E

e.g. — e.g. is the Latin abbreviation for exempli gratia and means "for example."

ellipsis — If it is used, put one space on each side of an ellipsis (…). An ellipsis is not used at the beginning or end of a quote, only within a quote. The same is true when quoting Scripture. An "em" dash can be used in place of ellipses (…).

email — Lowercase except at the beginning of a sentence (also applies to ebooks, ejournals, cellphones, smartphones, etc.). Email addresses are written italicized but not underlined: *lwml@lwml.org*. Email addresses may be underlined as well as italicized in digital copy.

eNews — The subscription-based electronic newsletter produced by Lutheran Women in Mission. Note the capitalization of the letter "N." It is not italicized.

events — Capitalize only the official name of an event but not general terms like "zone rally" or "spring workshop." For example: The zone rally is on Sunday. The Mid Coast Zone 2026 Spring Workshop is tomorrow.

eQuarterly — electronic version of the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* is written without italics.

F

flyer —Flyer is the preferred term. He used his frequent flyer miles; they put up flyers announcing the show.

fonts — See the LWML Brand Guidelines for font usage.

Use one special effect at a time in the text. Either use italics, OR bold, OR underlining, OR solid caps, OR font size, OR color, OR an additional font — but not all in the same paragraph. If a word in the text needs to be emphasized, use bold type, not solid caps or underlining.

G

Gifts from the Heart — The name for ingatherings at LWML-related events. Do not set off with quotation marks or use italics. Using GFTH is acceptable on second reference.

graphic design — Include credit to graphic artist on work. For example: Graphic Design: Jane Doe.

group — It is suggested to use "local group" or "group" in place of society. See capitalization and society.

H

headings — Be consistent with centered and side headings throughout the document. Example: if chapter titles are in 16-point font, centered and bold, then subordinate centered headings could be in 14-point type, bold, with only the larger words in initial caps. Then, side headings could be 12-point font, in bold. At minimum, each document should be consistent throughout in how the headings look.

Heart to Heart Sisters — Do not set off with quotation marks or use italics. Using H2H is acceptable on second reference. When referring to Heart to Heart District Leaders do not abbreviate District Leaders. Use H2H District Leaders.

hymns — Italicize the names of hymnals such as *Lutheran Service Book* or *LSB*; *The Lutheran Hymnal* or *TLH*. Hymn numbers are not italicized.

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To indicate one or more specific stanzas, add a colon and the stanza number(s). Example: "(*LSB* 412)," "(*LW* 412:1–3)." (*LCMS Stylebook)* Hymns in the "public domain" (words and/or tune) in our LCMS hymnals can be reprinted in documents without permission. However, if the "public domain" notation (found at the bottom of the hymn's page) for any given hymn is not listed, then permission needs to be requested from CPH. Since this could be time consuming and expensive, it's recommended that LWML documents only contain printed words from public domain hymns in our LCMS hymnals.

I

i.e. — i.e. is the Latin abbreviation for id est and means "in other words." If you want to say, "for example," you would use the abbreviation e.g.

interdepartmental (ID) — Annual meeting of the LWML department committees, ad hoc committees, and special teams.

internet — Lowercase internet and web. Use the following guidelines for capitalization of other internet-related terms: webcam, webcast, webmaster, webpage, the web, web address, web browser. WWW is capitalized. Typically, web addresses are written in all lowercase.

When writing a website link, do not include the "http://" protocol unless that particular site does not use the "www" prefix or they include it in their address. For example: *www.lwml.org* or *lwml.org* versus *http://example.com.*

NOTE: In most cases, remove "http://www." from URLs. Always test to make sure they still work, since deleting some prefixes can cause the URLs to no longer work. (AP)

If an address breaks between lines, split it directly before a slash, dot, or an appropriate word break; do not insert a hyphen. Web addresses are written italicized but not underlined. Web addresses may be underlined as well as italicized in digital copy. See also email, eNews.

italics — Use italics for the text of Bible verses; web addresses; links; URLs; names of books, magazines, movies, newspapers, and works of art; titles of CDs, DVDs, podcasts, and record albums; television shows and plays; short devotions, and other large works.

Do not italicize titles of events or organization-specific terms. See quotation marks for use with small works.

See also Addendum A — Bible Verse Formatting on page 12.

L

links — Common practice is to not underline links; just use italics. Underlining links may be done in digital copies. See italics.

livestream (n.) and livestreaming (v.) — Livestreaming is the broadcasting of live events. Vimeo is the name of a service we currently use. *The AP Stylebook* uses these terms as one word: livestream, livestreaming. Not capitalized unless it begins a sentence. (AP)

lists, bulleted lists — Whether separating sections in a list by dashes or bullets, put a space between the dash or bullet and the first word of each item in the list. Capitalize the first word following the dash or bullet. Use periods, not semicolons, at the end of each section, whether it is a full sentence or a phrase. Here is an example:

- Start with the same part of speech for each item (in this example, a verb).
- Use the same voice (active or passive) for each item.
- Use the same verb tense for each item.
- Use the same sentence type (statement, question, exclamation) for each item.
- Use just a phrase for each item, if desired.

Introduce the list with a short phrase or sentence: "Here is a list of our partners" or "Following is a list of our partners."

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Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, The — The organization's full name should always be written properly, including capitalizing The and an "em" dash with no spaces between the words Church and Missouri: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The Missouri Synod, the Synod, and the LCMS are acceptable short forms for the church body's name.

Lutheran Woman's Quarterly — Italicize the name of the official publication of the LWML. *Quarterly* or *LWQ* are acceptable on second reference. Note that "Woman's" is singular. When unable to italicize, use all caps (e.g. LUTHERAN WOMAN'S QUARTERLY or QUARTERLY).

One could say *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* magazines, or issues of the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly*, or *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* subscriptions. If one wants to use the magazine's informal name, the plural could be written as *LWQ*s or perhaps *Quarterly* subscriptions (not *Quarterlies*). NOTE: in plural cases, the letter "s" would not be italicized although the others are.

Lutheran Women in Mission — The preference is to use Lutheran Women in Mission over Lutheran Women's Missionary League to describe, in spoken and written form, who we are and what we do. Use LWML as an acronym when necessary. Do not use LWiM. See Lutheran Women's Missionary League.

Lutheran Women's Missionary League — Use on first reference to the organization in official correspondence and news releases as it is the legal name of the organization. LWML is acceptable on subsequent references or on first reference only in internal communications. The Lutheran Women's Missionary League is an official auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

LWML Office — Capitalize when using the official name of the LWML Office in St. Louis.

LWML SHOP — Capitalize when referring to the official name.

LWML-specific and LCMS-specific words and phrases —

- LWML *On The Go* Podcasts.
- 2-Minute Tuesday.
- Gifts from the Heart.
- Heart to Heart — Sisters of All Nations
- *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly, Quarterly,* and *LWQ.*
- eQuarterly.
- eNews.
- LWML App.
- Lutheran Women's Missionary League; The LWML.
- Lutheran Women in Mission.
- Use the term group or local group instead of society.
- The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; The LCMS.
- *Lutheran Service Book*; *LSB* (Hymnal).
- *The Lutheran Study Bible* (*TLSB*).

M

mission grants — Capitalize only when preceded by "LWML": LWML Mission Grants, Lutheran Women's Missionary League Mission Grants: The LWML Mission Grants have been selected. The district prays for mission grant recipients.

Mite Box — Capitalize in all instances.

mite offering, mite donations — Preferred over mites, although mites can be used on second reference. Lowercase in all instances.

motto — When specifically referring to the LWML motto, the correct way to write the motto is, *Serve the LORD with gladness!* (Psalm 100:2).

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multicultural — of, relating to, or representing several diverse cultures or cultural elements. Use this term rather than ethnic.

Mustard Seed Devotions — Name given to the daily devotions. Mustard Seeds is an acceptable second reference. Capitalize in all instances. Do not set off with quotation marks or italics.

N

national — Limit the use of "national" when referring to LWML. If used, it should be lowercase.

news release — Use instead of "press release."

numbers — Write out the numerals one through nine; use figures for 10 and above, except when writing dollar amounts, dates, addresses, or phone numbers; or if the number is the first word of a sentence. Spell out any number at the beginning of a sentence. Examples: She attended five LWML gatherings. There were 25 women in attendance. The LWML Mission Goal is $2,150,000. Two million, one hundred fifty thousand dollars is the mission goal for this biennium. Write "25 percent" within a text, but "25%" in a chart.

P

page numbers — When writing a multi-page document, it is best to insert page numbers. See multi-page documents.

podcast — Write the LWML podcast as "LWML *On The Go* Podcast." Only *On The Go* is italicized. LWML and Podcast are capitalized. In an article, podcast is lowercase. A title of a podcast is in quotes, not italicized. Capitalization is used as in titles. Example: "You are Priceless and Precious."

Publications Committee — Official name of the committee that produces the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly*. (LWML Bylaws) *Quarterly* Staff also acceptable.

punctuation — Use one space between sentences and after colons. Place a period outside a closing parenthesis if the material inside is not a sentence (such as this fragment). (An independent parenthetical sentence such as this takes a period before the closing parenthesis.) When a phrase placed in parentheses (this one is an example) might normally qualify as a complete sentence but is dependent on the surrounding material, do not capitalize the first word or end with a period. (AP)

A hyphen is used to hyphenate two words, never to separate two phrases in a sentence. To separate phrases, an "em" dash — must be used. If the — cannot be located on the keyboard, then a double hyphen -- is acceptable as an alternative. En dashes are used between numbers, as in Luke 2:1–3, which looks different from Luke 2:1-3, and between dates, as in June 1–15, 2016. See also italics, quotation marks, dashes.

Q

quotation marks — Use a comma to introduce a complete one-sentence quotation within a paragraph: The pastor said, "Please turn to the insert in your bulletin." Do not use a comma at the start of an indirect or partial quotation: Ruth said she was "fit as a fiddle."

The period and comma always go within quotation marks. The dash, semicolon, question mark, and exclamation mark go within the quotation marks when they apply to the quoted matter only. They go outside when they apply to the whole sentence. For example: Mary asked, "Where is the party?" But: Who said, "This is most certainly true"?

Use quotation marks around articles that appear in books, magazines, and newspapers; chapter titles; titles of poems; songs and hymns; convention themes; individual podcast titles; and other "small" things.

Note: All quoted material (except as noted from the Bible) needs to be cited, naming the source. Place the citation immediately after the quote when possible. See *The LCMS Stylebook* Appendix:

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Footnotes and Citations for the format.

S

seasons — Lowercase for the names of the seasons unless they are used in a proper name: the Summer Olympics.

society — Current preferred usage is group or local group. See group.

Scripture — When quoting Scripture, the verse is in italics, no quotation marks. The quotation marks are used for a quote within the verse. The Bible reference is in regular font, in parentheses, within the final punctuation of the sentence. The Book of the Bible should be written out if there is space to do so. Some examples are: *"God so loved the world*" (John 3:16). *Serve the LORD with gladness!* (Psalm 100:2).

If using any translation other than ESV, indicate as follows: *Worship the Lord with gladness;* (Psalm 100:2 NIV). *And they realized they had been with Jesus. "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard"* (Acts 4:13b, 20 NKJV).

When quoting Scripture from the *Lutheran Study Bible*, since it is the ESV translation, simply quote the verse with the Book of the Bible, chapter, and verse(s). If anything is quoted from the commentary portions, however, those need to be cited. See *The LCMS Stylebook* Appendix: Footnotes and Citations for the format.

Follow the capitalization of Lord/LORD as found in Scripture. LORD is the preferred rendering of the Hebrew yhwh.

See also italics, quotation marks, and Addendum A — Bible Verse Formatting

states — When using a state name, spell out the state. When abbreviation is necessary, use the abbreviations from the LCMS Stylebook. Use the two-letter Postal Service abbreviations only with full addresses, including ZIP code.

Ala. (AL) Alaska (AK) Ariz. (AZ)
Ark. (AR) Calif. (CA) Colo. (CO)
Conn. (CT) District of Columbia (DC)
Del. (DE) Fla. (FL) Ga. (GA)
Hawaii (HI) Idaho (ID) Ill. (IL)
Ind. (IN) Iowa (IA) Kan. (KS)
Ky. (KY) La. (LA) Maine (ME)
Md. (MD) Mass. (MA) Mich. (MI)
Minn. (MN) Miss. (MS) Mo. (MO)
Mont. (MT) Neb. (NE) Nev. (NV)
N.H. (NH) N.J. (NJ) N.M. (NM)
N.Y. (NY) N.C. (NC) N.D. (ND)
Ohio (OH) Okla. (OK) Ore. (OR)
Pa. (PA) R.I. (RI) S.C. (SC) S.D. (SD)
Tenn. (TN) Texas (TX) Utah (UT)
Vt. (VT) Va. (VA) Wash. (WA)
W.Va. (WV) Wis. (WI) Wyo. (WY)

T

times — Use figures except for noon and midnight. In a list or schedule, always use figures. Use lowercase letters and periods for a.m. and p.m. Use a colon to separate hours from minutes, but do not include a colon and two zeros if the time is on the hour: 11 a.m. and 3:30 p.m.

titles — Capitalize LWML positions of office in all references. When referring to non-LWML positions, capitalize titles only when preceding the name. For example: She has served as an LWML Recording Secretary, LWML Christian Life Committee Chairman, and a Bible study leader. The LWML Vice President of Communication will speak at the LWML convention. Ron Jones is our congregational president. See also district and the LWML Bylaws for proper spelling and capitalization of LWML offices and committees.

The following may be used to abbreviate position titles after first reference:
President (no abbreviation)
Vice President of Christian Life (VPCL)
Vice President of Communication (VPCOM)
Vice President of Gospel Outreach (VPGO)
Vice President of Organizational Resources (VPOR)
Vice President of Special Focus Ministries (VPSFM)
Recording Secretary (RS)
Treasurer (TR)

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Senior Pastoral Counselor (SrPC)
Junior Pastoral Counselor (JrPC)
Meeting Manager (MM)
Public Relations Director (PRD)
Strategic Plan Facilitator (SPF)
Executive Director (ExecDir)

W

web, website — See internet.

Wi-Fi —The current style is to capitalize Wi and Fi and put a hyphen between the two.

Note: when using Wi-Fi hot spots, AP style uses hot spot (two words) in all uses. (AP)

Y

Young Woman Representative — Note that "Woman" is singular. YWR or YWRs is acceptable on second reference.

Z

zone — Districts are divided into zones. The full legal name of a zone is preceded by "Lutheran Women's Missionary League" and the district name. For example, Lutheran Women's Missionary League Atlantic District Triune Zone. LWML Atlantic District Triune Zone may be used in informal writing. LWML South Wisconsin District Zone 18" (if numbered) or "LWML South Wisconsin District Madison East Zone" (if named). See district.

Addendum A — Bible Verse Formatting & Quoting Scripture

- Bible verses used in LWML publications include two parts: the verse (actual words from the Bible) and the citation (the book, chapter, and verse number).
- The verse itself is *italicized.*
- The words must be in the **exact order** as found in the Bible. Capitalization and punctuation should follow the Bible **exactly.**
- The quotation marks are only used for a quote within the verse. When the entire verse is a quote from a person speaking, it is written with quotation marks around it and italicized. If only part of a verse includes a quote of someone speaking, then just the portion which is a quote is placed in quotation marks; again, the whole verse is italicized.
- The citation (book, chapter, verse number, and indications such as "4b" or "15a") is **not italicized** and are in **parentheses** followed by a period.
- If the punctuation mark at the end of the verse as printed in the Bible is an exclamation mark, comma, semi-colon, or a question mark, that mark **is** included with the verse. But a period is still placed after the parentheses,
- The Book of the Bible should be written out unless space is limited. See *The LCMS Stylebook* for proper ways to abbreviate the names of the Bible books.
- The English Standard Version (ESV) is the default Bible translation used by LWML in all publications. **No translation indication is necessary in the citation for ESV verses**. However, if another translation is used, cite the translation within the parentheses using capital letter abbreviations following the chapter and verse. A listing of translation abbreviations can be found at *www.biblegateway.com*.

Additional items to consider:

- ✓ Check for correct spacing before and within the parentheses.
- ✓ Look up each verse to verify that the chapter, verse, and translation are cited correctly.
- ✓ Capitalize all references to the Bible, including Holy Scriptures, God's Word, the Word, etc.
- ✓ The word "Lord" in the Old Testament is often written with small caps: LORD. Follow the capitalization of Lord/LORD as indicated in the "Concordia Publishing House Stylebook for Authors & Editors Eleventh Edition (11.1), Originally published September 2008, Copyright © 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 Concordia Publishing House." "LORD — Preferred rendering of the Hebrew yhwh. Used only in direct Scripture quotations.
  .
- ✓ Ellipsis usage
  - If a verse begins mid-sentence, an ellipsis is not used at the beginning of the verse. Capitalize the first word.
  - If the sentence of the verse being quoted continues past the portion being quoted, an ellipsis is not used at the end of the verse.
    Example:
    Original text: *and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son* (Matthew 2:15).
    Incorrect: *… and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken…* (Matthew 2:15).
    Correct: *And remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord*

had spoken (Matthew 2:15a). [The "a" is used to indicate that only the first part of the verse is being quoted.]

- If you leave out words in mid-sentence an ellipsis is used
  Correct: *And remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken … "Out of Egypt I called my son"* (Matthew 2:15).

Examples:

- ✓ *And they realized they had been with Jesus. … "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard"* (Acts 4:13b, 20 NKJV).
- ✓ *Serve the LORD with gladness!* (Psalm 100:2).
- ✓ *"So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath"* (Mark 2:28).
- ✓ *Jesus said, "I am the way"* (John 14:6).
- ✓ *Worship the Lord with gladness* (Psalm 100:2 NIV).
- ✓ *"For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said,*
  "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
  'Prepare the way of the Lord;
  make his paths straight.'" (Matthew 3:3).
  Note: In this verse, the quotation marks are exactly as used in Scripture.
  One word of caution, sometimes the quotation marks are only at the beginning of a paragraph, and it might be several verses before the one you are quoting. Because you pull the quote out of a paragraph that is in quotation marks in the Bible, you need to include quotation marks with that verse, too.
- ✓ The full paragraph is: *"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire"* (Matthew 3:11-12).
  Note: If you quote only a portion of these two verses it would look like this: *"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire"* (Matthew 3:11b).
- ✓ *"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven"* (Matthew 5:16).

Compiled from documents prepared by:
Vice President of Special Focus Ministries Deaconess Betty Knapp (December 2020) and Resource Editor Carolyn Blum (March 2021). Updated 2025.

Addendum B — LWML Writer's Checklist & Tips

- Before, and as you write, pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance and wisdom, asking that God will bless your writing.
- Follow the *LWML Style Guide*. Download a copy to your desktop. Read it and use it!
- Familiarize yourself with *The LCMS Stylebook* found at *www.lcms.org*. Search for "stylebook." Download a copy to your desktop for easy access.
- Did you date your article? If updating a document, did you include the update date?
- Did you title your article?
- Is your name as author and your committee name (if applicable) on the article?
- Are the pages in your article numbered if there's more than one page?
- Did you include the LWML website address on your article?
- Did you add a footer on your article with the title noted?
- Did you follow the suggested guidelines for word count? For example: Home page and 2- Minute Tuesday articles are to be 150–175 words.
- Think about the purpose of your article. Does your writing encourage:
    - Mite giving?
    - Use of the website?
    - Hosting an LWML Sunday event?
    - Or_____? Keep the purpose in mind.
- Adhere to deadlines and include the publishing deadline on your article.
- When you get an idea, just write from your heart without thought of proper formatting. (Don't let the fear of making editing errors slow you down — just write!) Quickly type the ideas into your computer (before you forget the thought!) or jot them on paper. Go back and refine if needed, and then let it sit. Do something else. Come back to it after a few hours or days. Re-read it from the standpoint of someone who doesn't know anything about your topic — will the reader understand your main point? Is the material organized? Do the words flow easily from one thought to another? Have you given enough background information so the reader can put your ideas in context? Read it out loud to yourself. Have you unnecessarily repeated the same words and/or information? Revise as needed and check the accuracy of Bible verses, the spelling of names of people and their titles, names of companies and organizations, etc.
- Use a thesaurus so you aren't repeating the same word throughout your article.
- Remember the correct way to quote scripture. Use the ESV version of Scripture. If you use another version, it should be noted. Refer to the *LWML Style Guide* for proper formatting. Double check each word and the Bible citation
- Do not begin a sentence with figures such as "$3,784." If figures must be at the beginning of the sentence, then the words need to be written out.
- End prayers with punctuation such as "... in Jesus' name. Amen."
- Be sure to use and abide by the LWML Logo Use policy found on *www.lwml.org*

Created by Resource Editor Carolyn Blum, October 2019. Updated 2025.