



DISTRICT NEWS

SOUTH DAKOTA

Welcome, Pastor Winckler!

I am pleased to announce that Rev. Paul Winckler, who had been the lead associate pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, School and Preschool, Rapid City, has accepted the call to serve as the district's "assistant to the president" (also known as the executive secretary). The district's Board of Directors issued the call during their special meeting on Aug. 4.



Rev. Scott Sailer
District President

The assistant to the president will attend to the responsibilities of the former executive secretary position, minus the education and commissioned minister responsibilities (areas now covered by our part-time education executive, Dave Geidel).

How will the assistant to the president/executive secretary serve us? He will:

- ▶ Serve as the assistant to the president in getting to know the pastors and congregations and their needs, challenges and opportunities. He will especially seek to visit with and encourage pastors across the district as they carry out their ministries. He will also serve in various other administrative capacities in order to help carry out the responsibilities and programs of the district (for example, administration of the Lay Leadership Institute).

- ▶ Serve as the primary district staff member promoting God's mission of making disciples of all nations and of seeking and saving the lost, and in promoting the call of the Christian to serve our neighbors with deeds of love (including the promotion of Together in Ministry).
- ▶ Provide accountability and oversight for district-subsidized ministries in our responsibility of carrying out the mission opportunities our Lord puts before us.
- ▶ Serve as the supervisor of the new Mission and Ministry Council, the district group that aims to provide support and ministry resources to church workers, congregations and schools.
- ▶ Ensure that biblical principles of stewardship are promoted throughout the district.

I look forward to serving with Pastor Winckler, who has served so well at Zion, Rapid City, since his seminary graduation in 2012. His last Sunday at Zion was Oct. 2, and his installation into the district position was being planned for November.

Pastor Winckler and his wife, Laura, have three children: Ben, who lives and works in Sioux Falls; Emily, a sophomore at South Dakota State University; and Caleb, a high school sophomore.



Pastor Winckler is pictured with his wife, Laura.

Please pray for Pastor Winckler and all of our district staff at the office in Sioux Falls. Besides yours truly and Pastor Winckler, Chad Zinnel serves as business manager, Julie Pike serves as the administrative assistant, and Randy Gayken serves part-time as the district's vice-president for the Lutheran Church Extension Fund.

As part-time education executive, Dave Geidel works remotely from his home west of Dimock.

We are here to serve the Lord by serving you!

Your servant in Christ, Pastor Scott Sailer
"Not ashamed of the Gospel"
Rom. 1:16; 16:25-27

Trinity, Belle Fourche, is district's 106th congregation

Trinity Lutheran Church, Belle Fourche, is the newest congregation in the LCMS South Dakota District. Rev. Scott Sailer, district president, presented a certificate of membership on Sunday, Aug. 28, during service. The district's Board of Directors accepted Trinity as a member congregation on June 13. Trinity is a daughter congregation of St. Paul, Spearfish. With the addition of Trinity, the South Dakota District now has 106 congregations. All thanks and praise to our Triune God!



Pictured are charter members of Trinity, Belle Fourche. The congregation is currently being served by Rev. Don McKillop.



Bob Van Sickle, Trinity congregation president, receives the certificate of membership from Pastor Sailer. The congregation worships at Belle Business Plaza, located at 1403 Fifth Ave. in Belle Fourche. Bible study and Sunday school begin at 9 a.m. and worship is at 10 a.m.



SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH US!

Send articles and photos to Kate Meadows:

- kate@katemeadows.com
- 420 E. Liberty Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

January 2023 issue deadline: Nov. 15



‘For you’ | District youth attend Higher Things conference in Montana

South Dakota was well represented at the 2022 Higher Things Conference held July 19-22 at Montana State University in Bozeman, Mont. The conference theme, “For You,” fed middle and high school youth a steady diet of Word and Sacrament for four days. The conference had 843 attendees from 23 states, three countries and 98 congregations.

If you’ve never been to a Higher Things conference before, imagine it like this.

Breakfast begins at 7 a.m. Students and adult leaders walk from the dorms to the university cafeteria. At 8 a.m., conference musicians and choir members go to rehearsal.

At 9 a.m., hundreds of voices join together to sing Matins. Then students attend the first plenary of the day as speakers teach and answer questions that students have sent via text message. At this conference, speakers were Rev. Duane Bamsch, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Grass Valley, Calif., and Higher Things president; and Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard, pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Minot, N.D.

After the plenary, it’s lunch time in the cafeteria. Following lunch is Vespers, with singing, preaching and terrific music. The afternoon consists of another plenary and various breakout sessions, primarily led by Higher Things staff or pastors who have also brought their own students to the conference.

Soon, it is supper time. These kids can

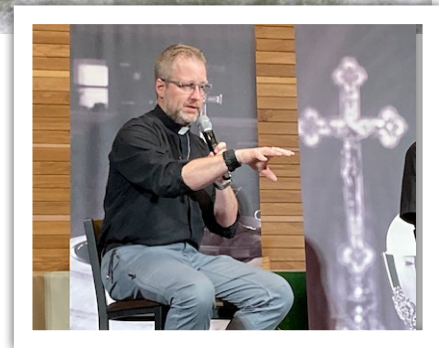


sure put down a lot of food! With full stomachs, we all return for the beautiful service of Evening Prayer.

During the evening hours, various activities are held all over our area of the campus, including chalk-drawing competitions, a hilarious and high-caliber talent show and outdoor games like ultimate frisbee and knockerball, in which kids get inside a giant inflatable bubble and run into each other.

A competition among all participating congregations is held during the entire conference. Congregations are divided into four teams, called tetramorphs. Each tetramorph represents one of the Gospel writers. Teams score points by answering questions in breakouts and winning challenges during the free time. They can also lose points for misbehavior. There is a lot of tetramorph spirit!

Finally, around 11:30 p.m., everyone returns to their dorms to pray Compline.



From top, youth from Zion, Rapid City, and Divine Shepherd, Black Hawk, braved the rapids on Montana’s Gallatin River; and Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard makes his presentation.

It is a beautiful thing to hear Compline being sung across the campus. After Compline, it’s lights out around midnight because the routine starts again the following day.

The conference began and ended with Divine Services.

PATTY'S PONDERINGS

WANTED: Banner designs for LWML convention

“CELEBRATE THE LORD OF THE NATIONS” is the theme for the LWML 40th Biennial Convention, to be held June 22-25, 2023, in Milwaukee. The theme is based on Ps. 33:12-13:

Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage! The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all the children of man.



Patty Peters
LWML South Dakota
District President

The Lutheran Women in Mission of the North Wisconsin, Northern Illinois and South Wisconsin districts are hosting the convention. All of you who have attended an LWML national convention know what a blessing they are to each of us — not to mention how much fun they are.

The banner procession is part of the convention pageantry, and it's also a way to artistically represent the theme. Our beloved South Dakota District is filled with talented ladies. I know, because I saw beautiful banners they made for our district convention in Yankton. Perhaps the zone presidents can encourage their talented members to create another design based on the theme.

Please send your ideas to me at lwmlprespatty@gmail.com by Jan. 3. The Board of Directors will meet in January and we will decide on the design that will then be made into the banner. Banner instructions can be found at sdlwml.org. Thank you very much for helping with the banner design.

May God bless your time as you “Walk in Love” with your family and friends in this season of Thanksgiving. May we be thankful for the most precious gift of all — the Christ, Jesus, who came to live among us, to be a sacrifice on the cross, to rise from the dead and to reign forever at His Father's right hand.



PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL at the state fair

The 50th anniversary of the Puppet Place at the South Dakota State Fair was a fantastic celebration! All of Rev. Andrew Utecht's family was there to help with the puppet show, including his brother, Rev. Peter Utecht, and his mother, Donna. It was wonderful to be back to pre-pandemic numbers again this year. In all, 945 people attended a show. The Black Hills, Brookings, Chamberlain, Milbank and Mitchell zones each had volunteers that were happy to help. Several of these women were first-time helpers and were so excited about the ministry.

Pastor Andrew loved the little hand puppets that LWML members from across the state had made. We handed them out to the children, and the children loved them, too! The puppet booth that Pastor Andrew featured at the district convention was there. The booth, placed by the front door, fascinated children walking by and provided another opportunity to invite them to the shows.

Pastor Peter wrote the Bible story, “Fishers of Men,” for the show. It was excellent, as Puppet Place

stories always are. We especially enjoyed the music.

To carry out the theme, Pastor Andrew purchased wooden fish necklaces that were given out to 244 adults. Volunteers also handed out 298 “Cross in your Pocket” gifts, some of which were made by women who attended the district convention, while others were donated by the Sioux Falls Zone. Women from the Pierre Zone made an additional 300 puppets to be added to those made at the district convention. In all, we handed out 476 puppets! It was so fun to watch the puppet show attendees choose the perfect hand puppet to take home.

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of Puppet Place, the exterior of the building was repainted, complete with some LWML purple to set it off. Those purple doors really stand out! Nine volunteers completed this task on a Saturday morning in July. Thank you, volunteers! We also purchased a new awning, table, stools and indoor and outdoor mats. Pastor Andrew was pleased with all of the changes.

Continued on next page

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Count your blessings, and share them!

November is a month to be thankful. It begins with All Saints Day — and it ends with Thanksgiving, for crying out loud! Both days are times to gather with loved ones and remember God's rich blessings in our lives. First, we remember the blessing of faithful people who have gone before us and who have inspired us in our own faith. Weeks later, we celebrate Thanksgiving for the many blessings that we enjoy.

So now is also an opportune time to think of all the ways you're blessed. But go a step further ... share those blessings! Remember that believers in Christ are rich in blessedness, even when we don't feel all that blessed. In 2 Cor. 9:8, we learn that grace is abundantly given to us at all times — and not just the times when it is easy to thank God for what He has done — so that we can share those blessings with others.

Grace is abundant, even in times of distress and pain, because Christ came to overcome the world — all distress, all pain and



Rev. Clint O. Thorson
LWML District Counselor



all sin. While we were still enemies of God, He showed us His love in giving up His Son, that we might be His heirs. He didn't just reconcile us to Himself so we could be friends. No, Jesus died to make us heirs with Him. Since He can make enemies into heirs, He can use any circumstance (yes, even distress and pain) in our lives to bless both us and those around us.

So in this season of Thanksgiving, don't forget to give thanks for and share the abundance of blessings that God gives you, even during the hard times. As you can see, God is so gracious that we could never begin to count all our blessings! But we can be thankful. We can have grateful hearts that turn to God in every circumstance. We can be generous and share our blessings with those around us.

Therefore go, be thankful. Go, bless others. Go, tell of Christ's abundant blessings of grace, all the while sharing in the countless blessings you have from our gracious and giving God.

STATE FAIR (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

A special thank you to John Koch from Pierre for building the new table. These improvements were purchased with an offering we collected at the convention. We will be adding some signage to Puppet Place for next year, and we may do a bit more painting. It seems there are always things to be done!

Thank you so much to everyone who helped in any way to make this a special year for the Utecht family and Puppet Place. God is working in wonderful ways.

Jan Larson • Vice President of Gospel Outreach



Information on bus transportation to the national LWML convention in Milwaukee in June will be posted soon. Please contact Colleen Keiser with a text message at 605-209-2098 or with an email at colleen.keiser@gmail.com with questions. — **Colleen Keiser** • Bus Chairman

Meet our new financial secretary

As your new LWML district financial secretary, I want to thank all of you for voting, and for electing and entrusting me with your finances.



en's mission work of the church.

My husband and I are newly retired from a business that we ran for 36 years, in which I was

the financial officer. We have three married daughters and five grandchildren.

Please remember to send your monthly Mites! I look forward to meeting and getting to know all of you.

To God be the Glory!

Paula Warren
Financial Secretary

My parents, whom a lot of you already know, are the late Rev. Juraine and Lorene Hornig. I am a member of Peace, Rapid City, and treasurer of our LWML group. With the encouragement from my mother, I have always enjoyed and been heavily involved in the wom-

WANTED:

YWR applicants for Milwaukee convention

Hello to all the young women of the LWML South Dakota District. My name is Laurel Schamber and I am the chairwoman of the Young Woman Representatives (YWR) Committee. I am encouraging all women ages 22-35 to consider applying as a YWR to represent our district at the LWML 40th Biennial Convention June 22-25, 2023, in Milwaukee.

I served as a YWR for the South Dakota District in Pittsburgh in 2013. It was a life-changing experience for me. While I could describe everything you get to do as a YWR, the focus is bigger than that. As young women, we strive to find our purpose and how to best serve the Lord with gladness. Sometimes this is a struggle as we are still learning who we are and what difference we can make in the world around us.

Attending a national convention gives you an opportunity to experience the power of generous hearts giving, the joy of serving those in need and feeling the love of God pour out of thousands of women of all ages, races and backgrounds. Attending a national convention helped me cement my purpose and better understand how to seek opportunities to serve.

But don't just take my word on the benefits of becoming a YWR. Videos of past YWRs describing their experience are available at lwml.org/ywr. Here you can also read convention tips from former YWRs and find the application to apply.

Applications are due to the YWR Committee or the district president by early December.

I hope many of you will apply for this opportunity, and I look forward to reading your applications.

God's Blessings, Laurel Schamber

BLACK HILLS ZONE UPDATE

The Black Hills Zone has participated in multiple activities over the past year. In September 2021, 17 of our zone ladies traveled to Faith Lutheran Church, Pierre, for the district Christian Life Workshop. A week later, we held our Fall Retreat at Zion, Rapid City, with 52 ladies in attendance. The theme was RESTORE, based on 1 Peter 5:10.

Our zone officers were re-elected and installed by Rev. Thomas Brown, pastor of St. Paul, Spearfish. They are President Casey Harvard (St. Paul Spearfish) and VPs of Christian Life Kathy Roling (Divine Shepherd, Black Hawk) and Vickye Hoffman, Bethlehem Lutheran, Rapid City.

In February 2022, several zone members attended the pre-Lenten prayer service at Peace, Rapid City. Rose Mason from Hot Springs volunteered to make our convention banner. The banner was carried at the convention by Casey Harvard.

On June 2-4, several ladies from our zone traveled to Yankton for the district retreat. On Sept. 1, five ladies from our zone assisted the Puppet Place ministry at the South Dakota State Fair. Three of them were first-time helpers for that ministry, and it was an amazing experience.

The fall retreat was Sept. 24 at Bethesda, Hot Springs. The retreat theme was "Our Father." Rev. Peter Utecht led us in opening and closing devotions, and Rev. Thomas Brown conducted the Bible study. In the afternoon, our guest speaker was Mary Culverson, coordinator of the VA Vets Craft Program. Zone members donated gift cards to help with the program.

St. Paul, Spearfish, hosted the Christian Life Workshop on Oct. 15.

Casey Harvard • Black Hills Zone President

Call Information

PENDING

Rev. Nathan Neugebauer, St. John/Bethlehem, Revillo/rural Milbank, is prayerfully considering a call to St. Paul, Ogallala, Neb., Sept. 22.

Rev. John Fries, Grace/Blessed Emmanuel, Deadwood/Sturgis, is prayerfully considering a call to St. Paul/St. Paul/Redeemer, Alta Vista/Junction City/Wabanssee, Kan., Sept. 11.

DECLINED

Rev. Jason Wolter, pastor of St. Mark, Benson, Minn., has declined a call as pastor to Emanuel, Milbank, Oct. 2.

VACANCIES

- Emanuel, Milbank
- St. Paul, Plankinton, and Trinity, White Lake
- Zion, Rapid City (*lead associate*)



Join us for life march



and destructive. In printed and online ads, abortion advocates have called for violence against pro-life advocates and crisis pregnancy centers. Name-calling seems mild in light of the riots some abortion advocates support. In light of this, some folks have expressed concern over their own safety at an event like the National March for Life.

Sure, since *Roe v. Wade* has been overturned, the 2023 March for Life could be an amazing victory celebration. On the other hand, it could be the place where protestors choose to wage war against the pro-life movement and its people. I have no idea what to expect, and I have yet to see anyone confident in making a prediction. You need to make the decision about going for yourself as you seek God's will for your witness and well-being.

We live under the Gospel Christ has given us. Nevertheless, please consider the national march as an opportunity to walk with your fellow Christians, and the apostles and prophets before you.

Have you been blessed to know the difference Jesus has made using your work and witness in His name? I'd enjoy hearing that life story. A fellow worker may need to hear it. Contact me at:

- pcnavurskis@gmail.com
- 605-352-7121

Rev. Chris Navurskis
South Dakota District
Life Coordinator
Pastor, Mount Calvary,
Huron



New treasurer

Stacey Moulton has replaced Don Sperlich as treasurer of South Dakota Lutherans For Life. Please direct all correspondence and donations to Stacey at 420 E. Madison St., Rapid City, SD 57701. Thank you!

Good news makes me glad. A smile on the face of my wife brings me joy. The sound of my children getting along and laughing when we are all together is an occasion to rejoice. I am uplifted by a friendly note or email or when my neighbor waves and shouts a greeting from his yard.

Kindness is uplifting. I assume that is a universal reality for people all over the world.

If so, then why does Jesus say:

"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account." (MATT. 5:11)

Insults hurt. Rumors wreck lives. Name-calling happens to people of every generation and it is just as painful at age 50 as it is at age 15. Why would we ever rejoice in being attacked in any way? Only when it means we are included in the life and victory of Christ.

In Matt. 5:12, Jesus says:

"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

The prophets pointed to Christ in word and deed. The apostles did the same and they were persecuted. We follow in their footsteps, pointing to Christ. That means we will face rejection and persecution.

Persecution hurts, but so does a good workout. When I ride 100 miles on my bike, I am sore the next day. If your favorite sports team beats the opposing team on the latter team's home field, your team will be booed. A parent who disciplines her child might face push-back from the child or even from society.

When we publicly profess our faith, we are proclaiming the victory of Jesus' death and resurrection to everyone in our midst. That includes people who oppose even the idea of God, not to mention the eternal Christ in time and space, and the Scriptures.

We plan to face that battle again on Jan. 20, 2023, in Washington, D.C., for the annual national March for Life. If ever we thought that overturning *Roe v. Wade* would resolve the arguments over abortion, we have discovered a different reality now. The overturning has only made extremists within the pro-abortion movement more vicious



‘The devoted, devotional life’

Higher Things retreat lifts up high school youth

Our Savior Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, hosted the 2022 South Dakota District Higher Things Confirmation Retreat Aug. 12-13. Rev. Bret Bierman, pastor of St. Paul, Stratford; Trinity, Mansfield; and St. John’s, Aberdeen, spoke on the retreat theme, “The Devoted, Devotional Life” and Revs. Jordan Andreasen (Our Savior, Aberdeen, and St. John, Columbia), Jeremy Yeadon (St. John’s, Groton, and Zion, Andover) and Colin Ford (Concordia, Cresbard, and Immanuel, Wecota) preached during services. Breakout sessions were taught by Rev. Samuel Bobby (St. Paul’s, Aberdeen, and St. Paul’s, Leola), Rev. Jacob Smith (St. Paul’s, Aberdeen) and DCE Michael Leapley (St. Paul’s, Aberdeen).

The youth had an incredible time. “I really liked the atmosphere and being around other Lutherans my age,” August Bobby said. “It was a lot of fun.”

He added that he appreciated being able to ask the pastors questions.

The fellowship that a Higher Things retreat provides is invaluable. What a blessing to show South Dakota youth they are not alone in the Lutheran faith. Deep and meaningful questions abounded as the youth considered what it means to lead a “devoted, devotional life.”

Tying into the retreat’s theme, DCE Leapley taught a breakout session on the form and structure of a “collect” prayer so participants could add this church practice to their own devotional time. The youth were quick learners. By the end of the class they were writing collects of their own.

Pastor Smith led a session on how to read Psalms, and he engaged the youth in some tough questions. Pastor Bobby taught on Christian identity. He explained that all secular activities, such as sports or musical performances, are ultimately law-based. Therefore, Christians have a unique privilege in hearing and proclaiming the Gospel!

Similarly, Pastor Bierman explained that the world tries to define us in many ways and that people are bound to have opinions of each other. But above all, our identity in Christ is what matters most. Pastor Bierman reminded participants that each of them is a “redeemed, baptized child of God.” God holds us in His arms, and nothing can change that. We have already won because of what Christ has done for us.

Bierman then echoed the words that God so frequently shares in His Word — “Fear not!” We have nothing to fear because Christ has conquered all. Living as Easter people, we have the freedom to “thank and praise, serve and obey by loving our neighbor.”

Please pray for our youth as they put these devotional strategies into practice. And join us in 2023 for the next South Dakota Higher Things Confirmation Retreat.