

# LUTHERAN GIRL PIONEERS

## WHAT IS LUTHERAN GIRL PIONEERS?

LGP is a Christ-centered youth program for girls of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Church and those in fellowship with WELS. Our purpose is to provide an informal educational experience for the girls in Christian fellowship with one another. It is our desire to inspire youth to realize the joy of a Christ-centered life, while building strong Christian character and values.

Lutheran Girl Pioneers strives to help each girl become a happy, confident and useful member of her church, school, home and community.

A leader's job then is to help make these aims come true as they work with the girls week by week. They help the girls learn new things that will make their lives more enjoyable and more useful to others. They will help the girls as much as possible live up to our motto "*Loyal to Christ.*" In fact, a leader will find that her life is enriched, as well, as she shares her time and talents.

In a nutshell, Lutheran Girl Pioneers strives to see young girls grow up to be Christian women joyfully serving our Lord in their daily lives.

## WHY LUTHERAN GIRL PIONEERS?

Parents are given the awesome responsibility of helping our children learn how to think and act like Christians. We are instructed to lead them and train them up in the Lord....a tall task these days when every where we look it seems to be more of an example of what NOT to do. Leading them to God is easy when they are little but as they get older their peers become more important and more influential. We can assist parents in helping keep their girls Loyal to Christ.

We need to encourage Christian friendships. We can't pick their friends, but we can improve our odds by giving them groups to pick from.

How can we be sure that the advice they receive is directing them to their Savior? God knows: "*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer....all the believers were together and had everything in common...*" Acts 2:42

Encourage the ministry of Lutheran Girl Pioneers in your congregation. The benefits can be "out of this world!"

Lutheran Girl Pioneers

608-781-5232 girlpioneers@gmail.com www.lgp.org



## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

### NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

Sometimes called dues, these fees are the backbone of our not-for-profit organization as we receive no synodical dollars. The membership year for Lutheran Girl Pioneers runs from Sept. 1 to Aug. 31 of each year. Annual membership fees are due at the National Office by Oct. 1. These fees help us to maintain our office and develop and improve training and teaching materials.

**The National membership fee is \$20.00 per girl per year.  
There is NO congregational fee for Lutheran Girl Pioneers**

### CAR- AVAN FEES

When you are working out the cost of LGP for each girl in your caravan, you will want to remember to include not only the national fees per girl but also your projected operating expenses in your caravan. This amount will be determined by activities you are planning, the cost of handbooks for each girl (recommended), etc.

### DISTRICT FEES

In some areas, not all, the districts require a small fee to help with expenses of newsletters and district events. Your District Counselor will be able to help you with this.

**REFER TO THE "SOURCES OF FUNDING" PAGE  
TO HELP YOU DETERMINE HOW TO FUND EXPENSES.**



**PLEASE NOTE:** Lutheran Girl Pioneers and Lutheran Boy Pioneers are two separate organizations. Each organization has their own budget and fee structure.

## WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP INCLUDE?

As a Caravan (the name of the group of Lutheran Girl Pioneers in a congregation), you will receive:

- [A LEADER LIBRARY](#) The library contains devotional information and leaders' manuals that have information about planning a program and teaching the skills involved.
- [NAME RECOGNITION](#) The Lutheran Girl Pioneers is known throughout the WELS and ELS as a Christ-centered program for girls. The material produced by the organization is doctrinally-sound and correct and has been developed with the help of teachers and pastors.
- [ASSISTANCE FROM EXPERIENCED LEADERS](#) Volunteers are available in many areas to come in and assist you with getting your program started. The National Office is available to answer questions and assist you whenever possible.
- [MERCHANDISE](#) Your national membership entitles you to purchase items from the National Office at reasonable prices. Items available are clothing, teaching materials, awards, jewelry, pens/pencils, and more!
- [TRAINING](#) Leader's Training Clinics are offered with presenters coming from the ranks of experienced leaders who share their knowledge and ideas.

- [NATIONAL ACTIVITIES](#) The activities include Summer Camp, the Pinecar Derby, and the biennial National Convention.
- [NEWSLETTERS](#) We publish two newsletters.

For the leaders—a bi-monthly newsletter called "The Guide"

For the girls—"The Prairie Schooner News" published bi-monthly.

The National Organization exists to serve the CARAVANS.

It is there to serve the girls, leaders, parents, and the congregations who support the program with their time, talents, and treasure.



## HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

There are five possible levels in the total Lutheran Girl program.

<b>SUNBEAMS</b>	for first and second graders (some Caravans include kindergartners)
<b>TRAVELERS</b>	for third and fourth graders
<b>TRAILBLAZERS</b>	for fifth and sixth graders
<b>HOMESTEADERS</b>	for seventh and eighth graders
<b>SPINNERS</b>	mainly high school age girls
<b>JUNIOR LEADERS</b>	girls at least 12 years of age who have met the requirements listed in the LGP Girls' Handbook.

The activities and/or requirements for the Sunbeam, Traveler, Trailblazer, and Homesteader levels each take approximately two years to complete. As a new caravan you will receive a library which will contain suggestions for meeting schedules, teaching aids, resource materials, and devotional helps which will aid you in helping the girls to achieve this.

### SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Over and above the level requirements, special achievements can be worked on by the girls in several areas. Some examples would be: Babysitting, Computer Coding, Ecology, Drama, Sewing, Handicrafts, Gardening, Art, Pet & Animal Care, and many more!

The level requirements and special achievements are outlined in the  
**LUTHERAN GIRL PIONEER HANDBOOK.**

### RECOGNITION and AWARDS

The award system we use are a **Charm Bracelet** with charms. They are available through the National Office.

### WHEN DO CARAVANS MEET?

Some Caravans meet on Sunday afternoons every week; some meet twice a month on a Tuesday; others still meet once a month. Whatever works for your girls, leaders, and congregation is fine! We would recommend at least two hours per meeting— that gives you enough time to do a lesson and play a game or do a craft without being rushed.



## HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Listed below are steps you should follow as you consider chartering or reactivating a Lutheran Girl Pioneers Caravan in your congregation.

*You may have already completed some of these steps. Others may not be appropriate for your congregation. These steps are meant to be a guide.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Read through the information and share with other interested members of your congregation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Get the permission & support of your pastor and responsible congregation board or committee.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contact your District Counselor—she can answer questions and guide you through the steps of introducing the program to the congregation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hold an information meeting for interested adults and girls; have your District Counselor present if possible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assess the interest of the girls and adults. Recruit adults to help with the program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hold a second meeting of adults willing to serve as leaders or Caravan Council members.
  - Have your District Counselor present if possible.
  - Decide on a method of funding your program.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit a “Membership Form” to the National Office.
  - You can estimate the number of girls you will have and update later.
  - List all leaders, even potential ones; you can update the list later.
  - When your membership form with fees is submitted to the National Office, a Caravan Library will be sent to you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ When the Caravan Library arrives, meet with the potential leaders to go through the materials. Plan your first meeting and activities with leaders and the caravan council.

**You are not alone!**  
 Call the National Office or your District Counselor  
 when you have questions or concerns!

## SOURCES OF FUNDING

Once you know the costs involved, you will need to look at what sources of funding exist for your Caravan. Each congregation will differ in how they approach this funding. Be sure to check with your congregation leaders to see what is available and how your Lutheran Girl Pioneers Caravan will fit into the funding procedures.

*Following are some ideas other Caravans have used successfully. You may use one or a combination of the following ideas, or you may have another way to fund your Caravan.*

### CONGREGATION BUDGET

In many congregations, the National Membership fees are paid as part of the yearly congregational budget. The Pioneers are listed as a line item in the budget. In these cases the congregation sees the Caravan as an integral part of the church's ministry to its youth and recognizes the need to fund it. In some congregations all of the costs for the year are taken care of through the church budget.

### CONGREGATION GROUPS

Another alternative is to approach various groups in the congregation to see if they might be able to assist with the funding of the Caravan. You may want to talk with the Men's Club, Ladies' Aid, LWMS, Thrivent, Parent/Teacher Organization, etc.

### PARENTS

In some congregations, parents are asked to pick up the cost of the Lutheran Girl Pioneers program entirely or in part. In this case the budgeted costs of the Caravan would be divided by the number of girls and a fee per girl set to be paid by the parents.

### DOOR OFFERINGS

Another method used by some congregations is to have a free-will offering in which any member of the congregation can donate. This can take place after a church service or at some type of meal or other gathering.

### FUND RAISING PROJECTS

Some congregations will allow groups to conduct fund-raising projects. This might include:

- Meals with a free-will offering, like a spaghetti or soup dinner, or a pancake breakfast
- Car washes
- Candy or pizza sales
- Bake sales
- Silent Auctions
- Pumpkin sales
- Garage sales



Call the National Office if you'd like to brainstorm ways to fund your Caravan!

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

### BROCHURES & BULLETIN INSERTS

*These will give the parents some general information on Lutheran Girl Pioneers*

### YOUR DISTRICT COUNSELOR

*She is a local representative who would visit with you and present the program. Please contact the National Office for your District Counselor's contact information.*

### RECRUITING GIRLS

- Sending a letter to parents informing them of the Lutheran Girl Pioneer program with a schedule of events and activities that are planned is a good start. If your congregation has a school, your teachers may be willing to hand this information out at registration.
- Write a personal invitation to girls in the congregation (postcards are fun!).
- Hold an information night inviting the girls and their parents. Let the girls do a simple craft to take home with them and give them a schedule of events.
- Have interesting activities, crafts, and events planned. *Use the Leader's Manual for help!*

### RECRUITING PARENTS TO HELP

- Invite parents to attend a meeting to see what goes on.
- Put together a list of special events scheduled along with a sign-up sheet so they can choose what they could help with.
- Invite parents or other congregation members with special talents to share that particular skill.
- Keep parents informed of your activities.
- Be sure to properly thank anyone who helps out.
- Ask parents to stay at a meeting to help with "crowd control."

### RECRUITING & ENCOURAGING LEADERS AND HELPERS

Here are some qualities you should look for when looking for an LGP leader:

- \* A leader is someone who loves the Lord and loves children.
- \* A leader likes variety in the things they do and the resources they work with.
- \* They are creative in their use of the handbook and teaching requirements.
- \* They are democratic in their approach to leadership.
- \* They solicit ideas and suggestions from the girls.
- \* They find it easy to praise and encourage the girls.
- \* Their focus is on cooperation and relationships; they are team players.

You can do things to encourage the leaders in your Caravan:

- \* Make it fun, like brew good coffee and have fun creamers available during meeting times.
- \* Be friends: take a genuine interest in their lives, remember birthdays, etc.
- \* Thank them! A thank you note goes a long way!
- \* Trust them! No micro-managing!
- \* Pray for them!

## KEEPING LUTHERAN GIRL PIONEERS VISIBLE IN YOUR CONGREGATION

- Have photos displayed on a bulletin board in the school or church of various activities.
- Keep the congregation informed through articles or blurbs in the newsletters or in the bulletin.
- Hold a Pioneer Sunday where the girls sing and hand out bulletins. Host a coffee/brunch between or after services. Show a slide presentation.
- Sponsor a food bank. Have the girls write an article for the local paper about what they did.
- Compile a list of members with special talents that can help with teaching lessons.
- Adopt a friend or “grandma” at church.
- Help keep up the church grounds; clean the church kitchen or the church library.
- Help at Vacation Bible School.
- Host a Veteran’s Day brunch after the church service closest to the Veteran’s Day. Decorate the tables with patriotic colors and centerpieces.
- Help with the child care when LWMS has a rally at your church.
- Celebrate baptisms by gifting a blanket the girls made together to the newly baptized baby.
- Host a school supply drive for the local school or a hat and mitten drive for the local homeless shelter.
- Host a pet supply drive for the local humane society.
- Make treats and serve them for church meetings: the church council, the Ladies’ Aid, various committee meetings, voters’ meeting, etc.
- Host an Advent by Candlelight event for the ladies of the congregation.
- Make treats and thank you notes to deliver to the pastors, teachers, and other workers in your congregation, like organists, choir director, secretary, custodian, etc.
- Go Christmas caroling and invite everyone at church to go along with you!

**Ask the girls for ideas about what they would like to do!**



## A TOOL FOR REACHING OUT

### Friendship Evangelism

Girls inviting unchurched friends to join them in the Christ-centered activities in Pioneers provides a wonderful outreach tool. Pioneers is less structured or formal than Sunday school or worship and may attract the interest in a less threatening way. Talk to your Evangelism Committee and work with them to come up with ideas to include children in the community or neighborhood who do not have a church home.



### Serve the Lord publicly with joy in community service projects.

Have materials available at a booth at a local fair or event. Participate in a parade or local service projects: food drive; roadside cleanup; collecting school supplies for those families who are struggling financially; donating gifts at Christmas; visiting nursing homes or shut-ins. Sponsor a Run/Walk for a specific cause.

### Not only does the Pioneer program provide an opportunity for children it also presents itself as an avenue to bring adults to hear God's Word.

Parents that accompany their children to events and activities or even someone who is an "expert presenter" on a particular subject will have the opportunity to hear God's life saving message.

### It often happens that the members of the congregation who have not been involved or active in the church and become leaders have grown in their commitment to God through Pioneers.

The comfortable setting of the Pioneer programs and activities lend themselves to building relationships and creating opportunities to talk about your life and your Savior. Children often do this naturally.

Leaders should not hesitate to be just as welcoming and then "be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have...with gentleness and respect."

Thank you for your interest in the Lutheran Girl Pioneers ministry. We welcome your questions at any time!

Please call the National Office at  
608-781-5232

or email [girlpioneers@gmail.com](mailto:girlpioneers@gmail.com)  
or visit our website at [www.lgp.org](http://www.lgp.org)